

Democratic Rural Conference of New York State

2018 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE DEMOCRATIC RURAL CONFERENCE

CANDIDATE'S NAME and HOME ADDRESS:

Letitia James

[REDACTED]

Position for which you are a candidate: New York State Attorney General

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

THE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS WILL BE POSTED ON THE DRC WEB SITE, Facebook Page, and as many other media outlets as possible.

Name, cell phone number and e-mail address for the person on your staff who will be your liaison with the DRC.

[REDACTED]

List your qualifications for this office including but not limited to other offices you have held, educational background, etc.

- Public Advocate for the City of New York (current position)
- Member of the New York City Council
- Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Brooklyn Regional Office
- Attorney for the Legal Aid Society

Please address these questions, but make your answers brief so the entire questionnaire does not exceed 4 pages.

1. ABILITY TO LEAD THE ENTIRE STATE – What contact and experiences have you had with parts of the state, other than where you currently reside, which demonstrate your recognition of the geographic, demographic and economic diversity of the state and your ability to provide leadership on behalf of all New Yorkers?

Throughout a lifetime in public service--as an elected official, public defender, Assistant Attorney General, and government staffer--I have always been focused on helping those most in need and I've committed myself to fighting for their interests. This work and advocacy has allowed me to develop understanding, connections and relationships in dozens of communities that are vastly different from my own.

In my time visiting the towns and cities throughout New York State, I recognize a similar dynamic with the people I have met and interacted with. I have visited many of the rural counties within the state and all New Yorkers need champion advocating on their behalf -- whether it's to address the scourge of zombie houses, taking on the opioid epidemic, or protecting against environmental injustices. With my long record of fighting on behalf of those in need of a champion, I will stand up for New Yorkers from Batavia to Brooklyn, from Ithaca to Islip, from Plattsburgh to Poughkeepsie.

2. KNOWLEDGE OF THE ISSUES – What issues do you believe are of most concern to voters in rural counties, and what will be your message in addressing those issues?

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Fighting corporate greed and protecting New Yorkers from Wall Street abuses - Wall Street malfeasance has had devastating consequences in New York. It precipitated the foreclosure crisis, in which tens of thousands of families lost their homes, others faced an unrecovered loss in property values, and many lost their jobs. As Attorney General, I will have both the power and the responsibility to prosecute financial fraud that harms consumers and investors. I will target banks that put investors at risk and take action against predatory lenders.

Affordable High-Speed Internet for all New Yorkers regardless of their residence - Right to broadband is fundamental to freedom of expression, education, and ability to grow and sustain one's business. I advocated for increased access to broadband in rural areas and have fought against Charter Communications for failing to meet their terms of delivering broadband access to New Yorkers. As Attorney General I will continue the fight to ensure that all New Yorkers have access to broadband and will use all legal levers to ensure that internet service providers like Charter are upholding their obligations to the people of New York.

Criminal justice reform - Throughout my career, I have fought for measures to build trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve. I believe that the vast majority of police officers and prosecutors are dedicated public servants who uphold the law every day. But when there is no accountability or transparency, incidents of misconduct are magnified and it becomes impossible for people to trust the system. I will champion legislation to create a commission to hold prosecutors accountable and push to end unnecessary and harmful police secrecy.

3. PARTY BUILDING – How have you expressed and demonstrated a commitment toward building our party statewide and what are your ideas for future party building, specific to rural counties?

My fellow elected officials throughout New York City can attest to the fact that I am a committed ally to democrats everywhere and I always support my friends. In these dire times of the Trump administration, Democrats must have control of both chambers of our legislature and as many seats in Congress as possible. I will dedicate myself to ensuring that democrats running throughout the state have the support they need to win and will do everything I can to ensure our rightful return to power in the state and federal legislatures.

4. In the event of a primary for the office you are seeking, will you support the winner of the Democratic primary? (This calls for a YES or NO answer only.)
YES

5. FAIRNESS IN SHARING POLITICAL POWER - How have you and how will you defend and further the rights of small counties to be represented in the decision making process and in governmental and political positions?

As Public Advocate, I represent every person who walks through my doors -- not just those with a fancy lobbyist or expensive lawyer. I will take this same approach to the Attorney General's office, where I will represent the voices of New Yorkers from every corner of our state. As the New York State Attorney General, I will also publicly and openly seek additional authority through every available channel so that every county is at the table to make meaningful reform.

6. INCLUSION – If elected, how would your administration include the people from DRC counties and address the issues of concern in those counties?

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In the short time frame of this campaign, I have already traveled to several rural counties to learn more about the issues that impact New York's rural residents and I intend to visit every DRC county in the state. My track record as an elected official, first representing a diverse district in Brooklyn and now representing all of New York City, is to visit and meet with as many constituents as my schedule permits. And I don't simply meet with them; I consider it my obligation to work with them and to help identify solutions to their problems. I look forward to representing all New Yorkers, not just city residents, and helping to address their issues.

7. VOTER APPEAL – What qualities or experiences do you have that would attract support from voters in DRC counties, not just from Democrats but also from non-enrolled voters and cross-over Republicans?

Regardless of race, gender, partisanship, and political ideology, our country's democratic values are founded upon important pillars including equity, representation and justice. Throughout my career in public service I have never been afraid to speak truth to power or take on entrenched interests.

As a City Council Member, I helped expose one of the largest frauds ever committed on the public coffers in the CityTime corruption scandal. I blew the whistle and catalyzed an investigation that exposed hundreds of millions of dollars in government waste and fraud and led to multiple criminal convictions. As Public Advocate, I have served as a watchdog over city government, and sued New York City and State to protect kids suffering irreparable harm in the foster care system, public housing residents subjected to dangerously cold conditions, and students with disabilities sweltering on overheated buses. No one is above the law, and as Attorney General I will ensure that New Yorkers have an advocate who will use the force of the law and the power of the courts to protect equity, representation and justice.

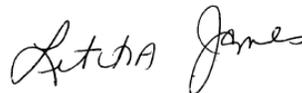
8. CAMPAIGN IN DRC COUNTIES – How would you campaign in DRC counties? Have you personally appeared with any local rural candidates? In what rural counties have you campaigned? How have you helped rural candidates campaign?

I have been to the following DRC counties:

- Broome - attended Broome County Democratic Picnic
- Saratoga - attended Saratoga races
- Niagara - toured Niagara Falls
- Schenectady - Endorsed by Schenectady Mayor and local electeds; attended National Night Out events
- Tompkins - Attended Tompkins County Summer Party
- Madison - Attended Madison County Democratic Dinner
- Fulton - Attended Presbyterian Rural Urban Divide Conference

My goal is to visit the rest of the DRC counties and meet with the voters and hear their concerns and priorities.

9. OTHER CRITERIA – Please set forth anything else you want us to consider.



August 19, 2018
Date

Signature of the Candidate

THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE MUST BE postmarked or e-mailed at your earliest convenience but no later than _____, 2018 to Phil Jones at 19 Elm Street, Geneseo, NY 14454 or via e-mail at paj12147@gmail.com. INTERVIEWS MAY BE ARRANGED THEREAFTER.