



## Central Brooklyn Independent Democrats: 2022 Federal Candidate Questionnaire

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

1) Why do you seek an endorsement from CBID?

*I was honored to be endorsed by CBID before and would be honored to receive your endorsement again. I believe it is vital that as a candidate, and hopefully as a Representative, we have progressive voices helping guide us on important and necessary issues such as climate change, immigration reform, gun control reform, abortion access, and so much more. As a Member of Congress, I truly believed that I was a representative for all members of my district and it was essential to me that groups such as yours had their voices heard on policy issues. As NY-11 moves into new parts of Brooklyn, I look forward to having a sustained and deep relationship with CBID and hope to call upon their knowledge and expertise when in office.*

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

*My top priority will be helping to build a more just and sustainable American economy, which supports families, guards against inflation, reverses rampant and unprecedented wealth inequality, and contributes to overall public safety. I believe that the build back better framework was absolutely the right policy framework to achieve this goal, but that we also must establish truly universal child care, paid family and medical leave, solid union protections, and a system of fair taxation.*

3) Do you support the right of a pregnant person to choose to terminate their pregnancy? Have you always? If not, please explain why your position has changed.

*Yes, I 100% support a woman's right to make decisions about her own healthcare decisions, to include her pregnancy.*

4) With Roe v. Wade at risk, do you plan to ensure adequate funding and legal protection to guarantee the right to accessible abortion and health services? If so, what actions will you take?

*I strongly oppose any restrictions on women's access to abortion or health care coverage. This is evidenced by my strong support for Planned Parenthood and their support for me in prior campaigns. To that end, I believe that we must codify Roe v. Wade into a federal statute, and while in congress, I co-sponsored the Women's Health Protection Act, which would do just that.*

*In Congress, I was also an active member of the Pro-Choice Caucus because I believe that everyone deserves both equal access to reproductive health care, no matter where they live, as well as the right to make personal decisions about their helathcare, and seek abortion care without interference*



*from any politician. I also co-sponsored the Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance (EACH Woman) Act, to make sure that every woman, no matter what type of insurance they have, or if they're low-income, has the freedom to choose. If elected, I will once again be on the forefront of protecting a women's right to choose.*

**5) What is your position on the building of new oil or gas projects? What is your vision for expanding the nation's supply and transmission of renewable energy? Do you support the vision of a Green New Deal?**

*I am 100% committed to America doing everything possible to achieve a carbon neutral economy sometime between 2035 and 2040. This will require unprecedented federal investments in alternative energy systems and technology as well policy changes required to ensure that this transition is undertaken.*

*It will also be absolutely vital to ensure that tax giveaways to the fossil fuel industry are stopped. Lastly, we must also engage in all global action required to ensure that it is not just America that reaches this target, but also all major carbon emitters.*

*We must ensure that this significant economic and policy transition also comes with a dramatic expansion of the working and middle class in America, and that there is a just economic transition for those who have lost their jobs in the fossil fuel industry.*

*As I do not believe that this full net carbon neutral transition cannot occur until 2035-2040, I do support any carbon focused energy initiatives that serve as a bridge to this goal, such as a natural gas project that leads to reduced coal emissions.*

*I fully support the environmental elements of the green new deal, but do not support the medicare for all and federal job guarantee policy prescriptions in it.*

**6) What health care reforms or plans do you support?**

*Health care is a human right and I believe there are a number of steps we can take to ensure this right for all Americans. This includes lowering the Medicare eligibility age to 55, offering a public option for those who cannot afford or do not want private coverage, and making sure Americans do not have to pay exorbitant costs for their medical treatments and drugs. If elected, I will actively support legislation which achieves these objectives and makes it easier for our working families to receive affordable health care.*

*One of the key components of this will be expanding Medicaid into states that opted not to do so through the Affordable Care Act. Despite strong support and the fact that the ACA would be a significant health and economic benefit to their constituents, lawmakers in Republican states decided it was more important to play politics and refused to expand Obamacare into their states.*



***Plain and simple, we need to get Americans the healthcare they deserve. The ACA has proven to be effective in getting Americans affordable healthcare and reducing exorbitant healthcare costs. As a Congressman, I will work diligently to ensure that all Americans, not just those in Blue states, have the opportunity to enroll in Medicaid.***

***As a member of Congress, I took on Big Pharma and insurance companies to work to expand coverage and lower costs for the American people. That's why I cosponsored and voted for H.R. 3, the Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act, which would dramatically lower pharmaceutical drug prices for all Americans. I also fully support permanently expanding and funding subsidies for the Affordable Care Act health care marketplace to ensure lower premiums and deductibles for middle class families. While in Congress, I also introduced the More Help for Seniors Act, which would lower out of pocket drug costs for more lower and middle-income seniors. My bill passed the House after it was included in H.R. 3.***

***Additionally I am a strong supporter of implementing All Payer rate setting nationwide. For far too long hospitals and healthcare provider systems have been able to get away with arbitrarily jacking up the price of care, and putting it on the backs of hard working Americans. It is vital that we create a system in which the cost of care is far more uniform nationwide. Due to the federal government's inaction I am an ardent supporter of the effort at the state level to pass the HEAL Act which would address skyrocketing hospital costs at the state level.***

***Through these legislative priorities, we can make healthcare accessible and affordable for all Americans.***

**7) Do you support repealing the Senate filibuster? If so, how will you use your platform to push for this reform?**

***Yes I support repealing the Senate filibuster as I do not believe that antiquated, Jim Crow Era Senate procedure which is not enshrined in the constitution should stop congress from protecting our democracy or advancing a legislative agenda that supports working families.***

**8) Voter ID laws, poll taxes, and limitations on polling sites and early voting are all examples of voter suppression tactics. What will you do to protect voting rights and elections, including but not limited to cosponsoring legislation?.**

***As a member of Congress, I continually supported measures which would ensure access to voting and guarantee voting rights for all Americans. That is why I was a lead co-sponsor of the For the People Act and co-sponsored the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. I also co-led the End Corruption Caucus with Katie Porter and led legislative proposals to ban corporate pacs and end the lobbyist loophole, both part and parcel of an anti-corruption agenda that I believe bolsters pro-democracy efforts.***

***Per my answer above, I support repealing the filibuster to enact pro-democracy measures.,***



**9) What steps do you support to reduce gun violence in the United States?**

*For far too long we have seen the rate of gun violence in this country far exceed other developed nations, and that falls solely on the gross inaction displayed by congress on this issue. Congress, and more specifically the Republican party, has been bought off by the NRA and other pro-violence lobbyists that act on behalf of gun manufacturers and not the American people. Just two weeks ago I unveiled a plan to curb the rising tide of gun violence in our communities in the wake of the horrific shootings of two heroic police officers. Firstly and most obviously, we need universal background checks on all gun purchases and sales. In addition to this we need to create a federal gun registry, which will give us a better ability to track gun ownership. In the same vain we need to close the "Charleston loophole" which so tragically led to the brutal murder of 9 parishoners at the hands of a white supremacist terrorist. The Charleston loophole states that a gun purchase or sale may move forward if the background check is not completed within three days. In congress I was proud to vote for Congressman Jim Clyburn's bill, HR 1112 which would extend that period from 3 to 10 days-allowing time for a more thorough background check. Additionally we need to create a federal red flag law where law enforcement is empowered to seize weapons from individuals who pose a threat to themselves or others.*

*Lastly we need a holistic approach by empowering both law enforcement and community partners to address this issue. Locally we need a more robust investment in CURE violence groups that are doing the work on the streets and speaking to individuals that are likely to engage in violent acts before they do so. Additionally we need to empower the ATF and repeal the Tiahrt amendment which ties the hands of law enforcement in tracking the movement of illegal guns. Our city is filled with weapons that are brought up the iron pipeline from states with lax gun laws and we need to do everything in our power to get them off the streets.*

**10) What actions do you support to protect our immigrant neighbors?**

*We need comprehensive immigration reform which is just, compassionate, and functional at protecting our borders. This district and city were built by immigrants and we must continue to build upon that legacy. This will not only keep America competitive economically but it will also ensure a diverse, strong United States. In congress I was a proud cosponsor of HR 6, which would provide a path to citizenship for 3-4 million DREAMers and Temporary Protective Status (TPS). I am also fully in support of a pathway to citizenship for law-abiding immigrants that have been living in the shadows for decades. This needs to be coupled with a robust investment in justly securing the border and economic and social investments in Central and South American countries so that people do not feel compelled to leave their homes to flee violence and economic destitution. Washington DC has completely abdicated its duty on this issue, and the result has been disastrous; Over 15 million people are largely forced to live in the shadows of our society.*

*Additionally I am in full support of upholding and fighting for New York City's Sanctuary City Policy,*



***as recommended by NYPD leadership. We must push back against dangerous lies about this policy from republicans and pundits because it makes us safer as a community.***

***Immigration is the best economic tool that this country has had in its past and it remains our greatest tool in the future. We need to be investing in streamlining our immigration process so we can increase our supply of labor, further grow our economy, and continue to build an America we know is possible, one that is beautifully diverse, just and prosperous.***

**11) What steps do you support to reform our criminal justice system?**

***I have worked on criminal justice issues as far back as my time as at the District Attorney's office under the late-great Ken Thompson where I helped spearhead Begin Again, which forgave low-level arrest warrants for constituents for things such as riding their bike on the sidewalk. Ken showed that the criminal justice system can be a part of the solution in repairing the breach between law enforcement and the communities they protect.***

***That is why I support a well-trained and well-led police force that enforces the law without bias, as well as additional resources for mental health treatment and social services so that police officers are not responsible for handling a variety of social problems for which they aren't trained. Furthermore, we must invest in programs that reduce recidivism so that those who've paid their debt to society are able to reintegrate and become productive members of society.***

***Policing in America must be held to a high standard of equal protection under the law and police officers must be fairly compensated for the risks that they take everyday to protect us. I was proud to cosponsor and vote for the Justice in Policing Act, which would implement long-overdue reforms to our policing and criminal justice system and would bring the rest of the country up to the standards of the NYPD, including: banning chokeholds by police officers, ending racial profiling, and providing resources for police departments nationwide to invest in community policing models.***

***An overwhelming 91% of U.S. adults say that marijuana should be legal for recreational or medical use. Despite the acceptance of marijuana across the country, nearly every minute one person is arrested for marijuana possession. I was proud to vote for the Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment & Expungement (MORE) Act, which would end the federal criminalization of marijuana and align the public's view with federal law. I also strongly support eliminating sentencing disparities for crack and powder cocaine, which is a racial justice issue.***

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

***This Country has seen a historic decline in union membership while simultaneously seeing an unprecedented increase in wealth inequality. The two are inextricably linked. Without the labor movement our society would not see important pro worker policies such as overtime pay, the 40 hour work week, Davis Bacon and so many other victories for workers.***

***While In Congress, there was no one more vocal and substantial in their support for the PRO Act than I was. Not only did I co-sponsor the bill, but I stood on the house floor and fought to protect it when Republicans sought to argue against its importance. Later, I went further still and worked to***





***actively combat pernicious “Right to Work” laws which would undermine the PRO Act. That bill would streamline and protect the organizing process for workers. Currently we see the adverse effects of the PRO Act not being passed, as behemoth mega corporations engage in coercive tactics to keep their workers from creating a union. When the PAct becomes law, many of these tactics will be illegal, which is why I will be the loudest voice in congress in support of this bill.***

***Furthermore, to ensure fairness in employment and to eliminate pay inequity, I co-sponsored and voted to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act, which strengthens and closes loopholes in the Equal Pay Act, which was passed in 1963 and desperately needs modern updating. The Paycheck Fairness Act would finally provide effective remedies to women who are not being paid equal wages for equal work. It also protects against retaliation for discussing salaries with colleagues. Lastly, and perhaps most significantly, I believe that the Taft Hartley bill should be fully repealed.***

**13) What would you do to ensure access to affordable and quality housing for everyone in Brooklyn and nationwide?**

***As the member of Congress for the 11th district, I didn’t just fight for more funding for NYCHA, I battled daily with the city and owners of section-8 apartment housing in my district to fix the horrible conditions my constituents endured. It didn’t matter how small the issue was, whether it was fixing signs, remediating mold, removing lead paint chips, cleaning up sewage and garbage, to actually forcing NYCHA to install parcel boxes in buildings so that packages were no longer stolen and seniors didn’t have to travel to the post office to retrieve the package. If it mattered to them, it mattered to me.***

***I am also extremely proud of the relief I brought back to tenants and homeowners who struggled financially as a result of the pandemic.***

**Additionally, I support robust protections for tenants, particularly those in rent-stabilized apartments where there is often a perverse incentive for landlords to remove perfectly law-abiding tenants from their homes.**

***It is essential that we pass some form of BBB that includes the \$40 billion in funding for NYCHA. No one deserves to live in a home that is unsafe or a threat to their own health. As a member of Congress, I will once again make that a core mission of my office.***

***We must also address the core root causes of homelessness, particularly in the areas of chronic poverty and the mental health crisis. It is for this reason that I support a National Mental Health Strategy which tackles this issue head on with robust funding and a real strategy, as well as addressing rampant poverty with real social service provision and a vibrant social safety net. Homelessness is, ultimately, a sign of society failure and our goal must be to eliminate it.***

**Lastly, I support the full federal funding of section 8 housing policies, which has not been fulfilled in recent memory.**



14) 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 do not and have never accepted money from Corporate PACs or federal lobbyists.*