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Many thanks to the Leadership of the Staten Island Democratic Association for this opportunity to share my vision as the next New York State Senator, representing the priorities of all 315,000 residents of the 23rd District.

I am a Native Staten Islander, and for several years, my family resided in West Brighton's "Markham Homes" (NYCHA), along with 360 other working class families. I am one of 5 children raised in a "Union Strong" family, where education was non-negotiable.

Our foundation of faith, self-respect, ambition, education, compassion, and the wisdom we gained from our nightly sermons at Mom and Dad's dinner table, prepared us to navigate through a dramatically changing society. Dad, the epitome of steely leadership, gave us our blueprint to thrive despite adversity and to survive an unforgiving society for young African American men.

Prior to the emergence of "Educational Injustice", Dad visited our High School to unleash his wrath (his version of 'Cease and Desist'), upon our Vice Principal, who routinely redirected young men of color from pursuing higher education, and once told my brother, "stop wasting your time with that college stuff, just pick up a trade and help your parents out".

As young African American men, we were taught how to conduct ourselves at the Mall, on public transportation, in school, on the street, and most of all, every time we are driving. These lessons of self-respect, confidence, respect for authority, and speaking with authority, were designed for our survival and for our safe return home.

Decades of 'policies and remedies' to control this country's shifting social order, wreaked havoc on families of color. Like many persons of color in the 23rd District, which now comprises 56% of the District's population, my life has been impacted by the trauma of incarceration, 'Stop and Frisk', gun violence, and the untimely demise of family members due to a lack of access to adequate healthcare. These experiences, and more, redefined my life, my mission and my message.

Empowerment. Inclusion. Compassion. Vision.

I am a Community Advocate, NOT a career politician! For over 30 years I have battled Economic Injustice, by connecting unemployed, underemployed, Veterans, LGBTQ individuals, Homeless or Sheltered persons, to hundreds of full time jobs. Promoted Worker Education and exposed oppressive policies aimed to diminish Worker Protections and Labor Unions. Marched with the Eric Garner family in support of Equal Justice for all. Personally invested to fight against Educational Injustice.

Act on behalf of Food Deprived individuals and communities. Actively promote Civic Engagement.

PRIORITIES

Health Care: Staten Island ranks 2nd in deaths under age 65, Citywide, and Brooklyn ranks 3rd. The leading causes are cancer and heart disease; with the North Shore having the highest percentage Island-wide. The six Medically Underserved communities in the district, are disproportionately of color, and have poorer health outcomes than neighboring, non-minority communities. In the fight against Health Inequality, I have met with Legislators in Albany to push

for passage of critical legislation that protects and expands current healthcare delivery models, including Governor Cuomo's blueprint to End The Epidemic.

I support the New York Health program, a comprehensive and universal single-payer system of access to health insurance for all New York State residents. I'll fight to protect the Indigent Care

Fund, and legislate increases of such funding, particularly on behalf of Richmond University Medical Center. It's unacceptable that Staten Island is the only borough without a public hospital. I will unlock the stalemate that blocks the passage of the Safe Staffing Act. It is unfathomable that Patient-Staffing ratios are dangerously compromised, in lieu of profits. New York hospitals and nursing homes are chronically understaffed. This hurts patients because it increases the risk of

patient death, failure to rescue, hospital-acquired infections, falls and unsafe discharge planning. Just as I pledged to the NYS Nurses Association, "I will fight tirelessly for legislation to support, empower and protect our Nurses, which in turn provides a higher level of care for all patients".

Education: I will unlock the stalemate that for 10 years has failed to deliver \$4 Billion to fund public education from pre-k to 12th grade, as was established to resolve the Campaign for Fiscal Equity court ruling.

New York State has a school suspension crisis and black students are four times more likely than their white peers to be suspended, and often suspended for lower level offenses. Students of color,

Immigrants, LGBTQ students and students with disabilities also face disproportionate rates of suspension. I support the Solutions Not Suspensions Bill to ban suspensions for grades K to 3, reduce them dramatically for all grades, and utilize positive and supportive interventions as a first resort and suspensions as a last resort.

I am a staunch proponent of Educational Equity. I will fiercely take action to protect our vulnerable student populations from widespread and 'hidden' practices that undergird inequality.

Lastly, I propose 'wrap-around' services, and 'Homework 101!' I will legislate for a cure to the "TAP Gap". Funding, estimated at \$160 million, must be added to the CUNY and SUNY operating budgets to cover the funding difference at the point when increased tuition costs are not matched by financial aid from the N.Y.S. Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), whereby the student is forced to pay more, if possible, and/or the college is required to waive all or part of the student's bill. The TAP tuition waivers create a "TAP Gap" that has cut into CUNY's and SUNY's operating budget. CUNY, which serves large numbers of low and middle income students receiving TAP, absorbed a \$70 million cut last year. To protect quality college

education and to invest in our students, I will support all efforts to better fund CUNY and SUNY.

Housing:

I support the passage of Good Cause Eviction, the current legislation that requires landlords to have a good reason, such as non-payment of rent, to evict a tenant. I will push to fully fund Governor Cuomo's 2016 pledge to create 20,000 units of supportive housing - to date only a fraction of these homes have been financed. I support setting aside 15% of all units created in new state subsidized affordable housing projects for homeless families and individuals.

I will ensure the state's obligations to responsibly fund public housing by ending wasteful tax breaks to ultra-rich corporate developers [421a and 485a], and instead allocate that \$3 billion for repairs in NYCHA and public housing authorities across the state.

I support the passage of Home Stability Support, a statewide rent subsidy proposal designed to address sheltered individuals and families, and those who are at risk of homelessness.

I fully support Tenant Opportunity to Purchase, draft legislation from NYS Senator Zellnor Myrie (20SD) that affords tenants priority to buy their landlord's building and turn it into a cooperative if their landlord puts the property up for sale. Tenants could also work with a nonprofit that would buy and manage the building. The bill provides a structure for low to moderate income New Yorkers to become shareholders and co-own the building with their neighbors. The primary aim is to ensure that the apartments are permanently affordable.

Criminal Justice:

When considering 'Reform', we must view the landscape of what is to be reformed. The process to achieve Criminal Justice Reform is far easier to conceptualize than it is to actualize. 'Reform', acknowledges that corrective action is required to cease a past practice or policy which was proven to be detrimental, or even became the source of generations of destruction. Overzealous policing and an often unfriendly judicial system has caused irreparable harm to countless individuals and communities, and disproportionately to communities of color.

However, before the 'reform', I endured the fear and humiliation of "Stop and Frisk" on three occasions, once at gunpoint, and one that ended miles away after being driven in a patrol car to a crime scene. My family suffered the trauma of incarceration. I can speak of the importance of criminal justice reform with 1st-Person authority, and I do.

The process to true 'Reform' is never easy, but is absolutely necessary for the greater good. I support enactment of the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement (HALT) Act. Studies have proven that long-term solitary confinement causes severe mental and physical trauma. The United Nations has determined such confinement as torture. In 2019, there were 38,000 sentences to solitary, lasting a few days, or months, or for years. The bill limits solitary

confinement to only serious infractions, for a maximum of 17 hours per day and no more than 15 consecutive days. Prohibits imposing solitary confinement on special populations.

I support passage of the New York for All Act, to preserve state and local resources for community safety only, prevents diverting those resources to enable ICE, and protects Immigrant families. Prohibits state and local officers from enforcing federal immigration laws and sharing sensitive information with ICE, and also prohibits ICE from entering non-public areas of state and local property without a judicial warrant.

My view of a Legislator is be transparent. As such, I believe it's right and fair to always speak to my Constituents regarding any emotionally charged reform effort. Therefore, Let's discuss:

- Fair and Timely Parole Act, which ensures that the parole release process is based on who people are today and their accomplishments while incarcerated, not solely on their crime of conviction.
- Elder Parole Bill. Allows for the consideration of parole release for all people aged 55 and older who have served at least 15 consecutive years in prison.

For those who say, "It's not your time Brandon, just wait". Is it not time for the voiceless to be heard? Is it not time for everyone to have even ONE person to represent them? NOW IS THE TIME to elect a Champion.

I am ready to fight for housing rights and protections, quality and affordable healthcare, protections for Seniors, fortifying education and literacy, and working with community partners to forge a sustainable path to clean and safe communities.

I am a fierce advocate of worker's rights, economic security, and upholding Union guarantees. I am a TRUE Democrat and an unafraid "Voice for the Voiceless".

"Let's Get To Work"!