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# THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

♦ District Leaders: Curtis Arluck, Paula Diamond Román ♦ President: Noah Kaufman♦

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## Congressional Endorsements

### 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Congressional Districts

Come hear from the candidates and help decide who the club will endorse in the June primaries. To vote you must have attended at least one of the previous nine meetings and be current on your dues (seniors \$10; \$25 all others).

*to be followed by*

## A Democracy Teach-In with *Zephyr Teachout*

Join Professor Teachout, candidate for Governor (2014) and for Congress (NY-19, 2016), and author of *Corruption in America: From Benjamin Franklin's Snuff Box to Citizens United*, for a discussion about the state of our union, the state of our state – and the state of our democracy.

*More information inside!*

**Thursday, March 8**

7:45 p.m. registration

Meeting starts at 8:00 p.m. sharp!

**Bank Street College**

**610 W. 112<sup>th</sup> Street (between Broadway and Riverside Drive)**

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Volume 43, Issue 2

March 2018

## Democracy Teach-In *with* Zephyr Teachout

Join us for a discussion with Zephyr Teachout, Associate Professor at Fordham University School of Law, candidate for Governor (2014) and for Congress (NY-19, 2016). She is the author of *Corruption in America: From Benjamin Franklin's Snuff Box to Citizens United*. Professor Teachout will address concerns about the state of our democracy, and how we can improve our exercise of that democracy.

Professor Teachout is a strong advocate for citizen education and campaign finance reform. She continues to fight for the reversal of the *Citizens United* decision, which opened the floodgates of corporate cash into our electoral process. She is also one of several attorneys representing the plaintiffs in the lawsuit against President Trump for violation of the Constitution's Emoluments clause, brought by Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (now before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit).

In January, Teachout spoke to a meeting of Rise and Resist about the upcoming New York State elections (see <https://tinyurl.com/teachout-video> and <https://tinyurl.com/teachout-article>) Our forum will explore the issues discussed there, and more. Bring your concerns and questions about improving democratic participation and government responsiveness.

**This Thursday, March 8**  
**following Congressional Endorsements**  
**8:00 p.m. (7:45 p.m. registration)**  
**Bank Street College**  
**610 W. 112<sup>th</sup> Street**



### President's Column

Noah Kaufman

Presidents' Week just past is the hook for my first message as President of the Broadway Democrats. The federal holiday and the week-long break from public school helped us to honor and reflect upon two special leaders of the great experiment which is American democracy: George Washington, our Revolutionary commander and first President, and Abraham Lincoln, our greatest President.

Washington and Lincoln serve as examples of leadership. Their words and actions are not just reminders of their exemplary abilities, but serve also to remind us of the challenges that confront every occupant of the Oval Office.

As in the days of the Continental Congress 232 years ago, I pray (and it is our fervent hope) that Providence guide the words and deeds of the current President of the United States. But as the strong young voices coming from central Florida and echoing across the nation remind us, "hopes and prayers" are just not enough.

Action is required – action to register our neighbors to vote; action to support honest and capable candidates; action to work together to achieve the goals we set for ourselves; and action to hold POTUS to the oath of his office. How shocking that we must ask the President of these United States to highly resolve:

*that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.*

Shall we Broadway Democrats not also "highly resolve" to shepherd a new birth of freedom across this small planet, and to ensure a system of

government of the people, by the people, and for the people across the land?

Let's do! See you at the next meeting, March 8. Club members will vote to endorse in the June Congressional primaries, followed by a "Democracy Teach-In with Zephyr Teachout," all at Bank Street College, 610 W. 112th Street, starting at 8:00 pm.



## Transportation Forum – December 14, 2017

Susan Crawford

At our last meeting of 2017 the Broadway Democrats hosted a forum on transportation issues and concerns, entitled *Getting There from Here – Meeting Transportation Challenges in Our Ever-Growing City*. Issues explored included:

- Can bikes, pedestrians and vehicles safely share the road?
- Can we have "Vision Zero" without gridlock?
- Can mass transit expand without throwing riders "under the bus"?

The forum arose out of concerns about the "wild west" feel of street traffic. Bicycles seem to be everywhere they aren't supposed to be, and even in designated bike lanes, a pedestrian can never be sure riders won't be careening down the lane the wrong way. Electric bikes are an even greater hazard to pedestrians, given their increased speed. The "e-bikes" are not even legal, but have become ubiquitous among food deliverers.

Adding to a sense that traffic and transportation decisions are made without sufficient community input is the rapid spread of Citibike docking stations, which in turn reduce available parking spaces. The Department of Transportation has "painted away" travelling lanes on many routes, causing traffic jams in places where they hadn't been before. Bus service is so diminished, and congestion so bad, that it is in a virtual "death spiral." What to do?

Panelists for the event were Ann Marie Doherty, Sr. Director of Research, Implementation and Safety for the Department of Transportation; Andrew Albert, Non-voting Member of the MTA board, Chair of the Permanent Citizens' Advisory Committee to the MTA, and Co-Chair of Community Board 7's Transportation Committee; and Danny Pearlstein, Policy and Communications

Director of Riders Alliance, a transportation advocacy group.

Ms. Doherty gave a slide presentation of Mayor de Blasio's Vision Zero campaign, showing how use of bike lanes, road "diets," and bollards at pedestrian crossings, among other measures, were helping to slow traffic and decrease pedestrian deaths. Mr. Albert described how frustrations with bus service had resulted in reduced ridership, contributing to the bus "death spiral" and causing increased use of subways and ride-hailing services. Mr. Pearlstein described how Riders Alliance works to educate NYC residents that responsibility for the state of the MTA lies with the governor, not the mayor, and about his organization's work to call attention to needed changes and improvements in public transportation.

The discussion following the presentations focused on how citizens can advocate for more responsiveness and change at the ground level. Who should we call and where should we turn when a chronic transportation problem needs fixing? Elected officials generally refer us to our Community Boards for such issues, but that yields mixed results at best, especially when city agencies have made decisions counter to community preferences. As a case in point, residents of NYCHA housing in CB9 asked the DOT not to put Citibike docking stations in front of their building. The docking stations were installed anyway, causing chronic problems for those who use Access-a-Ride services. The residents' only recourse now is to attend meetings of the CB9 Transportation Committee to try to get that body to persuade the DOT to reverse its decision.

Too often, agency response is exceedingly slow, even when hazardous conditions need to be remedied. In Morningside Heights it took the better part of two decades to get stop signs installed at the dangerous intersection of 110<sup>th</sup> St. and the Riverside Drive service road.

Panelists did not offer much hope that the pace of change or improvements can be speeded up, but their presentations underscored the need for insistence and persistence at the ground level to bring them about.



## Go Blue 2018 – Let’s Flip the House!

Mary Peppito, Co-Chair  
Go Blue 2018

We are fired up and ready to flip the House Blue, and we invite you to join us and get involved! Go Blue 2018 is a committee of the Broadway Democrats aimed at organizing club members and our neighbors to take back Congress. We’ve all heard the refrain “there’s nothing I can do because I live in New York – a reliably Blue State.” Not true: there is plenty of work to do right here in New York, and in neighboring New Jersey and Pennsylvania. There’s extraordinary enthusiasm, energy and engagement to change Congress, unseat Republicans and win back the House. Join the tsunami of Democratic blue waves committed to change the House. We are coming out in force to turn our City, State and Country BLUE.

In this year’s midterm elections, Democrats must flip 24 seats to capture the 218 seats needed for control of the chamber. Organizations that publish such ratings currently rate 175 House seats as Solid Democratic and 166 seats as Solid Republican. According to Cook Political Report, Democrats have 16 seats that are likely or lean Democratic, and Republicans have 49 seats that are likely or lean Republican. There are only 3 Democratic seats rated as “toss-up” compared to 26 Republican seats. **We are going after those seats**, as well as local seats in districts that Obama won in 2008 and 2012 but Trump won in 2016.

**In New York, Go Blue 2018 will focus on the following districts:**

**NY 11:** Incumbent Dan Donovan (R) is a first-term member of Congress whose district comprises Staten Island and a western sliver of Brooklyn. Before being elected to the House, Dan Donovan was the District Attorney of Richmond County (Staten Island). Donovan failed to obtain an indictment against the NYPD officer whose illegal choke-hold caused the death of Eric Garner in 2014. It is speculated that Donovan charged only intentional acts to the grand jury, enabling the officer to avoid indictment by testifying that he did not intend to kill Mr. Garner. We will be coordinating with SwingLeft NY11 to conduct voter registration drives leading up to the June 26 primary, and will continue with other efforts to unseat Donovan after the primary.

**NY 19:** Incumbent John Faso (R) is a first-term Congressman, whose district includes Columbia, Delaware, Greene, Otsego, Schoharie, Sullivan and Ulster Counties and parts of Broome,

Dutchess, Montgomery & Rensselaer Counties. The district went for Obama in 2008 and 2012, before turning red in 2016. Faso is currently polling 6 points behind a generic Democratic opponent, and the seat is rated a “toss up.” We are supporting fundraisers for candidates and linking with local Democratic Clubs to provide other support.

**NY 22:** Claudia Tenney (R) is another first-term member of Congress whose seat is rated a “toss-up.” NY 22 covers Utica, Rome, Cortlandt, Binghamton & Chenango, Cortland, Madison, and Oneida Counties and parts of Broome, Herkimer, Oswego and Tioga Counties. Binghamton, Hamilton and Colgate Universities are within the district. Incumbent Tenney garnered attention during the recent AR-15 gun debate by falsely claiming that “so many of these people that commit the mass murders end up being Democrats.” ([cnn.it/2CA5Sr](http://cnn.it/2CA5Sr))

**NY 24:** Another vulnerable Republican seat, this district is bordered by Lake Ontario and includes Syracuse, Auburn and Oswego. Hillary Clinton won the district by 3.6% over Trump. We hope to partner with the universities in the district to provide support to flip this vulnerable seat, currently held by John Katko (R).

We’re also considering assisting in efforts to flip **NY 1**, where Lee Zeldin (R) is a first-term Congressman. Although the district went for Trump in 2016, it voted for Obama in 2008 and 2012. This district includes Eastern Suffolk County and Montauk.

There is also some momentum to challenge longtime incumbent Peter King (R) in **NY 2**, another district that voted for Obama in both 2012 and 2008 but unfortunately succumbed to the allure of “#MAGA” in 2016. NY 2 covers parts of Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Our neighbors in **New Jersey** have already poured so much energy into challenging the status quo that many Republican incumbents have decided to retire, including 12-term incumbents Frank LoBiondo (NJ 2) and Rodney Frelinghuysen (NJ 11, chair of the Appropriations Committee). Incumbent Leonard Lance (R) is being targeted in NJ 7, and in northern NJ’s District 5 we’ll try to help first-termer Josh Gottheimer (D) retain his seat.

With new district maps that are favorable to Democrats, we could pick up a number of seats in **Pennsylvania**, given the energy, enthusiasm, interest and engagement that Trump and the Republicans have inspired in the Democratic opposition. (<https://nyti.ms/2Cdx1nZ>) In the March 13th special election for PA 18 that has garnered

national attention, Democrat Conor Lamb, a Marine Corps veteran with deep roots in the district is running against Rick Saccone (R), a lackluster candidate and former Air Force officer. The RNC seem to be serious about this race in deep Republican territory (near Pittsburgh), sending VP Pence and a lot of PAC money to the district. Given the bellwether status of this race, we have reached out to the campaign and Democratic Clubs to provide support. SwingLeft is also organizing GOTV volunteers for the weekend prior to the election.

In short: a Blue Tsunami is building. Let's FLIP THIS HOUSE!

Find us on Facebook at  
<https://tinyurl.com/GoBlue2018>



**Disclaimer:** items herein reflect the views of their authors only. They are published as a part of our club's commitment to the free and open exchange of ideas on topics of interest, but their publication should not be construed as an endorsement by the editor, the Steering Committee, or the Broadway Democrats club.



## Aidan O'Connor, Jr. for NY State Assembly District 102

Richard A. Siegel  
Co-Chair, Go Blue 2018

Upstate Assembly District 102 includes all of Schoharie County and portions of Chenango, Columbia, Delaware, Greene, Otsego, and Ulster Counties. The Assembly seat became vacant in October 2017 when Republican Pete Lopez moved to a job at the EPA. There will be a special election on April 24 to fill that seat.

I recently attended an event in Delaware County and got to meet Aidan O'Connor, Jr., who's running for that seat. I am actively supporting him, and I urge you to support him as well. Aidan is 30 years old, grew up in Greene County, and was just elected to the County Legislature. He has worked as an EMT, starting as a volunteer in high school. He is a progressive who supports health care for all, and reasonable restrictions on gun ownership. He was elected as a Democrat in a Republican-leaning district.

Aidan has the potential to be a valuable member of the Assembly. He also brings a younger generation of progressive, practical Democrats into NY State politics.

There are currently two Republicans running against him. This is a winnable seat in a part of the state that needs local Democrats to show people we are the party that best addresses their needs.

To support Aidan's campaign please go to <http://aidanforassembly.com>.



Aidan O'Connor, Jr.



## Ideological Purity? Let's Keep Our Eyes on the Prize!

Bob Liff

There were lots of things Doug Jones supported in the Alabama Senate race that we would find anathema but that did not stop us from backing him wholeheartedly. Similarly, some of the Democratic challengers to upstate Republican Congressmembers take stands that might seem to be an apostasy to Broadway Democrats.

For example, as a Congresswoman from an upstate district, now-Senator took positions on gun rights that are diametrically opposed to the leadership position she now takes on gun regulation. As someone who has been to far too many murder scenes as a reporter not to ardently believe in the city's tough anti-gun laws, I could not have disagreed with her more *then*. But that did not stop me from supporting her, then or now.

*continued*



That's because the most important vote cast by any member of Congress or the State Senate – and yes, Simcha Felder and Marisol Alcántara, I'm speaking to you – is the first one every session to organize the chamber. That vote determines who will be Speaker or Majority Leader, who sets the agenda and who runs the committees.

There are progressives who seek an ideological purity and see any apostasy as disqualifying – and yes, I am speaking to the Susan Sarandons of the world and even those Bernie Sanders supporters who saw Hillary Clinton as too centrist for their tastes. Let them tell me it made no difference if Clinton or Trump – or, for those of us of a certain age, Carter or Reagan or even Humphrey or Nixon – were elected.

As a progressive club, our mission is to push Democrats as far as we can to embrace the kinds of policies we believe will promote economic and social justice. We shouldn't trim our sails in that fight. And if we don't succeed at first, we saddle up and fight another day. I believe we are right, but that doesn't mean if we don't win every time, we take our marbles and go home (and we also should stop using so many damn metaphoric clichés ...).

I spent years as a political reporter, much of that time in Room Nine in City Hall where I realized that reporters are often the only people who talk to both sides of contested issues or campaigns. That even means talking to Republicans who, believe it or not, sometimes have something to say.

Politics is a long march, where change is incremental. There are some rock-bottom policy lines I cannot cross, but absent those I will support Democrats in congressional races across the state and country *even if* some of their positions would not pass muster here on the Upper West Side.

Because the prize is that first vote in Congress or the state legislature. If we can't win that vote, we can't make the progress we seek.



## News You May Have Missed

(Reuters Feb. 22) The head of a federal commission who has helped states protect election systems from possible cyber attacks by Russia or others is being replaced at the behest of Speaker Paul Ryan and the White House. The action raises fresh questions as to the degree to which President Trump and the Republicans who control Congress are taking steps to protect the security of American elections, and some state officials have accused them of doing too little to address the threat.



The poster features the CCRB logo at the top center. Below it, the title "Town Hall: Police-Community Relations in Harlem" is displayed in white text on a blue background, with "Hosted by Community Board 10" underneath. A photograph shows a man in a dark jacket speaking to a group of people seated at a table. The bottom section of the poster is blue and contains the following text: "Join the Civilian Complaint Review Board for its March Public Board Meeting and discussion on policing." Below this, the date and time are listed: "When: Wednesday, March 14, 2018 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm". The location is: "Where: Adam Clayton Powell State Office Building, Art Gallery Room, 163 West 125th Street, 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10027". A map of the area is shown to the right, with a red pin marking the location. Below the map is a subway line indicator for M2, Bx15, M100, and M101. At the bottom, there is a small disclaimer: "For more information, visit nyc.gov/ccrb. Speaking at the Board Meeting is open to all. If you have questions about speaking, requests regarding accessibility, or need language interpretation assistance, please email outreach@ccrb.nyc.gov. Interpretation services are free upon request."

All are invited to the Harlem Public Meeting of the NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board on Wednesday, March 14 at 6:30 p.m. in the Art Gallery Room of the Adam Clayton Powell State Office Building, 163 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street.

This town-hall style meeting is intended to open a dialogue with residents and community leaders in order to better understand police-community relations in the borough. It is a forum for the community to voice their concerns, offer insights, and share experiences with policing and police-community relations in the neighborhood. Members from the community are allowed to make a comment during the public session or sign-up upon arrival to speak.

Elected officials, community leaders, residents, media and local precinct commanding officers are expected to attend.

For more information and to RSVP, contact:

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