

JIM OWLES DEMOCRATIC CLUB

Candidate Name: **Jumaane Williams**

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Do you now support or have you ever supported an openly LGBTQ candidate for public office?
Yes. Most recently I supported Cynthia Nixon and was proud to run alongside her during our recent bids for Governor and Lieutenant Governor. In my own district, also endorsed and campaigned for a member of the LGBT community for a seat as District Leader, a race that the candidate won. More broadly, I had a great working relationship with LGBT candidates and elected officials. We have stood shoulder to shoulder as allies in advocacy and passing legislation specifically aimed to increase protections for LGBT New Yorkers.

If applicable, what legislation directly affecting the LGBT community have you introduced or co-sponsored? (indicate accordingly)

My first big legislative achievement dramatically increased protections for LGBT New Yorkers, related interactions with law enforcement. The Community Safety Act (2013) banned bias-based policing against LGBT New Yorkers, and made it significantly easier for victims to file discrimination suits in state court. This was a time when 700,000 innocent New Yorkers were stopped, questioned and frisked, with no reasonable suspicion. This only damaged community-police relations, including LGBT New Yorkers, who often suffer targeted discrimination. As Housing and Buildings Committee Chair, I was proud to cosponsor and move through committee, Council Member Dromm's legislation to ensure equal access to single stall restrooms, regardless of gender identity, and a resolution with Council Member Menchaca to prohibit NYPD from using condoms as evidence of prostitution. Additionally, trans women of more color are being killed with impunity across the country and no one seems to address it, which is why I've consistently worked to raise their voices as much as possible. Finally, I am sponsoring legislation, the Fairer Chance Act (2018 legislation, which builds on the original Fair Chance Act), which, when enacted, will ban employers from inquiring about non-criminal violations before sealing, principally Loitering for the Purpose of Prostitution. This codified violation, which turns into a misdemeanor after a first arrest, has long left many New Yorkers, including LGBT New Yorkers (specifically transgender women), and sex workers, vulnerable to specific, targeted, unfair law enforcement actions, and I intend to put a stop to it once enacted. No longer should LGBT New Yorkers face a loss of employment on the basis of engaging in constitutionally protected activity. No longer should it be up to an officer to subjectively determine which legal behaviors becomes illegal and the collateral consequences that result. I am proud to carry this bill.

What LGBT organizations have you been involved with, either on a volunteer basis or professionally?

I'm a proud member of the Jim Owles Board of Governors and was honored to receive the club's endorsement in my recent bid for Lieutenant Governor. As a Council Member, I've also worked hand in hand with a number of LGBT organizations and advocacy groups to craft legislation and advance social justice issues across the city.

If applicable, what LGBT organizations have you allocated funds to?

FY19: LGBT Center - 2,500; Brooklyn Community Pride - 5,000

FY18: Brooklyn Community Pride Center - 5,000

FY17: Brooklyn Community Pride Center - 5,000

FY16: Brooklyn Community Pride Center - 5,000

FY15: Brooklyn Community Pride Center - 6,000

FY14: Brooklyn Community Pride Center - 3,500

FY13: Gay Men of African Descent - 3,500

FY12: SAGE - 5,000

FY11: SAGE - 7,000

Do you consider yourself a member of the LGBT community? **No**

Have you marched in Pride? Which marches and for approximately how many years?

YES— I've been proud to march with the NYC Council contingent and with multiple LGBT clubs in many pride parades throughout my tenure at City Hall, including the NYC Pride Parade, Brooklyn Pride Parade, Queens Pride Parade, Bronx Pride Parade and Harlem Pride Parade.

Have you employed openly LGBT individuals previously? Do you employ any currently? **YES and YES**

If you receive the endorsement, do you agree to identify the club using its FULL name on all literature and electronic materials where you list endorsements? **YES**

What press conferences, demonstrations, rallies and protests in support of LGBT issues, pro choice legislation, criminal justice issues and the Resist Trump Movement have you attended?
The next Public Advocate needs the right combination of activism and legislative acumen to get the job done, and I believe I have shown how it can be done. I've never not been afraid to put my body on the line, for example, against the threat that Brett Kavanaugh presents to women, LGBT New Yorkers and people of more color, or to stop Donald Trump's deportation machine from targeting Ravi Ragbir and immigrants across this city. I've also stood recently stood with advocacy groups such as Planned Parenthood when the New York City Council passed a bill I sponsored to expand reproductive justice laws in New York City. I've proven throughout my time in City Council that I'm unafraid to make the right decisions for the people and speak out for injustices, not what is politically safe.

Have you ever been arrested? If so please explain why and outcome of arrest.

Yes, more than any any elected official in New York. Full story here: <https://www.cityandstateny.com/articles/politics/new-york-city/jumaane-williams-arrest-record.html>

Will you advocate in Albany for legislation to mandate the review of sentences of incarcerated individuals over the age of 55 who have served in excess of 15 years to determine if they warrant release? **YES**

Do you commit to visit constituents who are incarcerated in state prisons such as Bedford Correctional Facility? **YES**

Do you believe sincere remorse, risk of reoffending and actions taken while incarcerated should be considered over the original crime in determinations of parole? **YES**

Do you consent to having your name added to a letter of elected officials to the New York State Parole Board advocating for the release of Judith Clark? **YES**

Have you participated in any demonstrations or protests in relation to the issues of clemency and parole? **YES**

Will you affirmatively seek to hire formerly incarcerated individuals? **YES**

Do you believe in the legalization of sex work? **YES**

What proposals will you advocate for the protect immigrants and the further New York as a Sanctuary City?

I have put my body on the line fighting to protect immigrants from ICE. I stood up to stop the deportation of Ravi Ragbir-- and he's still here. I wish I could do the same to stop every immoral deportation. I represent an area with an incredibly large immigrant population, and my office provides legal aid to these people every day. In a state that prides itself on its immigrant roots and the vibrant immigrant culture we have today, defending those people who make our state what it is, using our resources for the good of the people, is the only option. As Public Advocate, I will continue to fight against ICE and and expand the rights of our immigrant brothers and sisters.

Will you advocate, including introducing legislation, to remove public funding from religious schools? **I'd like to further discuss further with the club's leadership.**

What is your position on Amazon opening their headquarters in Queens?

I expected that any consideration of Amazon coming to NYC would be the beginning of a conversation between the city, state, the local community, our unions, local business owners, advocates, and more. What I could not have thought was that the next word we received would be a secret back room deal, reached to undermine and cut out all of the stakeholders in this issue, and deliver billions in benefits to the richest man on Earth to make that happen. I oppose the use of subsidies to the wealthiest companies when we could use them to grow businesses with good-paying jobs here. I'm already co-prime on a bill to prohibit this and future Mayors from engaging in nondisclosure backroom deals like this in the future and will continue to explore possible legislative solutions, while lending public support to those on the state level fighting this proposal. I believe any subsidy program should be much more narrowly targeted to incubate businesses here and encourage worker protections at the same time.

Do you support removing the loitering statute from the state criminal code? **YES**

Do you support the legalization of marijuana? **YES**

Do you support the establishment of supervised drug consumption spaces? **YES**

Have you ever endorsed any member of the IDC or any candidates who challenged IDC members? Please identify all candidates

Yes, I was proud to run alongside the IDC candidates to help bring the blue wave to our state legislature. I endorsed and campaigned with several of the now State-Senators and was proud to have their support for my Lt. Governor campaign as well.

Do you support reform of the CCRB? If yes, please explain.

Yes. A few key reforms to the CCRB that I support and will fight for as Public Advocate include:

Increase CCRB's annual budget and headcount of investigators to meet the high percentage of complaints that come in each year then are closed without a robust investigation.

Create further distance between the head of CCRB and the Mayor by authorizing the City Council to appoint the Chairperson and a majority of the 13-member board.

Open CCRB offices in other boroughs outside of Manhattan to make it easier for people to come to their offices and speak to staff about possible police misconduct instances .

Please identify 3 boards on which the PA serves and 3 appointments the PA makes that are of the utmost importance to you.

Boards: New York City Employees' Retirement System; Commission on Public Information and Communication; Contract Performance Panel. Appointments: Commission on Public Information and Communication; City Planning Commission; NYC Transit Authority Advisory Council

What reforms to the powers and duties of the office would you advocate for?

I believe that the Public Advocate should be given additional tools in order to better hold government accountable, root out corruption and better serve New Yorkers. These include subpoena power, the addition of voting rights in the council and an independent budget. In addition, the Public Advocate should have an advisory role in ULURP similar to that of the borough presidents, giving advocacy groups a dedicated forum for weighing in on any rezoning, rather than play catch up after developers have cut their deals.

Will you commit to hiring a member of the LGBT community to serve as a liaison to the community? **YES**

Will you commit to ensuring diverse LGBT representation among your staff? **YES**

Who did you support for office in the following races A) Mayor and Public Advocate in 2013 B) President in 2016 C) Governor and Attorney General in 2018

A) I supported Bill de Blasio for Mayor in 2013 and Letitia James for Public Advocate

B) I supported Bernie Sanders for the Democratic Nomination and Hillary Clinton for President in 2016.

C) I supported Cynthia Nixon for Governor and I stumped with Zephyr Teachout on the campaign trail for Attorney General in 2018

Do you support Habitat for Humanity's proposal for gay-friendly low income housing on Elizabeth Street?

I am meeting with members of the community to learn more about the issue before making a firm decision.

Would you speak in favor of an establishment applying for a liquor license when the opposition is based on Nimby and or unreasonable concerns? **YES**