



PROChoice

Newsletter of

Choice Matters, Inc.,
WCLA PAC

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Texas Speaks Volumes Voting Rights = Women's Rights

If you're thinking of sitting out this election, DON'T. Remember town, village and county elected officials often go on to become state and federal ones. If you don't like them on a local level, you'll probably hate them on a state or federal level. By then it may be too late. They will be making decisions about guns, healthcare, taxes—and abortion and voting rights!

While eyes are focused on Washington DC, states are stealing people's rights away. The same states passing voter suppression legislation are the ones passing abortion bans.

After a year of historic expansion of voter access and turnout, **28 states have filed more than 106 bills** to roll back voter access and **19 states have enacted 33 laws**. Since January 2021, **47 states have introduced 561 abortion restrictions, including 165 abortion bans. 106 of those restrictions have been enacted across 19 states, including 12 bans.**

If you can't vote, you can't fight back. Right now, this is not happening in New York, but it could.

New York State is rife with examples of migration to higher office. There are many great stories like the present Westchester Assembly delegation, all of whom held local office before being elected to the State; both our pro-choice NYS Senate Majority Leader and County Executive served on the Westchester County Board of Legislators before being elected to higher office.

And then there are many bad stories—anti-choice George Pataki who first served as mayor of Peekskill before going on to serve in the NYS Assembly and Senate, and then as governor where he vetoed access to emergency contraception; or anti-reproductive rights Trump zealot Sue Serino who was elected to the Hyde Park Town Board then Dutchess County Board and now the NYS Senate, voting against every reproductive rights bill to come to the floor; and then there is Trump extremist, right-to-life favorite Rob Astorino who was elected to the Mt. Pleasant School Board, followed by Mt. Pleasant Town Board

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Endorsements:

Countywide Government

George Latimer: A Superlative Choice. George Latimer has earned our endorsement for re-election. He has both 20+ years of private sector business experience and an extensive public service record as a Rye Councilman, County Legislator, County Chairman, Assemblyman, NYS Senator and County Executive. Most importantly, Latimer has a history of votes and policy positions by which voters can measure his words and stellar record. In dramatic contrast, his opponent is a huge Trump and Astorino supporter and is promoting their hate-filled, ultra-conservative, religion-driven, anti-choice agenda. Westchester cannot afford an Astorino/Trump clone. **WCLA PAC Proudly Endorses George Latimer for Re-Election!**

Tim Idoni: THE BEST County Clerk. Since elected to serve as County Clerk, Tim Idoni has awed everyone with his professional management experience. He has streamlined and diversified the Clerk's office, saving tax payers over \$37 million, while making outreach a priority. As a pro-choice leader, his credentials are impeccable. Idoni has been a vigorous advocate for reproductive freedom, often demonstrating great political courage. As Mayor of New Rochelle, Idoni stood openly with Planned Parenthood, placing the City's leadership firmly on the side of reproductive healthcare. Although the County Clerk doesn't have direct responsibilities related to healthcare, it is essential to have champions of reproductive freedom in all positions of public trust, particularly those with a County-wide scope and platform. **Idoni for County Clerk!**

County Legislator Races

The County Board of Legislators consists of 17 seats, all of which are up for election this year. Seven of the 17 are contested races, one of which is an open seat, with no incumbent running for re-election. In addition, pro-choice candidates Smith, Gashi and Walter are running for re-election for the first time and, therefore, are more vulnerable.

A Critical Race & Open Seat

Erika Lang Pierce (CLD 2) is an outspoken advocate for reproductive justice. She has an impressive depth of knowledge derived from her broad range of professional experiences, including Legislative Aide, teacher, and Financial Manager and Director of Technology for a multi-million-dollar firm. Her opponent is anti-choice and does not understand the complexity of issues facing Westchester's women and families. **Elect Erika Lang Pierce!**

Four Targeted Seats

Colin Smith (CLD 1) is an attorney, and former Peekskill Town Councilman and Peekskill School Board member, with an impressive commitment to the Westchester community. Smith is 100% pro-choice. His opponent is anti-reproductive rights and has aligned himself with anti-choice extremists promoting the Trump agenda. **VOTE for Colin Smith!**

Vedat Gashi (CLD 4), an attorney, supports comprehensive reproductive healthcare. He knows how important it is to

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Join the Fight!

by Catherine Lederer-Plaskett,
President/Chair of the Board

**Your support is our future.
Your gift will help us continue to fight against daily
threats to women's reproductive health.**

As Texas bans virtually all abortions and the US Supreme Court decides the reproductive future of women living in the United States, we—together with our two political action committees WCLA PAC and ProChoice Voter—are in the trenches, fighting for the women of New York and nationally. And despite the odds, we've been WINNING!

- We, together with our allies across the country, fought for the Women's Health Protection Act for years AND on September 24th, the U.S. Congress voted to pass it! The first time in history, Congress has voted on proactive legislation to protect abortion rights! ALL 17 NYS Democratic House Representatives co-sponsored the bill! (New York, take a bow!)
- When others were pigeonholing candidates, we took on negative stereotyping and fought for a true reproductive access champion – and won! We made sure on Primary Day voters knew our ally's record of standing with Planned Parenthood.
- We are arming our candidates with a new weapon, AbortionExplained.org, a key tool in the war for reproductive justice and freedom. It's an accessible hub where we break down hot button abortion issues so our pro-choice allies—elected officials and candidates - can better communicate with voters.

These "wins" are key to protecting New York women. Unfortunately, we have depleted our financial reserves, having been unable to host critical events that make our work possible.

Our ProChoice Voting Guide is essential, but pricey due to labor, printing and mailing costs. We couldn't sacrifice it – not now – **Because ELECTIONS MATTER!**

Endorsements:

women of all ages and is committed to safe and private access. Gashi's opponent is anti-choice. **VOTE Vedat Gashi all the way!**

Damon Maher (CLD 10) is an attorney, negotiator, volunteer, and independent thinker—PLUS an ardent opponent of healthcare inequities. He is also a foster, adoptive and biological parent—and he is 100% pro-choice. His opponent is anti-choice and is promoting an agenda that is dangerous for women and families! **WCLA PAC proudly endorses Damon Maher!**

Ruth Walter (CLD 15) is a former Bronxville Court Clerk and Bronxville Library Trustee. As a small business owner and former investment analyst for a multinational firm, Walter understands first-hand the issues confronting Westchester. Walter adds a pro-choice vote and voice to the County Legislature. Her opponent is anti-choice and is supported by anti-choice zealots. **VOTE for Ruth Walter!**



We are operating in a hostile climate for reproductive care. We need informed and involved voters, like you. As Texas exemplifies, we don't know what new restrictions are headed our way. But with your generous support, Choice Matters and its two pacs will have the necessary funds to mobilize voters, advance reproductive freedom policies and laws, and protect New York women.

In this first post-Trump election, we must remain focused on fortifying New York State. As we predicted, abortion is becoming a state issue, with legislatures having enacted 106 abortion restrictions so far in 2021, the highest number in any single year since Roe v. Wade. We must make New York State a reproductive rights sanctuary, where abortion care is accessible to all.

Your generous gift helps Choice Matters move mountains. We are committed to keeping voters informed; getting financial and geographic access policies adopted; and our pro-choice candidates elected.

A gift envelope is enclosed. You can also make an online gift at: <https://choicematters.org/donate-now/>

Thank you for being part of our team!

Texas Speaks Volumes *Continued from page 1.* Voting Rights = Women's Rights

and Westchester County Board of Legislators, before serving as Westchester County Executive for two terms.

Local elections matter. They serve as a launching pad and hold the key to the future. In addition to all County government offices (except DA) and Supreme Court judges, **there are five statewide propositions on this year's ballot, three of which are directly tied to voting and redistricting.** If you don't vote, someone else will be making the decisions for you. *That should scare the daylight out of you!*

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EARLY VOTING IS HERE! Election Day is Tuesday, November 2th

You can vote ONE of the following ways:

1. Early Voting: October 23rd–October 31st, times vary day-to-day.
2. Absentee Ballot; or
3. General Election.

For more information, go to the Westchester County Board of Elections website for locations and times, or call 914-995-5700.

Please copy and distribute this page to other Pro-Choice Voters!

2021 **PROChoice** Voting Guide

WCLA PAC

Our endorsed candidates are highlighted in blue boxes. Help keep abortion legal and accessible. Vote for endorsed candidates.

Remember: In an odd-year election cycle like this, it all comes down to voter turnout—and the ProChoice Voting Guide is key to turning out our pro-choice voters!

SUPREME COURT JUSTICE (Vote for FIVE)

• 9th Judicial District

Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Dutchess and Orange Counties

THOMAS R. DAVIS (D,R)

ROBERT M. BERLINER (D,R,C)*
JAMES L. HYER (D,C)
CHRISTIE L. D'ALESSIO (D,C)
THOMAS QUINONES (D,C)

James M. Hendry III (R)
Mark T. Starkman (R)
Richard J. Guertin (R,C)

WESTCHESTER COUNTY EXECUTIVE

GEORGE S. LATIMER (D, W)*

Christine Sculti (R,CS)

WESTCHESTER COUNTY CLERK

TIMOTHY C. IDONI (D,W)*

Scooter Scott (R,CS)

WESTCHESTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

• District 1

Peekskill, Buchanan, parts of Yorktown and Cortlandt

COLIN D. SMITH (D,W)*

Joe Torres (R,C)

• District 2

Mt. Kisco, Bedford, North Salem, Lewisboro, Pound Ridge and part of Somers

ERIKA LANG PIERCE (D,W)

Gina M. Arena (R,C)

• District 3

North Castle, Pleasantville, and parts of Briarcliff Manor, Harrison, Mt. Pleasant, Ossining and Sleepy Hollow

DAVID W. VINJAMURI (D,W)

Margaret A. Cunzio (R,C)* RTL

• District 4

New Castle and parts of Yorktown, and Somers

VEDAT GASHI (D,W)*

Robert S. Brower Jr. (R,C)

• District 5

Scarsdale, parts of White Plains

BENJAMIN BOYKIN II (D,W)*

• District 6

Rye Brook, Port Chester, and parts of Harrison and Rye Town

NANCY E. BARR (D,W)*

• District 7

Rye City, Mamaroneck Town, Larchmont, and parts of Harrison, the Village of Mamaroneck, New Rochelle and Rye Town

Catherine Parker (D,W)*

→ For more information, please go to:
https://www.wclapac.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/WCLA_2019_pages.pdf and
<https://www.prochoicevoter.org/2020/05/19/cd17-the-candidates-running-for-nitas-seat/>

• District 8

Elmsford, Sleepy Hollow, Tarrytown and parts of White Plains, Greenburgh and Mt. Pleasant

JEWEL JOHNSON (D)

• District 9

Croton, Town and Village of Ossining, parts of Briarcliff Manor and Cortlandt

CATHERINE A. BORGIA (D,W)*

Charles E. Braue (R,CS)

• District 10

Tuckahoe and parts of New Rochelle and Eastchester

DAMON R. MAHER (D,W)*

Anthony S. Giacobbe (R,C)

• District 11

Pelham, Pelham Manor and parts of New Rochelle

TERRY A. CLEMENTS (D,W)*

WCLA PAC Endorsement Policy, 2021

WCLA PAC makes its endorsements based on the candidate ratings made by the Board of Directors of WCLA – Choice Matters.

WCLA PAC's endorsements are determined case by case. To be considered for endorsement, candidates must complete and return the Organization's questionnaire and participate in an interview if requested. Candidates who fail to return the questionnaire or attend an interview are rated anti-choice and have been fully informed of that consequence before making their decision. All endorsements are made on a strictly non-partisan basis. The questionnaires, incumbents' and opponents' records, leadership, and helpfulness during the legislative session are all reviewed. Consistency between candidates' actions, interviews and questionnaire responses is important. Each race is voted separately. Incumbents may be endorsed over pro-choice challengers if they have consistent voting records and have established a reputation for strong leadership and extra effort in advancing access to abortion and contraception. Non-incumbents may be endorsed if they have demonstrated leadership on the issue. Endorsement is considered only for those who unequivocally support:

- Access to abortion and contraception for all women, unimpeded by laws, restrictions, or regulations.
- Strict confidentiality for all reproductive health care;
- Coverage by public and private insurance of abortion and contraception.

Judicial candidates: To be eligible for endorsement, judicial candidates must participate in an interview if requested.

WCLA – Choice Matters and WCLA PAC are non-partisan and are not allied with any political party. The Organizations' sole mission is to fight for comprehensive reproductive healthcare for all women and to eliminate all inequities in accessing that care. The Organizations hold all candidates to the same standards and do not give any individual special treatment. Endorsements are made but not necessarily accepted. WCLA – Choice Matters and WCLA PAC have never and will never let their judgement and political opinions be compromised on any basis.

• District 12

Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry, Hastings, Irvington and parts of Greenburgh

MARYJANE C. SHIMSKY (D,W)*

• District 13

Parts of Mt. Vernon

TYRAE WOODSON-SAMUELS (D)*

• District 14

Parts of Yonkers and Mt. Vernon

David J. Tubiolo (D,W)*

• District 15

Bronxville and parts of Yonkers and Eastchester

RUTH WALTER (D,W)*

James M. Nolan (R,C)

• District 16

Parts of Yonkers

Christopher A. Johnson (D,W)*

• District 17

Parts of Yonkers

JOSE ALVARADO (D,W)*

Key to ratings:

ENDORSED

PRO-CHOICE, NOT ENDORSED

Anti-choice

* Incumbent

RTL: Right to Life PAC and/or LifeNet, past and/or present

Parties: C: Conservative D: Democrat
R: Republican W: Working Families
CS: Common Sense

PROPOSITIONS

There are 5 Statewide, 1 Countywide & 3 Local propositions on the ballot.

Go to the Westchester County Board of Elections website to read about them **BEFORE** going to the polls!

The Voting Guide is inside this newsletter. Use your power to vote to protect Choice!

WCLA – Choice Matters
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REMEMBER: Voting Rights = Women's Rights

VOTE – NOVEMBER 2ND!

24 Elected Offices & 8 Propositions are at stake!

THINK ALL 50 STATES!

“By communicating to and activating key voters early and consistently, we can help to elect leaders who will support and protect essential health care services like abortion.”

—CECILE RICHARDS

That is exactly what AbortionExplained.org does! Choice Matters has developed this key tool in the war for reproductive justice and freedom. It is an easy and accessible hub where we break down hot button abortion issues so that our pro-choice allies—elected officials and candidates—can better communicate with voters. They learn the proper language to use when discussing reproductive rights and how to effectively respond to anti-choice opponents.

AbortionExplained.org examines the 20-week abortion ban, the Texas' SB8 abortion ban and the New York State Reproductive Health Act, and will expand to include every restriction that is thrown at us.

The one thing we have learned from the Texas abortion ban is that far too many politicians have no idea what they are talking about when it comes to reproductive healthcare. We must educate and arm our allies with the knowledge

required to take on our opponents and communicate our message effectively. AbortionExplained.org is a tool for progress. **Stay tune for our official launch!** Your donations will help fund AbortionExplained.org.

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS/ACTIVISTS

It is time for Comprehensive K through 12th grade, Age-Appropriate Sex Ed in NYS!

New York State has NO comprehensive sex ed requirement! The only requirement is teaching what HIV/AIDS is & how it is contracted.

For years the NYS legislature has been pointing at the NYS Board of Regents for failing to provide our kids with the education they deserve. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.

There are two bills in Albany—one in the Senate and one in the Assembly, S2584A/A6616 Comprehensive K through 12th Grade, Age-Appropriate Sex Ed.

Help us get them passed! To Volunteer: Send an email to: Choicematters@choicematters.org & put “Volunteer” in the subject line.