



## Central Brooklyn Independent Democrats: 2022 State Candidate Questionnaire

**Name of Candidate:** Zellnor Y. Myrie

**Office Sought:** State Senate

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**Name of Person(s) completing the questionnaire:** Zellnor Y. Myrie

Please answer each of the following questions to the best of your ability:

### 1) **Why do you seek an endorsement from CBID?**

I have been honored to receive CBID's endorsement in my previous runs, and would be honored to receive your support once again. I'm proud that since entering the Senate in 2018, we've advanced critical progressive priorities in Albany— from tenant protections and criminal legal system reforms, to election reforms and taking on the gun industry. We've only been able to achieve these victories because we've worked together— but there is still so much more work to be done. That's what motivates me to run for a third term in the State Senate, and why I'd be proud to have CBID's support.

### 2) **If elected, what would be your top legislative priority?**

As Chair of the Senate Elections Committee, I've led the fight to improve New York's dysfunctional boards of elections and worked to protect and expand voting rights for all. I look forward to advancing further reforms of our elections system and enshrine the strongest voter protections into law with the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act.

I've also been a leader in holding corporations accountable for the harms caused by their products. In 2021 we passed a landmark gun industry liability law, and this year we're taking on the industries that prey on our young people with deceptive and misleading junk food marketing.

Championing affordable housing is in my DNA— I'm a tenant advocate and lifelong renter who was proud to lead the fight for the strongest tenant protections in New York history. I believe our property tax system must be overhauled and incentives like 421a replaced with programs that produce deeply affordable housing and living wages for those who need them most.

### 3) **What measures would you support to improve educational opportunities for all students in New York State.**

Our office works closely with NYC DOE leaders, principals, teachers and parents in every part of our district. In last year's State budget I was proud to fight for full Foundation Aid funding phased in over the next three years. This year alone, our Senate District is owed over \$22 million in Foundation Aid. As a proud public school graduate, I'll always fight for our students, teachers and families.



**4) NYS previously passed the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. What are your priorities and what level of funding would you support to implement this Act? Do you support the Climate Can't Wait package?**

I was proud to sponsor the CLCPA, the Climate Can't Wait package and support the NY Renews \$15 Billion budget request. Hurricane Ida, not to mention the recent spike in electric bills that many of us experienced, make clear that we cannot wait for climate justice or renewable, public power.

**5) How do you propose getting same-day voter registration and universal absentee voting approved by voters in NY?**

As Elections Committee chair, I advocated for same-day registration and no-excuse absentee voting, authored an Op-Ed strongly endorsing these measures, and was disappointed they were overwhelmed by a multi-million dollar campaign to mischaracterize and defeat both measures.

We must bring both these measures before the voters at the next opportunity, and commit to a sustained education campaign around them. In the meantime, I was proud to help pass measures this year to reduce the voter registration deadline to the constitutional minimum of ten days, and to extend the temporary authorization for any voter to apply for an absentee ballot due to the risk of contracting COVID-19 through 2022.

**6) What, if any, groups or types of people will you not accept campaign contributions from? If so, please note whose money you will not accept.**

I never take contributions from Big Real Estate, fossil fuel companies, utilities, or big corporate PACs.

**7) Do you support the work of the state's Public Finance Commission? Do you support any campaign finance reforms in NY State? If so, please describe.**

I support public campaign financing, but the PCFC doesn't go nearly far enough in reducing the influence of big money on our elections. The state program could be strengthened by emulating New York City's Campaign Finance Board, which has set the gold standard for public financing of political campaigns. I co-sponsored the bill closing the LLC loophole, and have written legislation that would prohibit campaign contributions by companies seeking state contracts.



**8) The Supreme Court has ruled that state legislatures can gerrymander political districts along partisan lines. How and by whom should political districts be drawn?**

Voters should pick their representatives and not the other way around. I support redistricting guided by the voters and their input, as well as the principles that communities of similar interest should be kept together while protecting the voices of historically disenfranchised communities.

**9) Now that the Reproductive Health Act has passed, what is your next priority in increasing reproductive healthcare access and gender equity?**

With reproductive freedom under attack throughout the nation, I'm proud to stand up for reproductive healthcare that is affordable and accessible to all and will work to ensure New Yorkers always have access to the care and choices they deserve.

**10) What actions would you take to promote safer and more efficient transportation options for pedestrians, cyclists, mass transit users, and drivers in New York?**

I strongly support efforts to improve cycling and pedestrian infrastructure in NY, and have been proud to participate in conversations with the Plaza Street Block Association regarding safety at Grand Army Plaza. I support major investments in our public transportation system and ensuring the MTA has the resources needed to ensure reliability, safety and service.

**11) What policies do you support to ensure fairness in employment and workplace conditions, as well as strengthening and increasing access to unions?**

I'm proud to support burgeoning unionization efforts across many industries in New York and will always stand with workers.

**12) What would you do to ensure access to affordable and quality housing for everyone?**

The Governor's newly proposed 485-w program in the executive budget, pitched as a replacement for 421-a, is still a grossly expensive subsidy for luxury development that provides nearly no truly affordable housing units in return. My legislation would end 421-a ([S260A/A1931A](#)) and replace it with a new program that truly creates affordable housing for those who need it most.

From the earliest days of the pandemic, I have been clear: New York must not allow our public



health crisis to become worsened by a tidal wave of evictions and foreclosures. I've supported the extension of New York's eviction moratorium, foreclosure relief for homeowners, and major investments in our stock of NYCHA housing.

**13) What are your views on criminal justice reform issues, such as (but not limited to) police accountability, and ending solitary confinement?**

I've been a leader in the fight to end qualified immunity, and was proud to fight to repeal 50-a in 2020, a law that had been used to shield police disciplinary records from public view for decades. We have so much more work to do. From ending wrongful convictions and stopping deceptive police interrogations, to ensuring incarcerated New Yorkers have access to the services and programming they need in prison, I've been a champion for sensible and just reforms to our criminal legal system.

I'm also the prime sponsor of the Clean Slate Act, which would seal criminal conviction histories of New Yorkers who have served their time and returned to the communities. I believe we must have a criminal legal system that lives up to our highest ideals, and that means ensuring everyone has a fair shot at a second chance to contribute to their communities and stabilize themselves and their families. This also enhances public safety by reducing the likelihood of recidivism.

**14) Do you support the New York Health Act?**

I'm a sponsor of the New York Health Act and believe we must develop and fund a single-payer plan for New Yorkers. The pandemic has shown us the importance and interconnectedness of our public health infrastructure— supporting New York Health means ensuring our preparedness for the next public health crisis.