



# ALL POLITICS IS LOCAL



**TODAY IS ELECTION DAY IN NEW YORK!**

POLLS ARE OPEN ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH,  
FROM 6:00 AM UNTIL 9:00 PM

FIND YOUR POLL SITE: [voterlookup.elections.ny.gov/](http://voterlookup.elections.ny.gov/)

## LIUNA ENDORSEMENTS 2023

Position/District	Candidate	Party
<b>Babylon</b>		
Council-At Large	DuWayne Gregory	D
<b>Brookhaven</b>		
Highway Superintendent	Dan Losquadro	R
Council District 1	Jonathan Kornreich	D
Council District 4	Michael Loguercio	R
Council District 6	Karen Dunne-Kesnig	R
<b>Glen Cove</b>		
Council-At Large	Marsha Silverman	D
Council-At Large	Joseph Manfredi	D
Council-At Large	Theresa Pergola	D
Council-At Large	Joanne Yee	D
Council-At Large	John Zozzaro	D
<b>Huntington</b>		
Council-At Large	Brooke Lupinacci	R
Council-At Large	Jen Hebert	D
<b>Hempstead</b>		
Supervisor	Don Clavin	R
<b>Islip</b>		
Supervisor	Ken Colon	D
Council-District 3	Christine Pellegrino	D
Council-District 4	Tom Murray	D

**Local 66  
General  
Building  
Laborers**

**Local 78  
Asbestos,  
Lead &  
Hazardous  
Waste  
Laborers**

**Local 79  
Construction &  
General Building  
Laborers**

**Local 108  
Recycling &  
General  
Industrial  
Laborers**

**Local 1261  
Lay Faculty  
Association**

**Mason Tenders  
District Council  
P.A.C.**

Dave Bolger  
Joel Burgos  
Steve Flanagan  
Pawel Gruchacz  
Mike Hellstrom  
John Norbury  
Mike Prohaska  
Chaz Rynkiewicz  
Frederick "Fritz" Schneider  
Barrie Smith

Mike McGuire  
Director

Kris Kohler  
Assistant Director

Josh Slaughter  
LI Field Representative

Ari Espinal  
NYC Field Representative

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7th Floor  
New York, NY 10018  
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212-452-9552**

# LIUNA ENDORSEMENTS 2023

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<b>Islip</b>		
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Council-District 4	Tom Murray	D

# LIUNA ENDORSEMENTS 2023

<i>Position/District</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Party</i>
<b>Nassau County Legislature</b>		
District 1	Scott Davis	D
District 3	Carrie Solages	D
District 4	Alexis Pace	D
District 5	Seth Koslow	D
District 6	Debra Mule	D
District 7	Howard Kopel	R
District 8	John Giuffre	R
District 10	Mazi Melesa-Pilip	R
District 12	Michael Giangregorio	R
District 13	Tom McKeivitt	R
District 14	William Gaylor	R
District 15	John Ferretti	R
District 16	Arnold Drucker	D
District 17	Rose Marie Walker	R
District 18	Josh Lafazan	D
<b>North Hempstead</b>		
Supervisor	Jon Kaiman	D
Council-District 2	Peter Zuckerman	D
Council-District 4	Christine Liu	D
Council-District 6	Mariann Dalimonte	D

**Experience matters.**

**On November 7th, I'm  
voting for Jon Kaiman**



**JON  
KAIMAN**

# LIUNA ENDORSEMENTS 2023

<i>Position/District</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Party</i>
<b>Oyster Bay</b>		
Supervisor	Joe Saladino	R
Council-At Large	Vicki Walsh	R
Council-At Large	Laura Maier	R
<b>Smithtown</b>		
Council-At Large	Tom Lohmann	R
<b>Suffolk County Executive &amp; Legislature</b>		
County Executive	Edward Romaine	R
District 1	Catherine Kent	D
District 2	Ann Welker	D
District 3	Jim Mazarella	R
District 4	Nick Caracappa	R
District 5	Steve Englebright	D
District 6	Chad Lennon	R
District 7	Ryan McGarry	D
District 9	Sam Gonzalez	D
District 10	Derek Stein	D
District 14	Kevin McCaffrey	R
District 15	Jason Richberg	D
District 16	Rebecca Sanin	D
District 17	Tom Donnelly	D
District 18	Eve Meltzer-Krief	D

# LIUNA ENDORSEMENTS 2023

## NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

### MANHATTAN

#### DISTRICT

- 1 Chris Marte (D)
- 2 Carlina Rivera (D)
- 3 Erik Bottcher (D)
- 4 Keith Powers (D)
- 5 Julie Menin (D)
- 6 Gale A. Brewer (D)
- 7 Sean Abreu (D)
- 8 Diana Ayala (D)
- 9 Yusef Salaam (D)
- 10 Carmen De La Rosa (D)

### THE BRONX

#### DISTRICT

- 11 Eric Dinowitz (D)
- 12 Kevin C. Riley (D)
- 13 Marjorie Velázquez (D)
- 14 Pierina Sanchez (D)
- 15 Oswald Feliz (D)
- 16 Althea Stevens (D)
- 17 Rafael Salamanca (D)

- 18 Amanda Farías (D)

### QUEENS

#### DISTRICT

- 19 Tony Avella (D)
- 20 Sandra Ung (D)
- 21 Francisco Moya (D)
- 22 Tiffany Cabán (D)
- 23 Linda Lee (D)
- 24 James F. Gennaro (D)
- 25 Shekar Krishnan (D)
- 26 Julie Won (D)
- 27 Nantasha Williams (D)
- 28 Adrienne E. Adams (D)
- 29 Lynn Schulman (D)
- 30 Bob Holden (D)
- 31 Selvena Brooks-Powers (D)
- 32 Joann Ariola (R)

### BROOKLYN

#### DISTRICT

- 33 Lincoln Restler (D)
- 34 Jennifer Gutierrez (D)

- 35 Crystal Hudson (D)
- 36 Chi Osse (D)
- 37 Sandy Nurse (D)
- 38 Alexa Avilés (D)
- 39 Shahana Hanif (D)
- 40 Rita Joseph (D)
- 41 Darlene Mealy (D)
- 42 Chris Banks (D)
- 43 Susan Zhuang
- 44 Kalman Yeger (D)
- 45 Farah N. Louis (D)
- 46 Mercedes Narcisse (D)
- 47 Justin Brannan (D)
- 48 Amber Adler (D)

### STATEN ISLAND

#### DISTRICT

- 49 Kamillah Hanks (D)
- 50 David Carr (R)
- 51 Joseph C. Borelli (R)

# NYC CANDIDATE SPOTLIGHT



## YUSEF SALAAM

**New York City Council  
District 9 (Central  
Harlem, Manhattanville  
& Sugar Hill)**

Yusef Salaam is well known in Harlem's 9th City Council District as one of a group that was once infamously known as "the Central Park Five" and are now known as the "Exonerated Five". These labels stem from the Central Park Jogger case in the late '80s. That crime, the rape and almost fatal beating of a young, white investment banker who was jogging in Central Park one night in April 1989, became a focal point of citizen concerns around crime and violence, as well as rampant inequity and racial strife.

Salaam and four acquaintances—the boys (Salaam was 15, as was another of the accused. The others were a 16-year-old and two 14-year-olds) weren't actually friends, but knew each other casually—were convicted due to coerced false confessions extracted by corrupt detectives. In Salaam's case, there wasn't even a recording of his supposed admission of guilt and there was no DNA evidence linking any of the accused assailants to the victim. Despite all this, at the time Donald Trump took out full-page ads in all of the New York daily newspapers calling for the death penalty for the wrongly accused teens, saying "Of course I hate these people, and let's all hate these people because maybe hate is what we need if we're gonna get something done."

The Central Park Five were exonerated some 13 years later in 2002 after the actual offender, an imprisoned serial rapist, came forward and provided forensic and DNA evidence that proved he, and he alone, committed the rape and almost deadly assault. Yusef Salaam and the other

children served 7 years for the crime they did not commit. The 16-year-old, Korey Wise, served 12 years. Shockingly, as late as 2016, Trump again said that the Central Park Five were guilty, even though every piece of accurate evidence said the exact opposite was true.

Upon his release, Salaam began working to reform New York State's criminal justice practices, advocating methods to prevent false confessions and eyewitness misidentifications, as well as becoming a board member of the Innocence Project. For this work, in 2016, he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from President Barack Obama. In 2017, Salaam supported two criminal-justice reform measures, one which would require police interrogations to be recorded from start to finish; the second that would provide training to police officers to protect against misidentification. Once Governor Cuomo signed the first bill, the video-recording requirement took effect April 1, 2018. This apparently whetted Salaam's taste for politics, as he ran for, and won, the Democratic primary in the 9th City Council District this year.

You will recall that the 9th District was the scene of a major fight for us last year. The 9th was the proposed home of the One45 project. It would have created hundreds of units of affordable housing, as well as hundreds of units of market-rate housing and a national Museum of Civil Rights. The Councilmember at the time, Kristin Richardson-Jordan, an avowed Socialist, had a different idea. She wanted the building to be 100% affordable units and the developer would receive zero public subsidies. Now, one might wonder, why would a developer build a project that will never be profitable? Well, he wouldn't. Instead, the neighborhood got a 24-hour a day, 7-day a week truck depot—as was allowed under the current zoning. And Richardson-Jordan took so much grief for killing this worthy project that she decided to not run for re-election, thus ending her political career at 16 months.

The MTDCPAC position was "anyone but Richardson-Jordan", so we sat this race out in the spring and waited to see what the voters in the district decided, and they decided they wanted

# LONG ISLAND CANDIDATE SPOTLIGHTS



## Nassau County

### JON KAIMAN

North Hempstead  
Town Supervisor

The laborers are proud to support and endorse Jon Kaiman's candidacy for North Hempstead Town Supervisor, a role he previously served in from 2003-2014. With over 20 years of public service experience, Jon has a strong record of creating good paying union jobs and supporting union workers.

When he previously served as Town Supervisor he ensured local union jobs on town funded projects, most notably when he entered into a project labor agreement with local union trades to construct the Town owned "Yes We Can Community Center" in Westbury.

Starting in 2013 he served as the Chairman of the Nassau Interim Finance Authority, which provides fiscal oversight and accountability for the County budget in Nassau County, and in the same year he was also appointed to manage the clean-up and recovery efforts in the wake of Super Storm Sandy, helping families and property owners to recover and rebuild from the devastation that occurred.

Since 2017, Jon has served as Deputy County Executive in Suffolk County where he oversaw efforts to design and build the National Offshore Wind Training Center in Brentwood, which will train future workers to manufacture and build upcoming wind energy projects on Long Island and place them into union apprenticeship programs. He was also the point person in Suffolk County in advancing the Midway Crossing project in Ronkonkoma, which will transform MacArthur Airport, connecting it to the nearby train station, as well as build a convention center and advanced

sciences buildings, all under a project labor agreement with local union construction trades.

Jon Kaiman is the clear choice to lead North Hempstead Town while supporting good union jobs on Long Island.



## Suffolk County

### RYAN MCGARRY

District 7

This year, Suffolk County's 7th Legislative District is the most competitive County race on Long Island, and your union is asking for your vote in support of union leader Ryan McGarry. Ryan is a first-time candidate with a long history as a union member and labor leader on Long Island.

Ryan has dedicated much of his professional life to representing working men and women and labor unions, having first worked for TWU Local 100, and now as Chief of Staff at the Suffolk Association of Municipal Employees, the largest public sector union in Suffolk County.

In addition to his union background, Ryan also has extensive experience working in Suffolk County government having formerly served under the current County Executive as a legislative liaison and policy expert.

Aside from his labor bona fides, Ryan is a proud volunteer firefighter in the Patchogue Fire Department, a member of the Greater Patchogue Chamber of Commerce's Civic Association, and currently serves on the Patchogue Village Zoning Board of Appeals after having served a term on the Village's Community Development Agency.

His well-rounded resume of community involvement, while working in government and for unions makes him the best choice to represent the interests of union workers as a legislator.

# Melinda Katz For Queens DA



The Mason Tenders PAC is thrilled to endorse Melinda Katz for re-election to the position of Queens County District Attorney in this November's general elections. This was an easy endorsement to make, as DA Katz has a long history of working well with the Laborers. Unfortunately, she's facing two opponents on November 7: one is a Republican (as one might expect) and the other is a Democrat that Katz beat in the June primary, who then petitioned onto the ballot as a "third party" candidate.

Our history with Melinda Katz goes back more than a quarter of a century, a connection that tracks along with her political career. When we first met Katz, she was a member of the New York State Assembly representing Forest Hills. As an Assemblymember, Melinda worked with us on several issues. In 1998, she ran for US House of Representatives with the Mason Tenders' District Council's endorsement. She ultimately lost that race by 285 votes out of 45,000 votes cast (a good example of how "every vote counts") to the now disgraced and infamous former Representative Anthony Weiner.

Her next foray into electoral politics was to run for New York City Council in 2001. She won and was appointed the Chair of the City Council's Land Use

Committee. This was when the relationship between our union and the future DA really solidified. As the Chair of Land Use, every project that needed to go through the city's Uniform Land Use Review Process (ULURP) and every rezoning had to pass through her hands. During that time, Katz oversaw the rezoning of 6,000 blocks of New York City.

**One of her first steps as DA was to create a labor advisory committee, which includes several leaders of Local 79 and the MTDC**

Our relationship with Katz allowed for an arrangement where her office would send us new land use applications as soon as they came in. This was perfectly legal, as it was all public information. The real advantage was that we would find out about proposed projects months before other interested parties became aware of them, allowing our organizers to get a jump on ensuring those projects would go union.

Melinda gave up her Council seat in 2009 to run for Comptroller of New York City, the second loss of her career, and went into private practice as an attorney for four years. In 2013 Katz jumped into the race for Queens Borough President, winning handily and getting re-elected in 2017. As Borough President, her expertise in land use issues and the relationships she built with the development community as Land Use chair once again benefited the Laborers as review and sign-off by



## Melinda Katz For Queens DA (Continued)

the Borough Presidents are part of the ULURP. Halfway through her second and last term as Borough President (due to term limits), Queens DA Dick Brown passed away mid-term, and Melinda jumped in and won the special election to replace him, winning a close race to fill out Brown's term. This year's race will be her first time running for a full four-year term.

As District Attorney, Katz has once again shown her respect for New York's unions. One of her first steps was to create a labor advisory committee, on which several leaders of Local 79 and the MTDC sit.

Then, in the wake of the Carlos' Law case and other construction fatalities, Melinda established

a policy of ensuring an Investigator or an Assistant District Attorney reported to every site that had a fatality to conduct a thorough investigation into potential criminal actions by the contractor. Katz was also helpful to the union by opening an investigation when we received reports that counterfeit Local 79 union books were being sold on the streets of Queens, ultimately resolving the matter.

The long-standing relationship with District Attorney Melinda Katz makes her the ideal candidate for our support. We urge all of our members who live in Queens to vote to re-elect Melinda Katz as Queens County District Attorney this November 7!

# Republicans Elect a New Speaker, Ending Weeks of Chaos

A little more than three weeks ago, the controlling party of the House of Representatives basically fired the Speaker of the House, Representative Kevin McCarthy of California. They very clearly had the power to do so, but they apparently forgot one of the basic tenets of politics: do not oust the boss until you have the new boss lined up. Forgetting this component of the process has resulted in the House becoming paralyzed. This week, they finally settled on their fourth Speaker candidate of this go around, selecting Republican Representative Mike Johnson of Louisiana to lead the House.

The way Congress is structured, nothing can be accomplished without a Speaker. The Speaker, who is traditionally elected only by the US Representatives from the majority party, controls the agenda; decides which legislation is allowed to advance; and determines who chairs committees. Without a Speaker in place, urgent matters cannot be addressed. And with the new war in Israel/Gaza; the ongoing war in Ukraine; and the looming government shutdown on November 17, this is a particularly bad time for government to be stopped in its tracks.

As a matter of fact, addressing the last potential government shutdown on October 1 was one of

the things that brought us to the brink. A small group of hardline Republicans were not happy that Representative McCarthy worked with President Biden to prevent the shutdown, which would have meant most government employees being told to stay home. The only ones that would continue working would be those deemed "essential" –think our soldiers, federal law enforcement, some medical personnel, air-traffic controllers, and the like—but they would not be paid until the shutdown ends. The last shutdown, fomented by President Trump, saw hundreds of thousands of federal employees sent home for five weeks during Christmas 2018 and into the new year of 2019. That one went on for five weeks.

The reason a small group of politicians, just 8 out of 435, could shutdown Congress, is because of the slim majority the Republicans hold in the House of just four seats. When these hardliners forced a vote on whether McCarthy should stay or go, they already knew the outcome. There are 221 Republicans and 212 Democrats (2 seats are vacant). The Democrats, in all of the eighteen Speaker votes that occurred in 2023, voted for Brooklyn's own—and friend of the MTDC—Representative Hakeem Jeffries.

## Republicans Elect a New Speaker, Ending Weeks of Chaos (Continued)

Meaning 217 Republicans would have to vote for the same candidate. With eight Republicans opposing McCarthy, his fate was sealed.

It should be noted that this type of power play is not unique to the Republicans. A decade ago, we dealt with the same situation in the New York State Senate. In 2009, the Democrats won control of the State Senate for the first time since 1964. The Senate was divided 32 Democrats vs 30 Republicans. With just a two-seat margin, a group of four Democrats (eventually growing to eight) threw the Senate into disarray by forming the Independent Democratic Conference (IDC) and creating a joint leadership by combining the IDC and the Republicans to lead the Senate. The IDC/Republican power play came to an end in 2018 when 6 of the 8 IDC members lost their primaries. The State Senate today stands at a margin of 43 Democrats and 20 Republicans—a Democratic “super majority”.

Speaker Johnson came about as something of a surprise. He’s little known outside his own party, having only been a member of Congress since 2017 and from the relatively small state of Louisiana (at 4.6 million, Louisiana’s population is about half that of New York City). His record on labor is almost non-existent, but his record on other issues makes it likely he’s no friend of unions. Politico, the well-regarded national website on politics, refers to Speaker Johnson as a “social conservative’s social conservative” and goes on to say he is the most “conservative lawmaker to ascend to the speakership in decades, if not longer.” History shows us that conservatives tend to be anti-worker’s rights and anti-union.

Johnson strongly opposes marriage equality, having argued against it before the US Supreme Court twice before becoming a representative. He posted on Twitter recently that any doctor who performs a legal abortion should be “...imprisoned at hard labor for 1-10 yrs & fined \$10K-\$100K”

Further, Speaker Johnson is an outspoken election denier, claiming that Donald Trump won the 2020 elections and that Joe Biden is not the duly elected President of the United States. He has stated that “36% of registered voters in America believe the election was stolen” and thus the election was illegitimate. What this statement ignores is the fact that it was Donald Trump himself—who is now either indicted or on trial for illegally trying to overturn the election in both Federal and State courts—who drove the unfounded allegations; further, if that 34% number is correct, literally two-thirds of Americans know and understand that President Biden truly is the duly elected and legitimate leader of the United States.

The election of Speaker Johnson should bring the current impasse to an end and allow Congress to actually do its job. However, with the same slim majority in the House and with the Speaker’s extremist views (85% of Americans support some form of legal abortion and 71% support marriage equality), only time will tell if mainstream Republicans will prevent Johnson from doing the job because of his radically conservative attitudes.

With any luck, the Democrats will win control of the House in next year’s elections, which will virtually guarantee the next Democratic Speaker of the House will be our friend and ally Hakeem Jeffries.

## Congress In A Nutshell

The United States is founded on three branches: Executive—presidential; Judicial—the courts; and Legislative—congress.

Congress itself is separated into two branches: the Senate and the US House of Representatives. This gets a little confusing because members of the House of Representatives are commonly referred to as “congresswoman” or “congressman”. Their actual title is United States Representative. The confusion comes because Senators are also technically congressmen or congresswomen.

There are 535 members of Congress. 100 Senators and 435 Representatives. This number was statutorily set in 1929. Prior to that, new House congressional districts were added as the population grew.

The census—conducted every ten years under the US Constitution—has always played a major role in Congress. While the Constitution sets the number of US Senators for each state at two, the House is proportional. In other words, it tracks with the population.

## Congress In A Nutshell (Continued)

Prior to 1929, the census would count the population and add new Representatives as necessary. After 1929, the process became: count the population and divide that number by 435. The resulting number tells us how many people must be in each congressional district. Currently, 761,179 people should be in each district. Each district must have as equal a population as is practicable.

New York's Senators are Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, both Democrats. The New York House of Representatives delegation consists of 26 members, comprised of 15 Democrats and 11 Republicans. The party breakdown is decided by

the voters, not the government.

The Senate is led by a person elected from within the body selected to be Majority Leader. The House is led by a person elected from within the body to be Speaker of the House. The current Majority Leader is Senator Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York. The Speaker—as of this week—is Representative Mike Johnson, Republican of Louisiana. While not written into the Constitution, both the Majority Leader and the Speaker votes almost always come down to parties...the Republicans vote for Republican leadership, the Democrats vote for Democratic leadership.

## A Glossary Of Construction Terms

It has come to our attention that at times we use terms and acronyms common in the development industry that some members are not familiar with. Here we define some of the more common phrases, terms and acronyms used in construction and development.

### **Alter Ego**

An employer who changes the name and outward appearance of a business but is in fact the same employer. An employer cannot rid himself of his obligation to recognize the union through an alter ego.

### **B.A. Business Agent**

A full-time representative of a local union whose job is to represent members in the field.

**BLS** The federal *Bureau of Labor Statistics*.

### **C of O Certificate of Occupancy.**

This is a document issued by a local authority that certifies a building is compliant with applicable building codes and suitable for occupancy.

### **CBA Collective Bargaining Agreement**

(also known as "the Contract").

A formal written agreement over conditions of employment entered into by an employer and the union representing employees in the bargaining unit.

### **CM Construction Manager.**

This refers to a firm overseeing a construction project's progress and performance.

### **Design-Build**

This is a project delivery method where the contractor is responsible for developing the final design based on the owner's concept. The contractor usually hires an architectural or engineering firm to create the design.

**DOL** *Department of Labor.*

### **Double-Breasted**

A situation where an employer operates two closely related companies—one with a union contract and one without. Under such operation, the employer will normally assign most of the work to the non-union segment of his two companies.

### **ERISA Employee Retirement Income Security Act.**

This law regulates the people and organizations that engage in the administration and management of private pension funds, such as the Mason Tenders' Trust Funds. The law also set up an insurance program under the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation (PBGC) which guarantees some pension benefits even if a plan becomes bankrupt.

## **A Glossary Of Construction Terms (Continued)**

**HVAC** *Heating, ventilating and air conditioning.*

### **Informational Picketing**

Picketing done with the express intent not to cause a work stoppage, but to publicize either the existence of a labor dispute or information concerning the dispute.

**LEED** *Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.*

This is a certification program for green building. It was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council and includes rating systems for the design, construction, operations, and maintenance of green buildings.

### **Lockout**

A suspension of work initiated by the employer as the result of a labor dispute. A lockout is essentially a management strike against the workers. Often used primarily to pressure employees to accept the employer's terms in a new contract.

**MOU** *Memorandum of Understanding.*

**NLRB** *National Labor Relations Board.*

The NLRB was created by the National Labor Relations Act in 1935. Its functions are to define the appropriate bargaining units, to hold elections, to determine whether a majority of workers want to be represented by a specific union or no union, to certify unions to represent employees, to interpret and apply the Act's provisions prohibiting certain employer and union unfair practices, and otherwise to administer the provisions of the Act.

**OSHA** *Occupational Safety and Health Administration.*

A federal agency responsible for establishing and enforcing safety standards in the workplace.

**PBGC** *Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.*

A federal corporation which guarantees that vested participants in private pension plans will receive some pension benefits even if a pension plan becomes bankrupt.

### **PLAs**

Pre-hire collective bargaining agreements negotiated between construction unions and construction contractors that establish the terms and conditions of employment for construction projects.

**PPE** *Personal Protective Equipment.*

Equipment worn to minimize exposure to a variety of hazards.

### **Prevailing Wage**

The wage prevailing in a locality for a certain type of work. It is a wage determinant for many federal, state and local public works construction projects.

### **Rank & File**

The members of a union. This term specifically does not apply to the leadership of a union

**RFP** *Request for Proposal.*

This is a formal request by an owner or owner's representative for a contractor to present a bid for project work. In procurement, an RFP also refers to a solicitation issued by a client for professional services such as architecture, engineering, and construction management, among others.

**RTW** *Right-to-Work states/laws.*

States which have passed laws prohibiting unions from negotiating union shop clauses in their contracts with employers covered by the NLRA. Unions often refer to these as "right to work for less".

**Sub Subcontractor.**

A company that performs work for a contractor on a project.

**UI** *Unemployment Insurance.*

**ULP** *Unfair Labor Practices.*

Those employer or union activities classified as "unfair" by federal or state labor relations acts. Under the NLRA, employer unfair labor practices include employer threats against protected collective activity, employer domination of unions, discrimination against employees for collective activity, and employer failure to bargain in good faith with the union.

**Union Bug**

A stamp or tag on a product or printed materials that shows that the work is done by union labor. The "stamp" is most often used on hard goods, while a "bug" is generally a printer's symbol.

**Vesting** The amount of time that an employee must work to guarantee his or her accrued pension benefits.

## NYC Candidate Spotlight (Continued)

The MTDCPAC position was “anyone but Richardson-Jordan”, so we sat this race out in the spring and waited to see what the voters in the district decided, and they decided they wanted Yusef Salaam, who won the 4-way primary with more than 50% of the vote, thus eliminating even the need to do a ranked-choice voting tabulation.

“I’m glad to see Yusef won this race. When he first jumped into the race, I thought he was something of a stunt candidate, a semi-celebrity that would draw votes because of his notoriety,” said PAC

Treasurer Mike Prohaska. “But once I saw him interviewed and learned about his recent history, I knew he was the real deal. Smart, dedicated, and most certainly world-wise, with what he’s been through in his life. And as a bonus, when he first got released, he worked in construction, like so many of our formerly justice-effected members, so he understands our work.”

The Mason Tenders District Council PAC is pleased to endorse Yusef Salaam for the 9th City Council District in Harlem this November.

# Suffolk County Legislators Flush \$4B in Construction Spending

On Tuesday, November 7, 2023 Long Island voters will go to the polls to elect candidates to represent them at the town and county levels of local government. These local positions are vital to union workers since these are the municipalities that decide what gets built and what does not. If current Suffolk County elected officials had done the right thing, there would have also been an important referendum on the ballot for voters to approve a new funding source for the construction of sewer districts and the expansion and/or repair of existing sewer infrastructure. Unfortunately, legislators in the majority of the Suffolk County Legislature blocked this referendum from even coming before voters to be approved. This lack of leadership on behalf of the legislature’s Republican majority in Suffolk County has jeopardized \$4 billion in new funding for local sewer infrastructure, half of which would have been direct spending to create good union jobs.

Organized labor, environmentalists and business leaders all joined together in advocating for the Suffolk County Water Quality Restoration Act, which proposes a modest increase of the County sales tax by 1/8 of a penny, which would create a dedicated funding source through the year 2050 to pay for this critical construction work. Not only would these improvements improve water quality in our bays and rivers, enhancing our Long Island way of life, but it would directly create thousands of union construction jobs over the next several



decades. It would also be funded in large part by visitors to Suffolk County who come for tourism purposes, rather than through property taxes on local residents. The funds raised would equate to almost \$4 billion from County Government, but would actually finance many billions more as these local funds would simply be matching funds for State and Federal monies that have already been approved through New York State’s Environmental Bond Act (approved by voters in 2022) and the Federal Bi-Partisan Infrastructure Plan (approved by President Biden and Congress in 2022).

By blocking the referendum, Republican Suffolk County legislators deprived voters of the chance to decide whether this funding should be raised, and they have likely jeopardized billions more in State

## Suffolk County Legislators Flush \$4B in Construction Spending (Continued)

and Federal dollars. This will prevent progress on improving our water quality, on protecting our drinking water and potentially halt further construction on sewer districts in Suffolk County. Adding insult to injury, many of these Republican legislators had previously committed to union leaders that they would vote to approve the referendum and support union jobs. It was only in the 11th hour, for political reasons, that they changed their votes and went back on their commitment. As a result, the laborers have

endorsed several strong challengers, who are committed to advancing the Suffolk County Water Quality Restoration Act when elected in 2023 by putting this referendum on the ballot for voters to decide.

Your union strongly urges you to support the union's endorsed candidates, so that we can create good union jobs while sending a strong message that turning your back on union workers has consequences.

## Your PAC Working For You

# The Masonry Panels Campaign: NYS School Construction Authority Plots Out a Race to the Bottom!

Many times, in discussions with members, we get asked a pretty basic question: "I know what the PAC does at election time, but what do you do during the rest of the year?" First, just in case you aren't aware of what we do regarding elections, please take a look at an article in this newsletter: [Our Vetting Process—How We Pick Our Candidates](#). Most of the members only see that process in the six weeks or so before Primary and Election Days, but in actuality, your PAC works on election issues about 9 months out of the year. Simultaneously, we do a fair amount of issue-oriented work. The current Masonry Panels campaign is a good example of that process.

The Masonry Panels campaign showed up on our plate last year. What prompted it was that the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) and the NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC) have unilaterally decided to use precast masonry panels in place of traditionally handset brick and block on about 90% of the school buildings and community centers they construct.

These panels, which can be as large as 20' X 40', are fabricated in factories in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Canada. They are preconstructed wall systems...a masonry veneer on the outside, then studs and insulation, and a finished wall surface on the inside. Electrical conduits and boxes, plumbing and heating pipes, duct work and windows are all pre-installed in these panels at the factory. They are then driven hundreds of miles to be swung in

by crane and bolted together at the jobsite. This process takes four ironworkers and one or two operating engineers.

This is an issue on many points. First off, these panels are extremely environmentally problematic. Second, and more important to us, is the fact that every school job that uses the panels eliminates about 20 mason tending jobs—along with several dozen brickies, and a dozen or so plumbers, electricians, carpenters and tin-knockers. Finally, and incredibly, using the panels actually costs 1% to 3% more than traditional methods. It costs more, swaps out as many as 65 to 70 trades jobs for 6 trades jobs and a truck driver, and instead of using traditional methods that would employ five or six dozen tradesmen and women whose wages will be spent locally here in the tri-state area, that New York taxpayer money is being given to factory owners in other states or countries.

In 2022 we began the campaign. First step, form a coalition, which we did with the Bricklayers & Allied Trades Local 1, and Glenwood Masonry, the last concrete-block manufacturer left in New York City. Then comes the research: aside from the loss of jobs, why else is the use of precast panels problematic? What are the advantages and disadvantages of these products? How much does it cost? Who makes the decision to use the panels? Who put that decision-making person in charge? Does this have to be a policy change or will it require legislation?

## Your PAC Working For You (Continued)

Once those factors have been ascertained, we jump into action! At the first coalition meeting, we needed to determine just why SCA has decided to go down this path. The first assumption was that it saved the city money. That turned out to be incorrect:

**Greater New York LECET funded a study by an independent economist that showed that while close in costs, the panels are generally 1% to 3% more expensive to use.**

Not a huge difference, but that study proved this issue is not about money. With that study in hand, we called for a meeting with Mayor Adams' office (the Mayor appoints all member of the Board of Directors of the SCA). We met with the heads of the SCA and DDC in a meeting moderated by then Chief of Staff of the Deputy Mayor (and now Buildings Department Commissioner) Jimmy Oddo, the former Staten Island Borough President and a longtime ally of the Laborers.

The agencies insisted that the use of panels wasn't part of any program or policy, rather it was decided upon by the designers and engineers on a building-by-building basis. We believe this to be untrue, because, as already stated, they are using the panels on nine out of every ten jobs. They cost more. They are untested. They are problematic for installation. And they are an environmental nightmare. Yet the so-called experts believe they are the best choice for 90% of new buildings?

As the SCA and DDC were reluctant to discuss the matter further, we decided that introducing a piece of legislation may force them to do the right thing. We can't just write a law that says "You have to use traditional methods," as this would conflict with various state and local rules and regulations, as well as federal restraint of trade laws. So we decided to frame the bill as a prevailing wage issue.

The strategy there was to make the argument that fabricating completed building segments in a factory is not manufacturing, but actually construction, and thus, prevailing wages should apply. Then the next argument was that since these panels are being used on New York State

public works projects, the NYS prevailing wage should apply, not the Ohio or Pennsylvania rates. We couldn't determine the wages being paid to the factory workers, but the Ohio Department of Labor says the average manufacturing salary there is \$21.85 per hour. Further, the average Ohio prevailing wage and benefit rate for mason tenders is \$45.66 per hour. For comparison, our New York City rate for mason tenders is \$73.19.

We've had the bill introduced in Albany and are meeting with various elected officials for support and Assembly and Senate members to sponsor the bill. This process is long and painstaking. There are 213 members of the state legislature to meet with over this issue. There are meetings with the Governor, as when this bill passes, she needs to be comfortable signing it into law. There are meetings with the State Comptroller, to determine what, if any, financial impact our law would have on the state budget.

There are also meetings with officials who have no standing on the bill, but could be influential in its passage. Primarily, those are New York City elected officials. This is where the complicated nature of this legislation comes into play.

The School Construction Authority is a New York State agency, thus the SCA is under the control of Governor Hochul. However, the SCA builds New York City's schools, so the board of the SCA is under the control of Mayor Adams. And for the final twist, some schools are partially constructed using federal education funding. Thus, one school construction project may experience various issues with the federal government; the New York State government; and the New York City government. Discussions and/or negotiations must be undertaken with all three governments to ensure that there are no conflicts between existing federal law and existing New York City law, and the new language that will become a New York State law should this bill pass.

Even though they have no standing on the bill, New York City elected officials come into play in several ways. First, is lobbying the Mayor and the various city agencies in an attempt to get them to support our concept. Next is to introduce a resolution in the City Council. The vast majority of what the City Council votes on falls into two categories: Introductions and Resolutions. Introductions (or "Intros" as they are commonly called) are proposed laws for the City of New York. Resolutions, or "Resos", are a vote of the City

## Your PAC Working For You (Continued)

Council showing support or opposition to a state or federal bill. Having overwhelming support for a reso helps move the bill through the other bodies. Of course, this means writing the reso, finding a City Council sponsor, getting the Speaker to introduce the resolution, then lobbying the 51 members of the City Council, the Public Advocate and the Mayor to support our position. (FYI: all four of you PAC's staff are registered lobbyists with NYC and NYS).

This issue is moving forward—slowly, due to its complicated nature—and we will post updates as

things change, but we wanted to give you a little insight into what your PAC does for you on a daily basis. It may seem like a lot of tedious and tiresome work (and it is!), but if we're successful, this campaign will result in hundreds of thousands of hours for the members of the Laborers. Your PAC working for you!

For that reason, fewer Republicans were endorsed this year than in years past. The full list of endorsed candidates in Nassau, Suffolk and New York City will appear in the next installment of this newsletter.

## UPDATE : George Santos

On Tuesday, October 10, Congressman George Santos was hit with additional charges alleging conspiracy, wire fraud, false statements, falsification of records, aggravated identity theft, and credit card fraud by the US Attorney's Office. These charges are in addition to the litany of charges already laid out in this newsletter. George Santos is the Congressman from the 3rd NY Congressional District representing parts of Queens, Nassau and Suffolk. It appears that he has been a professional con man for his entire life, and little, if anything, he says is true.

If you read the previous article, you'll know that one of the big questions revolved around \$700,000 that Santos claimed to have loaned to his own campaign. He revealed on his 2020 Congressional candidate forms that his salary was \$55,000. Two years later, when he filled out the same paperwork for his 2022 run, he claimed his salary was as high as \$11.5 million. Interestingly, the following year, in 2023, after he was elected to Congress, Santos and his sister were evicted from their apartment in Elmhurst, Queens for nonpayment of \$40,000 in back rent.

The answer to this mystery was apparently revealed in last week's 23-count superseding indictment. Simply put, it seems it never happened, and there was no \$700,000. Confusing? Absolutely! Here's what that scam was about: the National Republican Campaign Committee (NRCC) vets which candidates to support based on multiple criteria. One of them is proving you're a viable candidate by showing an ability to raise money to fund your own campaign. The benchmark they set

is you must raise at least \$500,000 on your own to then receive additional funds for the campaign from the national Republican Party.

When Santos filled out his forms for the Federal Elections Commission, he reported that he loaned his own campaign \$700,000 of his own money. This triggered a large contribution from the NRCC to Santos' campaign. Except the \$700,000 never existed. He made it up and put it on the forms just to trigger the contribution from the NRCC. And once the investigation began, it was revealed that he only had \$8,000 in the bank when he made the \$700,000 "loan".

The new indictments also reveal that Santos used the credit card of a donor repeatedly, without the person's awareness or approval, charging \$15,800 to his campaign and associated committees; in the following months Santos charged that same donor an additional \$44,800, some of which was routed through a Florida company associated with the Devolder Organization, Santos' company that was supposedly paying him millions of dollars per year. At least \$11,000 of that donor's money was transferred directly into Santos's personal bank account, prosecutors said in the indictment.

What's next in this saga is unknown. As of today, there is no Speaker of the House—Kevin McCarthy was ousted by hardline Republicans last week, but they kicked him out before deciding who should be the next Speaker, No work can be done in Congress until that's settled, and Republican infighting seems to indicate it could be weeks or even months before the Republicans settle their internal conflicts. The bad news for Santos is McCarthy needed him to maintain his leadership. Now that McCarthy has been knocked out, Santos no longer has a protector. Undoubtedly more to come...



# LABORERS' LOCAL 79 APPRENTICESHIP APPLICATIONS OPEN NOVEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup>

Our apprentices are put on a solid career path that transforms their lives. Come join us and achieve real economic security as a skilled laborer and union member.

**Friday, November 3, 2023**  
**9:00AM**  
**[www.MTTF.org](http://www.MTTF.org)**

## REQUIREMENTS:

- ✓ 18 years or older at start of program
- ✓ High School diploma / GED OR TASC
- ✓ Physically able to perform the work of a skilled construction laborer.

## OUR DUTIES INCLUDE:

- Mason Tending
- Interior & Total Demolition
- Scaffold Erection
- Mortar Mixing
- Temporary Heat
- Fire Proof Mixing
- Restoration Work
- General Clean-Up

## APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES OPEN TO ALL NEW YORKERS:

- 74% of graduates are Black or Latino
- 12% of graduates are women
- 80% of graduates live in the five boroughs



**For more information, visit [www.mttf.org](http://www.mttf.org)**



**New Mason Tenders' District Council** Business Manager, and new PAC Board member Dave Bolger, seen recently with MTDCPAC Assistant Director Kris Kohler, NYS Governor Kathy Hochul, and Local 79 Business Agent and Board Member Barrie Smith.

# General Elections Coming Up On November 7

## More action on Long Island than NYC

Tuesday, November 7, is Election Day in New York State. There are a number of races that we are involved with, but as is almost always the case, the lion's share of work for the General election will be done on Long Island. This is not at all unusual for a simple reason: the overwhelming number of Democrats that reside in New York City. Sixty-eight percent of registered voters in the City are Democrats. This means that the Democratic Primary held in June almost always settles the question of who will win in the General Election held in November. A Primary Election is an intraparty contest to decide who should represent a particular political party in the November elections. The November elections thus include candidates that are from any political party that legitimately qualifies for the election. Simply put, if you win the Democratic Primary in June, you go against Republicans or Conservatives in November. Since seven out of every ten voters in New York City are Democrats, it is virtually impossible for a Republican to defeat a Democrat in the General—except for a few notable areas, such as the mid-Island and south shore of Staten Island; the Russian-dominated neighborhoods of south Brooklyn; and, at times, far northeast Queens (where con artist George Santos was elected as a Republican to the House of Representatives last year).

Conversely, on the local level on Long Island, the Republican Party is slightly more popular. This

sets up Nassau and Suffolk Counties for competitive General elections.

**Thus, New York City elections are usually decided upon in the June Primary and Long Island races are decided in the November Generals.**

This is not to say that the New York City Democrats endorsed here don't need our help. As we all know, anything can happen in an election, and one never knows what issue might crop up on short notice that might disadvantage our candidate. On another point, what many people don't realize is, the bigger your margin of victory, the greater power and influence you informally have in the City Council. So, it's extremely important to come out and vote for the union-endorsed candidates even if we know they're going to win. After all, when we endorse someone because they support our members and our union, it clearly behooves us to ensure that our candidates win by the largest margin possible and are as strong as possible in support of the Laborers.

On Long Island, we have endorsed a mixed bag of Republicans and Democrats, with about 30% of the endorsements going to members of the GOP.

## General Elections Coming Up On November 7

the ratio might have been somewhat higher. However, Republican leadership killed the \$3.1 billion Suffolk County Water Quality Restoration Act which would allow voters to decide if the county should create thousands of construction jobs that would restore clean water by connecting homes and businesses to sewers, and finance clean water septic system replacements. The funding for the bill would have increased county sales tax by only 1/8th of one penny. At the July 25th public hearing, which lasted more than 4 hours, more than 40 people testified, with only two voicing opposition to the measure. Yet the Republican leadership of Suffolk County killed it—along with thousands of unionized construction jobs. And if you ask “Why?” the answer is simple: politics.

Keep in mind that this wasn't even a vote on whether to move forward with the plan. It was a vote on whether the citizens of Suffolk County would be allowed to even express an opinion on this very important matter. On a party-line vote,

the 10 Republican legislators unilaterally decided that the 1.5 million residents of Suffolk should have absolutely no say in whether or not their children and spouses should have clean drinking water. Voting against this measure was a pure, self-survival political play that blocked the environmental question from appearing on the ballot. Why? Because the Republicans believe having an environmental referendum on the ballot would increase Democratic turnout, thus endangering the Republican majority in the County Legislature. To them, holding onto power is more important than the will of one and a half million people, clean drinking water for our families, hundreds of jobs for Laborers, and thousands of jobs for the other building trades. What's the point of holding onto power if you're not going to use it to make the lives of the people you represent better?

For that reason, fewer Republicans were endorsed this year than in years past. The full list of endorsed candidates in Nassau, Suffolk and New York City will appear in the next installment of this newsletter.

## Our Vetting Process - How We Pick Our Candidates

**While we certainly want the candidates we endorse to win, “winability” is not the only criteria we use when determining who to endorse. Factors for endorsement include:**

### ***Relationships***

A strong relationship with a member or members of union leadership is an important factor in determining suitability for support. The reasoning behind this is simple: we need elected officials to be as responsive as possible to the needs of our members. Sometimes a crisis crops up at an inopportune time, and we need to know when we call Chuck Schumer or Tish James or Hakeem Jeffries late at night or on a Sunday morning, they will pick up the phone.

### ***Voting Record***

Of course, this one is as simple as can be: if you support our pro-union legislation, we will support you—unless you give us a strong reason not to!

### ***Union Participation.***

This means participation with the union. If we have a picket line or a rally and invite elected officials to participate, their willingness to stand with our members on the front lines goes a long way to earning our support.

### ***Winability***

We won't endorse someone just because we believe they are going to win, they have to score points in the other criteria listed here as well. While we always want our candidates to win, we're not going to put someone in office simply because they're going to win. They must bring some other assets to the table to earn the union's support as well. Once that happens, then

we will do whatever we can to get that candidate elected.

### **Interview**

The MTDCPAC, working alongside the NYS Laborers' PAC under the banner of LIUNA-NY, conducts extensive endorsement interviews. While this is a long, slow, painstaking process, it is probably the most important tool we have in the endorsement gang box. In 2024 we have elections for US House of Representatives, New York State Senate and State Assembly. Those three bodies are comprised of 26 members of the US House, 63 members of the Senate and 150 members of the Assembly, for a total of 239 offices in New York up for grabs next year. And that's just the offices. In some cases, we may have 2 or 3 candidates running for the same seat, making the field much more crowded. A great example of this was the 2021 City Council elections. There are 51 Councilmembers. By the time the elections actually rolled around, 330 candidates had registered to run with the Campaign Finance

Board, an average of more than 6 candidates per seat. This is an extreme, and we do not expect the 2024 field to be as crowded, but the interview process will still begin in December and continue through April, with your PAC ultimately conducting hundreds of 30-to-60 minute interviews.

### **Questionnaire**

And finally, the LIUNA-NY questionnaire. This document doesn't just collect information about the race (campaign committee name and address, candidate's contact information, campaign manager, etc), but also includes questions regarding issues important to our locals. This way, we have a written record of where a candidate stands on our issues, as well as a document we can pull out and use to go after any candidate who switches position and doesn't support our members after pledging to do so. One hard and fast rule we have is, no one gets an endorsement without submitting a completed questionnaire.

## **Laborers Do Well In Primary Races**

In June's Democratic and Republican primary elections—we made endorsements in both—the MTDCPAC picked the winner in 96% of the races, or 44 winners for 46 endorsements. The two losing contests were right next door to each other in Brooklyn: the 41st and 42nd City Council districts. In the 42nd, covering East New York and parts of the surrounding neighborhoods, we endorsed Charles Barron, a City Councilman who became an Assemblyman who became a City Councilman again in 2021, a longtime ally of the Laborers. We have since endorsed the winner of the primary, Chris Banks (watch for a profile of Banks in the upcoming weeks leading into Election Day).

During the Primary, we also did not make endorsements in five of the seats. It's rare when we don't endorse, but it happens from time to time for various reasons. Sometimes there are multiple candidates of equal value to the union. Other times, none of the candidates is of value to the union. In either of these cases, we would let the Primary voters decide, then make a decision as to who, if anyone, we'd endorse in November.

The most contentious race we stayed out of was the 9th City Council District in Harlem. We proactively stayed out of that race because the candidate with whom we have a history and would be our preferred choice really had no path to victory, and the front-runner, who was ahead in all the polling, had the worst record of dealing with our union.

The reason this was such a heated contest was this is the district in which the current City Councilwoman, Kristin Richardson-Jordan, unreasonably killed the One45 project, which, among other things, would have created hundreds of units of affordable housing as well as a national Museum of Civil Rights. Richardson-Jordan took so much criticism for this bad decision that she abruptly decided to not stand for re-election a little more than a month before Primary Day (for more information on the One45 situation, please refer to the Primary newsletters).

At the end of the day, the winner of that Primary election, whom we have now endorsed, was

## Laborers Do Well In Primary Races

Yusef Salaam, one of the Exonerated Five. Formerly known as the “Central Park Five”, Salaam was one of five teenagers who were railroaded and wrongfully convicted of a “wilding” attack in which an investment banker was raped and beaten unconscious in Central Park in 1989. All five were convicted of the charged offenses and served sentences ranging from seven to thirteen years. More than a decade after the attack, while incarcerated for attacking five other women in 1989, a serial rapist named Matias Reyes confessed to the assault and admitted he was the only actor; DNA evidence then confirmed he was the perpetrator.

Ultimately, all five were exonerated. After the exonerations, the case became a prominent example of racial profiling, discrimination, and inequality in the legal system and the media. All five defendants sued the City of New York for malicious prosecution, racial discrimination, and emotional distress; the city settled the suit in 2014 for \$41 million.

There will be profiles of all the newly endorsed candidates in future issues of this newsletter, so stay tuned...and remember: when Laborers vote, Laborers win!

# FEEL THE POWER!



LIUNAVOTES

FEEL THE POWER.  
USE THE POWER.  
BE THE POWER.

# VOTE!

## WHEN TO VOTE

Election Day is Tuesday, November 7th

Early Voting Begins Saturday, October 28th

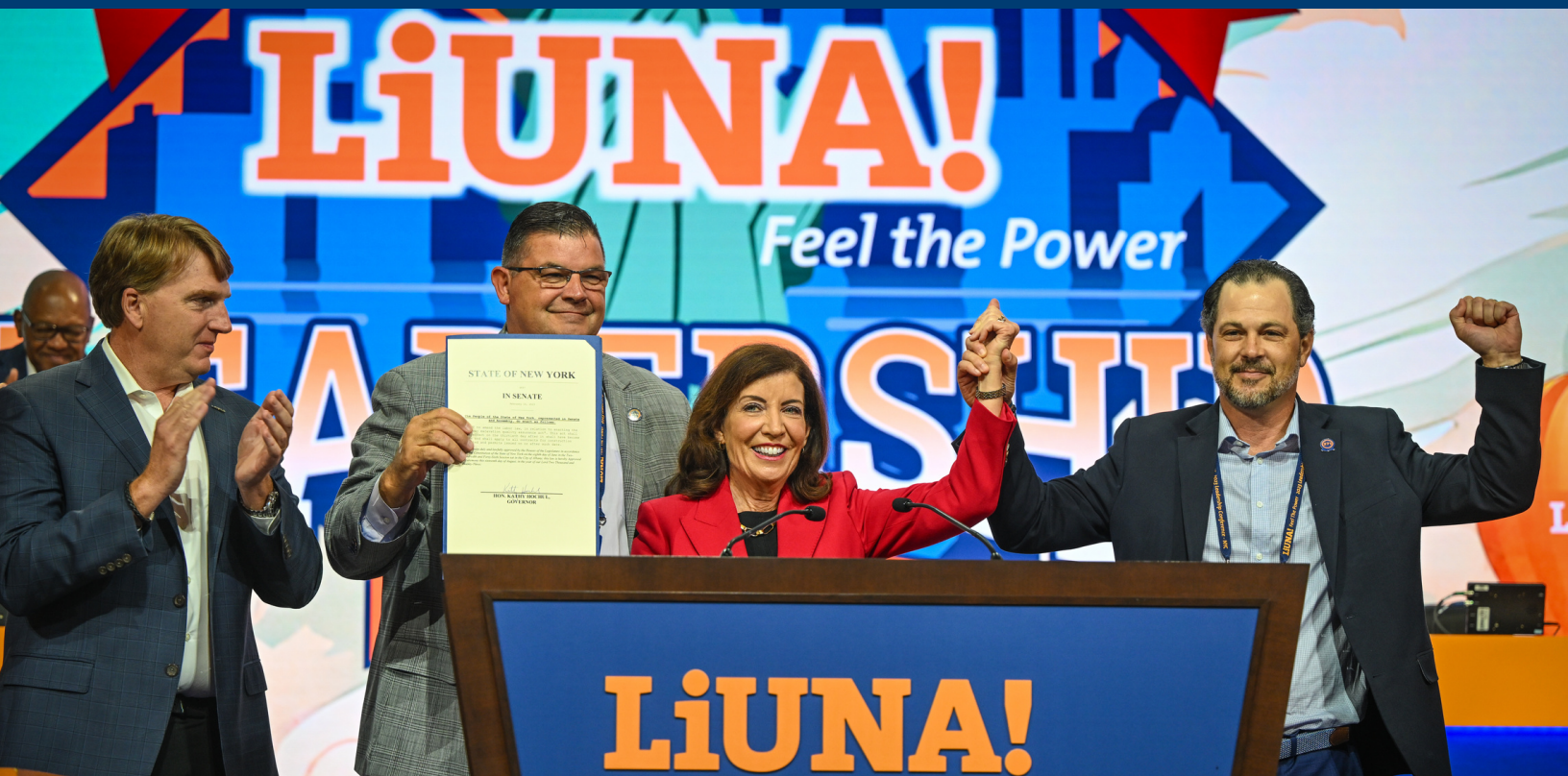
[EARLY VOTING SCHEDULE: nycvotes.org/how-to-vote/early-voting/](https://www.nycvotes.org/how-to-vote/early-voting/)

## Know before you go.

Find your poll site, check your voter registration, see who's running in your district, and learn about your Absentee Ballot information all in one place!



<https://voterlookup.elections.ny.gov/>



LIUNA General President Brent Booker, Eastern Regional Manager and VP Mike Hellstrom (holding the Roadway Excavation Quality Assurance Act just signed into law by Governor Kathy Hochul), the Governor and New England Regional Manager and VP Dan Bianco.

## POLITICAL NEWS

# Street Cutting

This year's annual LIUNA Leadership Conference was held August 13–16 at the Hilton in New York City. Many of the most powerful allies of the Mason Tenders District Council came to speak to the more than 1,000 Laborers' delegates from around the country. Mayor Eric Adams and US Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer spoke strongly about the work of the Laborers and of Local 79 in particular, with Schumer fondly recalling his brother-in-law Abie Weinsahl, a long-time Local 79 member, while also kidding Local 79 Business Manager Mike Prohaska from the podium about his roots in City Island. The conference was also attended by Congressman Hakeem Jeffries—widely expected to be the next Democratic Speaker of the House of Representatives—and Governor Kathy Hochul, who signed a priority piece of legislation that the Laborers have been trying to advance for more than a decade.

The Roadway Excavation Quality Assurance Act guarantees that whenever a street or sidewalk needs to be opened, prevailing wages and benefits will apply statewide. A priority for the New England region of the Laborers (we already have prevailing

wage on this work within the confines of New York City), this bill had literally been introduced in Albany every two years since 2007. While this length of time is unusual, it is not out of the ordinary for legislative proposals to take years to grind through the machine that is the New York State legislature. For instance, Carlos' Law, a bill written by the MTDCPAC that increases the penalties for injuring or killing a construction worker, passed and was signed into law last year. Carlos' Law was originally introduced in 2015.

Newly minted Eastern Regional Manager and Vice President and MTDCPAC Chair Mike Hellstrom assigned the MTDCPAC and GNYLECET to assist the New England Region in finally getting this important law passed. So, the Eastern Region and the New England region, working closely together under the banner of LIUNA-NY, rolled up our sleeves and got the bill to the Governor's desk by the end of the 2023 legislative session. Upon signing the legislation into law, Governor Hochul said, "Our construction workers keep New Yorkers moving, but are often underpaid for their hard and impactful work. I am proud to sign this legislation that will provide construction workers with fair wages and allow them to support themselves, their families, and our local economy."

# George Santos

**One of the most interesting and intriguing political stories of the last year has to be the election of George Santos (R-part Queens, part Nassau, part Suffolk) to the 3rd New York Congressional District. In case you somehow missed it, Mr. Santos apparently lied about every facet of his life during the campaign, from his education, to his personal life, to his employment record, yet he was still elected.**



Virtually every part of it was either completely or partially fabricated. Among some of the more outrageous lies he told were:

- **When allegations that he had been a drag queen back in Brazil, Santos vehemently denied them. Then multiple photographs surfaced that proved he was lying.**
- **He claimed that he was the producer of the Broadway show *Spiderman: Turn Off the Dark*. Oddly, that show is known to be one of the biggest flops in Broadway history. Why one would lie about being the producer of one of the biggest theatrical failures in history, no one knows, but Santos did.**
- **Santos has described himself as both a Jew and also a devout Catholic.**
- **He claimed to have been a member of the champion volleyball team at Baruch College. Except the Baruch volleyball team never won the championship. And Santos wasn't on the team. As a matter of fact, Santos never even attended Baruch.**
- **Claimed to be a struggling landlord during COVID, saying that he was not accepting rent during the crisis on any of the 13 apartments he and his family own. Except it turns out that Santos owns no property whatsoever.**
- **On his education, Santos claimed to have attended the prestigious Horace Mann Prep School in Riverdale, attained a Bachelor's Degree from Baruch and a Masters from NYU. Santos, in fact, never attended any of those schools.**
- **On employment, Santos stated that he was a "seasoned Wall Street financier and investor," who worked for both Citigroup and Goldman Sachs. Neither one of those corporations ever heard of him.**
- **Claimed that his family were victims of the Nazis during WWII, saying that his grandparents fled Europe in the face of religious persecution. Except his grandparents were born in Brazil and there's no evidence that they ever even set foot in Europe.**
- **Santos claimed that four of his employees were among the victims of the 2016 Pulse Nightclub mass shooting in Florida where 49 people were murdered. Not one of the victims was connected to Santos in any way whatsoever.**
- **He claimed his mother died in the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center. Records show she wasn't even in the United States in 2001, and she didn't actually die until 15 years after the attacks, in 2016.**

# And now for George Santos' potentially criminal acts...

## **The Green Card Scam**

Although Santos is openly gay and has been out for more than a decade, he was married to a woman from 2012 thru 2019. During that period, in 2014, Santos threw an engagement party for himself and the man he was going to marry—while still married to his wife. Prosecutors believe Santos was paid to marry the woman so she could get a green card.

## **The Fraudulent Checks Scam**

Santos was charged with writing fraudulent checks in his native country of Brazil. When this was revealed in the media, Santos strongly denied that it ever happened. Brazil had let the case go dormant after Santos left the country, but once he started denying it ever happened during the campaign, the government of Brazil reinstated the charges.

## **And the big one...**

## **The Fake Donors/Election Fraud Scam**

This is the big one. The one that earned Santos a 13-count federal indictment handed down this past May. Santos' finances are so corrupt and convoluted that the authorities are still trying to unravel all of the potentially criminal activity. This is the one scam he perpetrated that may take him out of Congress and put him in a federal prison.

## **The Fake Donors**

Santos reported more than \$30,000 in political donations from individuals, most of whom do not seem to exist; or, if they actually *are* real people, when contacted by the media said they didn't make the donations and had never heard of George Santos. One of the names used was that of a prolific Democratic donor. Another was that of a prominent Brazilian soccer star (even if that one was real, it would have been illegal in-and-of itself, as it is against the law for foreign nationals to contribute directly to federal campaigns).

## **The GoFundMe Scam**

Santos set up a GoFundMe to pay for surgery for a disabled Navy veteran's service dog, then promptly stole the \$3,000 donated, with not one penny going to the vet or the dog.

## **The Puppies Scam**

Santos was charged with theft by deception in Pennsylvania in 2017 for allegedly writing more than \$15,000 in bad checks to dog breeders in the state for "puppies."

## **The COVID Unemployment Scam**

Santos applied for and collected \$24,000 in COVID Unemployment Insurance in 2020 because he claimed to have lost his job due to the pandemic. In fact, he was employed at the time and collecting a \$120,000 annual salary.

## **The BIG Self-Donation**

Santos reported that he had loaned his campaign more than \$700,000 from his personal bank account. The problem is, the money wasn't Santos' and no one knows the source of the money. George Santos ran for the same Congressional seat in 2020. At the time, his Federal Elections Commission-required disclosure reports showed he had an annual salary of only \$55,000. Yet just two years later, in his FEC forms...(during the heights of the pandemic, mind you)", he reported an annual salary of at least \$3.5 million and perhaps as much as \$11.5 million per year. This salary supposedly came from a company he had formed in 2021 after the Florida investment firm where he worked was accused in a complaint by the Securities and Exchange Commission of operating a Ponzi scheme. Despite the fact that lower-end salary range of \$3,500,000 would put him making more than 6 times the salary he'd need to be in the top 1% of earners in the United States, in early 2023, he was sharing an apartment in Elmhurst with his sister, who herself was being evicted for nonpayment of \$40,000 in back rent.



## George Santos (Continued)

Prosecutors allege that virtually all of Mr. Santos' financial disclosures are either fraudulent or lies. Santos originally said the \$700,000 was a personal loan from himself to his campaign. But then in an update to a report originally filed in April 2022, the Santos campaign unmarked a box that had originally indicated that those loans came from Santos's own personal funds. Then in filings from later in 2022, the box marking "personal funds of the candidate" was once again checked as a "yes". And in a separate amended report, another \$125,000 loan that Santos gave to his campaign on Oct. 26 similarly had an unchecked box, suggesting that it did not come from his personal funds either.

That raises the question: where did the \$700,000 come from? Did it come from the Republican National Committee? Did it come from the Koch Brothers? And if so, by what mechanism? FEC regulations limits the maximum contribution by an individual to any Congressional candidate to \$3,300. This means that no less than 212 different individuals would have had to contribute the \$3,300 maximum to raise that \$700,000. And as preposterous as this is, even if it did happen, it still would be illegal because every one of those 212 \$3,300 donations are required to be disclosed individually, with the name, address, occupation, employer, employer's address and multiple other points of information included, which they were not.

## Getting Kicked Out of the House!

Shockingly, it is 100% legal for a felon to serve in the U.S. Congress. Under the US Constitution, there are only three requirements to be a member of the House of Representatives: you must be at least 25 years old, you must have been a US citizen for at least 7 years, and you have to be an inhabitant of the state where you are running when elected. Absolutely no bar on being a criminal. However, the House can vote to expel any member, as long as two-thirds of the members of the House agree.

In all of US history, there are only 5 members of the House that have been expelled. The first

## Why is Santos still in the House?

As is often the case with these perplexing questions, the answer is a simple one: politics. You may recall that when the Republicans recaptured the leadership of the House of Representatives, because of vicious infighting, it took their delegation 4 days and 15 rounds of voting before Kevin McCarthy was elected Speaker of the House, McCarthy ultimately received 216 votes from the 222 Republican House members (all 212 Democrats voted for Brooklyn's own Hakeem Jeffries, widely understood to become the next Democratic Speaker of the House). Obviously, with 212 votes for Hakeem and 216 for McCarthy, the Republican majority is very slim. And thus, they can't really afford to lose any votes. George Santos was one of McCarthy's early supporters, and voted for him in all 15 rounds. So, despite a veritable mountain of criminal and unethical behavior, McCarthy—when he was still the Speaker—would not take any action against Santos. Once a new Speaker is elected by the Republicans, this may change, particularly if Santos is convicted on any of the 13 counts of his indictment, and perhaps not even then...incredibly, there is no rule that says a convicted felon cannot be a member of Congress.

Multiple Democrats are lining up to run against Santos in the 2024 House of Representative elections. This will undoubtedly be a priority race for the MTDCPAC next year, so keep an eye on this page for updates on the absurd George Santos situation.

ones were in 1861, when three members supported the Confederacy against the Union at the start of the Civil War. Then, it was 119 years before the next one, when a Congressman from Pennsylvania was convicted of bribery in 1980. The final one came 21 years ago, when a member from Ohio was expelled, also after being convicted of bribery.

However, being convicted of a felony does not guarantee expulsion. It is very likely that whoever replaces McCarthy as Speaker, who will be dealing with a fractured Republican Party and a very slim majority, will not move a vote to expel Santos no matter how many crimes of which he is convicted.

Time will tell. Stand by...