



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Samra G. Brouk

## Jacobson and Brouk Introduce Bill Eliminating an Election Law Exemption to Raid Primaries for Judicial Candidates

SAMRA G. BROUK November 18, 2021

| ISSUE: **ELECTIONS, JUDICIARY, POLITICAL PARTIES, CAMPAIGN TRANSPARENCY, GOOD GOVERNMENT**

**ALBANY, NY** - Senator Samra Brouk (SD-55) and Assemblymember Jonathan Jacobson (AD-104) have introduced A8179/S7556, which eliminates the ability of judicial candidates for office who are enrolled in one party to automatically be allowed to run as a candidate in another party's primary election.

As the law stands currently, only non-judicial candidates must seek permission of a party before petitioning to appear on that party's ballot line. Judicial candidates may circulate petitions from a political party they are not enrolled in, unbeknownst to said political party or the voters they are courting. This can and does result in judicial candidates appearing on the ballot bearing the name of a party that they share few, if any, values with. This is confusing to voters and undemocratic.

**Senator Samra Brouk said**, "Our judicial races are of critical importance to our legal system in New York State. From Town Court to Supreme Court, judges have the ability to hand down decisions that can alter the course of a person's life. It is of the utmost importance that we protect the integrity of these judicial races, and ensure that the public knows who they are voting for. That is why Assemblymember Jacobson and I have introduced legislation that

would prevent a judicial candidate from running on multiple party lines in an attempt to trick voters into thinking they share a set of values. Judicial candidates must follow the rules that other candidates follow during the endorsement process, and seek permissions from parties they are not affiliated with prior to appearing on the ballot. I look forward to working with Assemblymember Jacobson and our colleagues in the legislature to protect our judicial races in New York.”

**Assemblymember Jonathan Jacobson said,** “Judicial candidates should follow the same rules as candidates for any other elected office. Period. I introduced this legislation because it’s becoming widespread practice, particularly for incumbent judges, to “raid” the primary of a party with which they are not aligned. This exception creates confusion with voters. Judicial candidates are restricted in what they can say in a campaign, so the party lines on which a candidate appears is one of the few ways they can telegraph their values. If a member of one political party wishes to run in another party’s judicial primary, they should be required to do what every other candidate for public office does – get the authorization of that party to run. My bill would help restore integrity in judicial elections.”

As a member of the Senate Committee on Elections, Senator Brouk joined Chair Zellnor Myrie in participating in a number of public hearings this summer to learn more about voters’ experiences, including one public hearing in Rochester at the Monroe County Government Office Building. A report of the Committee’s findings may be found [here](#).

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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**2021-S7556**

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- Introduced
  - In Committee Assembly
    - In Committee Senate
  - On Floor Calendar Assembly
    - On Floor Calendar Senate
  - Passed Assembly
    - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Eliminates the ability of judicial candidates for office who are enrolled in a particular party to automatically be allowed to run as a candidate in another party's primary election

December 01, 2021

In Senate Committee **Elections**

Sponsored by **Samra G. Brouk**

Do you support this bill?