

How would you go about creating more affordable housing in New York? What about permanent housing for New York's homeless population? Where would you put it? How would you make sure it's actually affordable and sustainable? Would you ever support upzoning in order to create it? Will you accept money from real estate interests? Please be specific on your proposals. *

We all know that New York City has becoming increasingly unlivable for working and middle-class New Yorkers. It's simple. You shouldn't have to work on Wall Street to be able to afford your rent or mortgage payment. And for too long, politicians have promised more affordable housing, only to come up short on providing enough homes that are truly affordable to New Yorkers. That's why we must be bold in addressing the affordable housing crisis. As Comptroller, I will use a key tool in the fight to build affordable housing for middle-class families: The city's own pension portfolio through the existing Economically Targeted Investments Program. Using our \$229 billion pension funds, we can partner with the private sector to incentivize middle-class affordable housing construction, creating much needed housing, thousands of jobs, and a strong rate of return on the city's investment. Guaranteeing the financial health of this affordable housing construction will unleash untold potential, allowing the city to build the affordable housing we need across the five boroughs. Put simply, no firefighter, police officer, teacher, retail worker or any New Yorker who works hard and contributes to the wellbeing of our communities should be priced out of our great city. Moreover, making the city more affordable for middle-class families will be profitable for New York. The more people who can afford to live in New York City without struggling to pay their rent, the more they have to spend on groceries, entertainment, retail and everything else. The money multiplier will be massive, and the City will benefit economically. No program regarding increasing, improving and maintaining affordable, livable housing would be complete without a long-term mechanism in place to properly audit NYCHA. With too many NYCHA buildings plagued by inadequate structural repairs, mold, and very infamously, lead paint, David will ensure a thorough and continuous auditing and investigating of NYCHA to ensure the health and safety of residents and the proper use of our tax dollars, potentially saving lives, as well as millions of dollars in the process.

Do you support taxing the wealthy? What specific tax policy changes would you support in New York State and New York City to increase State and City revenue? How will you, at the same time, restore NYC's economic health, employment, tax base, and small businesses, both short-term and long? *

Yes, we need to make sure that millionaires and billionaires finally pay their fair share. The fiscal crisis, due to Covid-19, facing our city is like none other before. I have stood strong with my colleagues in Albany and labor to advocate for taxing the super wealthy. I have also been long time advocate of re instating the commuter tax to ensure that those who work in the city and live elsewhere help pay for our roads and transit, of which they also use. We should set it at 1%, which could bring in more than \$1.6 billion each year. I also proposed NYC sharing in the marijuana and online sports betting tax and I am glad to see that the governor plans to support this needed source of revenue.

How should we desegregate our schools? Do you support eliminating the SHSAT? Do you support admissions screens? What concrete changes would you make to our public school system? *

As the son of a public school teacher and UFT member, I know the importance of fighting for our public schools. I will dedicate the audit and investigative powers of the Comptroller's Office to ensuring that the Department of Education is properly spending our tax dollars to give our kids the best possible education. We've heard too many stories of bloated administrative budgets, outside consultant sweetheart do-nothing contracts and dollars that don't trickle down to the classroom. Every classroom in New York City must be equipped with the tools our kids need to succeed. Moreover, our city has not done enough to fix the still very real issue of school segregation. If we ever have a chance at improving the socioeconomic divisions that are our reality, we must fight to make sure our schools reflect the true diversity of our great city. It's in our kids' schools where the building blocks for realizing this goal will be achieved. I support efforts to increase the diversity of our city's schools by allowing the admissions process to look at multiple measures of student merit, including the SHSAT and a student's GPA.

What is the path forward on corrections reform? Do you support closing Rikers? Do you support constructing new, borough-based jails? In all boroughs or just some of them? Do you support bail reform? Did you support the recent partial roll back of bail reform? *

I am proud to be the Chair of the NY Assembly's Committee on Corrections, where I have worked hard to make sure that the inmate population is treated fairly and provided the needed resources for real rehabilitation. I supported the closing of Rikers because it was long overdue and the right thing to do. I supported the plan for borough based jails. I have led the effort to ensure that the rights of immigrants who are detained at local jails are fully protected. I supported the bail reform act in the NY Assembly. I visited ICE detainees in local jails in Albany and Orange Counties and advocated for their release and urged local officials for more humane treatment.

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How can New York lead on climate change? Are there any green energy projects we can pursue? Do you support any of the existing pipeline proposals? How can we leverage our financial and economic power to encourage other jurisdictions to be better on the climate? *

The threat of climate change has been known to us for decades now. Yet, it has only been in the past few years that our city has really begun to implement policies aimed at reducing the negative effects of climate change on New Yorkers. I will aggressively push to incentivize renewable energy, weatherize buildings, and enhance sustainability measures on our coastlines in communities like Lower Manhattan, the East Shore of Staten Island, the Rockaways and South Brooklyn.

But the Comptroller of the City of New York has a national footprint as well. The power to fight for a cleaner, greener climate doesn't have to end at the city's borders. With the power that comes along with the \$229 billion pension portfolio, the Comptroller has the ability to influence corporations around the world in furtherance of a green agenda to combat climate change. As Comptroller, I will use this influence to the fullest extent possible to ensure that companies in which the City of New York pension portfolio holds stock adhere to policies that support green energy, resiliency, and environmental justice. After all, this isn't just affecting our lives, nor our children's. If we don't do enough now, the issue of climate change will affect our children's children for years to come.

How will you improve procurement and contracting? How do we cut waste, and how do we make sure women- and minority-owned businesses get a fair shake in the procurement process? *

As New York City's top fiscal watchdog, I will make it a priority to safeguard our hard-earned tax dollars and ensure that they are used for the programs and services we need. Our tax dollars should strengthen our schools, improve our public transit and enhance our quality of life, not be spent on bloated

administrative budgets, unnecessary and redundant bureaucracy or programs that don't help New Yorkers. My Fiscal Watchdog Plan will save the city tens of millions of dollars annually, enabling us to reduce the fees and fines burden on small businesses, lower the property tax burden for homeowners, and allocate these funds to better uses that help all New Yorkers. Making sure that MWBEs are fully engaged in the contracting process is a top priority. Through the audit function, yearly, not every four years, I will be a strong focus on ensuring their success.

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What is your plan to save small businesses? How do we make sure, when we come back from COVID, our local businesses are still here? And how do we make sure the enormous amount of commercial vacancies get filled, and not just by big chains snatching up cheap leases? *

Small businesses make up the backbone of our city. They employ millions of New Yorkers and contribute to the character and diversity of our neighborhoods. Small businesses are vital for immigrants and middle-class families. During the COVID-19 pandemic, I was one of the most vocal elected officials in New York City to call for the partial reopening of indoor dining, in order to help save the small and independent local restaurants that make up the lifeblood of our neighborhoods.

As Comptroller, I will organize a Red-Tape Reduction Commission to eliminate the endless fees, fines and regulations stifling small businesses. These businesses need our help more than ever given the economic fallout of the pandemic. Our city government should be helping these businesses grow and succeed, not stifling them. I will also be a loud advocate and use the bully pulpit of citywide office in lobbying our federal elected officials for more funding for small businesses.

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From what types of assets that NYC currently holds would you divest? *

My first role as the comptroller to make sure that our investments are sound and providing returns for the hard working men and women of the city. I strongly supported the 2017 NYC divestment from the private prison industry and will continue this policy.

Other than divestment, how would you use the Comptroller's office to push progressive change within NYC and beyond its borders? Give some concrete examples. *

I am running for Comptroller is to protect our pensioners and the rate of return on our pension funds. Whether a public school teacher, firefighter, police officer, or sanitation worker, I will work to make sure that the retirement system is sound. As a life long fighter for progressive issues as a member of the assembly and city council, I will take this same core value system into the comptrollers office.

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The NYC budget has an enormous amount of waste. That money could be used to provide better services for New Yorkers. Why are you the right person to find that waste and cut it down? *

I will make it a priority to safeguard our hard-earned tax dollars and ensure that they are used for the programs and services we need. Our tax dollars should strengthen our schools, improve our public transit and enhance our quality of life, not be spent on bloated administrative budgets, unnecessary and redundant bureaucracy or programs that don't help New Yorkers. My Fiscal Watchdog Plan will save the city tens of millions of dollars annually, enabling us to reduce the fees and fines burden on small businesses, lower the property tax burden for homeowners, and allocate these funds to better uses that help all New Yorkers. One agency that must be looked at is the Department of Education, which has the largest amount of outside consultant contracts.

How do you plan on continuing to build NY City's funds in the midst of a potential economic downturn? Is there a way in which you can do this while pushing the progressive ideologies that we value in NYC and the surrounding metro area? *

As our city looks toward the end of COVID-19, beyond overcoming the public health crisis we've been facing, we will have to overcome a fiscal crisis. Unfortunately, the economic damage caused by the Coronavirus pandemic is greater than 2008 recession, the post-9/11 recession and the 1975 fiscal crisis combined. Simply said, it is critical for us to build back better — implementing bold, creative solutions that will get New York City back on track. The comptroller has the ability to save taxpayer money through the audit function. I

will require yearly audits of city agencies that will find and root-out the waste and bloat. I will also be the strongest steward of our pension funds and investment bureau. I am the only candidate running for New York City Comptroller with the experience we need in our city's Chief Financial Officer and Fiscal Watchdog. From balancing the City's budget as Chair of the City Council's Finance Committee, to spending years working in municipal finance funding critical infrastructure projects, public schools, I am the only candidate who can get our city back on track.

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In regards to the NYC pension plans, what is your commitment to awarding City business/contracts to supporting women and minority-owned financial businesses - trading, asset management, auditing, accounting, etc? What about using the pension plans to make environmentally/ESG-friendly investments?

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I will use my role and bully pulpit as the comptroller to support MWBE's through policy and sound investment decisions. It is not just good social policy, it is the correct economic policy. New York City is the most diverse city in the country and our fiscal agenda should be fully inclusive of historically underrepresented communities. I would look to expand the opportunities for MWBE's to have greater economic participation not only in underwriting, financial advisor, and bond council assignment, but also in pension investment opportunities.

Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?

I'm running to be our City's next Comptroller to put the needs of working and middle class families front and center. That includes protecting seniors and those who rely, or will soon be relying, on pensions – people like my mother, a Cuban immigrant who became a teacher and proud UFT member. It includes standing up for those struggling to make ends meet during this health crisis. And it includes getting our city through this fiscal crisis – with a nearly \$4 Billion budget deficit slated for next year – and I'm the only candidate with the experience needed to do so. I've balanced city budgets before, and have always made

sure they were never balanced on the backs of hard-working New Yorkers.

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