



Progressive Caucus of the New York City Council

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New York City Council Progressive Caucus and Allies Launch Platform of 18 Progressive Policies for New Council Session Starting in 2018 & Welcome Council Member Bill Perkins to the Progressive Caucus

New York, NY – The New York City Council Progressive Caucus and allies gathered today on the steps of City Hall to announce their adoption of a new platform of “[18 Progressive Policies for 2018](#)” representing crucial campaigns they are fighting for – especially under the current political climate and the regressive era of the Trump administration.

Resistance and Progress: 18 Progressive Policies for 2018: (1) “Right to Counsel” for Immigrants, (2) Fair Work Week, (3) Economic Democracy through Worker Cooperatives & Day Labor Centers, (4) Living Wage 3.0, (5) Eliminate the Municipal Gender Pay Gap, (6) Invest in Public Housing, (7) Required and Permanent Affordable Housing, (8) Reduce Homelessness, (9) Right to Know Act, (10) Close Rikers, (11) Universal Childcare, (12) End Youth Hunger, (13) Integrate Public Schools and Provide Culturally Responsive Education, (14) After School for All, (15) Free & Strong CUNY, (16) Climate Works for All, (17) MoveNY, and (18) Pre-Citizen Voting. Read the full platform at nycprogressives.com.

Welcoming Council Member Bill Perkins into the Progressive Caucus: In addition to announcing their policy platform, the Caucus welcomed recently-elected Council Member and Former State Senator Bill Perkins as a member of the Caucus. Bill Perkins, was re-elected to the New York City Council in a Special Election on February 14th, 2017. Perkins brings a breadth of experience – having been elected to the Senate in 2006 after previously serving as deputy majority leader on the City Council for eight years, from 1998-2005. The council member was a prime sponsor of the Childhood Lead Paint Poisoning Prevention Act of 2004, and a dedicated affordable housing advocate. He also fought tirelessly to reform public authorities like the MTA, and worked to extend unemployment benefits and to make health care more accessible during his Senate tenure. A lifelong resident of Harlem, Bill Perkins started his political career as a community activist and known for his tenacious and unyielding commitment to serving the community.

“Now is the time for New York to step up and be the example for cities across the nation. We need to send the message loud and clear that this is not Trump’s America; it is ours. I’m proud of the work the Progressive Caucus has done so far, and we will use this policy platform to make our city an even better place for all people to live, learn, and work,” **said Council Member Antonio Reynoso, co-chair of the New York City Council’s Progressive Caucus.** “In addition, as we go to work on the behalf of all New Yorkers, having a progressive leader like City Council Member Bill Perkins on the team makes us strongly. I warmly welcome him back to the Council and into the Progressive Caucus.”

“In the age of a Trump administration, it is clear that the responsibilities of moving our country in the direction of progress will fall on the shoulders of our cities. Our new policy platform for 2018 is the Progressive Caucus’ pledge that we are up to the challenge. From the fight to protect and create affordable housing to protecting our environment through Climate Works for All, we are prepared to resist regressive federal policies and provide consistent progress for the years to come,” **said Council Member Donovan Richards, co-chair of the New York City Council’s Progressive Caucus.** “I also enthusiastically welcome Council Member Bill Perkins to the Progressive Caucus. He comes a time when the wellbeing of our communities is at-stake, so I welcome his leadership, experience, and commitment in serving New Yorkers during these hard times.”

"We are setting an ambitious agenda for the next Council and Speaker with 18 big progressive policies that will make New York City a better for all," **said Council Member Ben Kallos, Vice-Chair of Policy, instrumental in developing this platform.** "Thank you to Council Members and allies who have helped us to accomplish so much in this term as we set our eyes on what we can do in the next. We welcome Council Member Bill Perkins to the Progressive Caucus, an organization that follows in the steps he set from long before."

“In these dark times in our country, it is essential that New York City be a beacon for progressivism. As a truly progressive city, we must focus on policies that make for a more equitable economy, increase affordable housing, reform civilian-police relationships, address our climate crisis, provide excellent education for all children, and protect our most vulnerable. I’m proud to have joined my colleagues on the Progressive Caucus in crafting a comprehensive policy platform that resolutely affirms human and worker dignity,” **said Council Member Helen Rosenthal (Vice-Chair for Budget Advocacy).** “I also welcome Council Member Bill Perkins – who has been leading with progressive values for a long time. His addition to the Progressive Caucus is a welcomed one and we’re excited to continue our fight for a better, fairer city.”

"At a time when local officials must stand up to Trump's attacks, this platform offers a litmus test for progressive leadership in New York City. We applaud the Progressive Caucus for focusing on concrete ways that the City can protect and expand opportunity for working-class communities of color," **said Javier H. Valdés, Co-Executive Director of Make the Road Action.** “For immigrants and people of color, we are particularly pleased to see the emphasis on passing the Right to Know Act, to re-affirm all of our constitutional rights, and asserting a right to legal counsel for immigrants facing deportation."

“The many challenges facing our City demand bold ideas, as well as the leadership to make those ideas happen. That is why I am proud to be a founding member of the Council’s Progressive Caucus,” **said Council Member Margaret S. Chin (District 1, Manhattan).** “I look forward to working with my colleagues to push forward these policies to continue our progress towards a more inclusive, fair and equitable city.”

“As the Council's progressive leaders, we have committed ourselves to creating opportunity and a more equitable city for immigrants, working families and women. Together, we have successfully rallied around important changes like the Fair Chance Act and funding for legal assistance for low-income tenants in housing court, all of which have made a measurable difference in the lives of countless New Yorkers. Today, we are more committed than ever, as we charge into this budget process, to fight and protect vulnerable communities as we face challenges from the Federal government,” **said Council Member Julissa Ferreras-Copeland (District 21, Queens).**

“Our values are progressive values and I am proud to support the Progressive Caucus’s agenda for 2018, which includes plans for critical legislation that will help end the abusive practice of on-call scheduling for retail workers and install Living Wage 3.0 codifying labor harmony into law. The passage of these bills will give workers a fighting chance to live, work and raise a family, and I am confident the Progressive Caucus will deliver for workers across New York City,” **said Stuart Appelbaum, President of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, UFWC.**

“This is a critical moment for both fierce resistance and insistent progress,” **said Council Member Brad Lander, the Council's Deputy Leader for Policy (District 39, Brooklyn).** “Fierce resistance to Federal policies that erode civil rights ... and insistent progress on the path to close Rikers. Fierce resistance to the Trump/Ryan effort to shred the social safety net ... and insistent progress on a fair work week and a real living wage. Fierce resistance to corruption that corrodes our democracy ... and insistent progress to expand voting rights and participation. The values that undergird our resistance -- justice, equality, and inclusive democracy -- also point the way to the future we want to build for New York City.”

“We are proud to support the New York City Council’s progressive caucus platform,” **said 32BJ SEIU President Hector Figueroa.** “Important initiatives like the Fair Work Week legislation that will provide important scheduling protections to fast-food workers and other workers across NYC are needed as soon as possible. Fast-food workers are also calling for legislation that will help them form an organization to fight for better jobs and strengthen their communities. 32BJ SEIU strongly supports the progressive caucus platform – they have been at the front line fighting for worker protections and we will continue to work with them on their advocacy for working people during the next year.”

“This is a time of resistance and action. The 2018 Progressive Caucus platform demonstrates our commitment to protecting workers, immigrants, tenants, and youth. It also advocates for healthier schools, environmental justice, and desperately needed criminal justice reform. Advancing this platform will build a more just and secure City for all New Yorkers,” **said Council Member Carlos Menchaca (District 38, Brooklyn).**

“The Working Families Party is proud to support the Progressive Caucus’s bold agenda for 2018, which includes; expanding voting rights for New Yorkers, passing the Right to Know Act, expanding worker protections, and an expansive climate jobs program. We are looking forward to continue partnering with the Progressive Caucus to deliver for working families across New York City,” **said Juan Antigua, NYC political Director, Working Families**

“More than ever, we must be ready to fight for the basic rights and prosperity of our community. This platform not only serves as a plan for the way forward in New York, it is also an example to people everywhere who share our values,” **said Council Member Steve Levin (District 33, Brooklyn).** “We must fight to reduce homeless, invest in public housing, and provide true universal childcare for all our communities. I’m proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with my colleagues and I look forward to advancing this agenda forward.”

“As New York faces an increasingly hostile Washington, it is more critical than ever that we continue fighting for progressive policies and bold ideas to make our city a safe, fair and equitable place for every New Yorker,” **said Council Member Mark Levine (District 7, Manhattan).**

“From guaranteeing legal counsel to immigrants to ensuring that low-wage workers get a fair work

week; this platform embodies the idea that despite the current political climate, we don't just have to play defense, we can use the power of our local government to score monumental wins for our communities. Our '18 Progressive Policies for 2018' platform is an epic document that I am proud to support, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to make these policies a reality in New York."

"The Progressive Caucus has long stood up for the disadvantaged, pushing policy that is cutting edge and which rightly pushes the envelope to support these communities," **said Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez (District 10, Manhattan)**. "In this new and strange reality, raising our voices for the voiceless could not be more important. From providing free right to counsel for immigrant communities facing persecution from ICE, to putting the justice back in our broken criminal justice system, to ensuring the education we offer our hungry minds is of quality and reflects the world we live in, this agenda could not be more timely. I am proud to support the 18 for '18 and I stand with my progressive caucus colleagues, dedicated to get them done."

"New York City has always been a leader, and by adopting this platform, we can lead once again and serve as an example to cities across the nation. As a founding member of the Progressive Caucus, I am proud to support many of the policies in this platform, including eliminating the gender pay gap, respecting the rights of immigrants and workers, and investing in quality education for all our children. Today, more than ever, it is important that we work together for a city that provides opportunity to all residents," **said Council Member Deborah Rose (District 49, Staten Island)**

"I am proud to support the Progressive Caucus's '18 for 2018' platform, particularly its commitment to investing in public housing and desegregating our public schools," **said Council Member Ritchie Torres (District 15, Bronx)**. "With the Ryan/Trump agenda dominating Washington, it's up to cities and states to stand up for progressive values, and there's no better example than the 18 for 2018 platform. Together we will show the country how government can be a force for good – a safety net for the poor, a beacon of hope for immigrants, and vehicle for advancement through education."

"Because of the chaos and misdirection coming out of Washington, the City Council has a greater responsibility than ever before to defend our values and way of life," **said New York City Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer (District 26, Queens)**. "In New York City, we know what makes America great, and the platform announced today is a reflection of our commitment to protect and improve the lives of all New Yorkers, including immigrants and the most vulnerable. The Progressive Caucus will fight to ensure equal access to all in our great City."

"The legislative priorities representative in this Caucus is one that pushes forward policies that will lead to a City where vulnerable populations are given the attention and resources needed to truly thrive in this City they call home. In this era of making America great again, I'm proud to work alongside colleagues who share in the vision of a more equitable and just society," **said Council Member Jumaane D. Williams, Deputy Leader of the New York City Council (District 45, Brooklyn)**.

The Progressive Caucus was formed in 2009 with the goal of advancing policies to build a more just and equal New York City. Our members from all five boroughs for the 2014-2017 term include Council Members Antonio Reynoso (Co-Chair), Donovan Richards (Co-Chair), Ben Kallos (Vice-Chair for Policy), Helen Rosenthal (Vice-Chair for Budget Advocacy), Margaret Chin, Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, Corey Johnson, Brad Lander, Steve Levin, Mark Levine, Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Carlos Menchaca, I. Daneek Miller, Ydanis Rodriguez, Deborah Rose, Ritchie Torres, Jimmy Van Bramer and Jumaane D. Williams. The Progressive Caucus welcomes a new member, Bill Perkins.

Allies that endorse this platform include:

32BJ SEIU
African Services Committee
Central American Legal Assistance
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF)
Citizens' Committee for Children of New York (CCC)
Coalition for Educational Justice (CEJ)
Coalition for the Homeless
Coalition for Homeless Youth
Communities United for Police Reform (CPR)
Community Development Project (CDP) at the Urban Justice Center (UJC)
Community Service Society of New York (CSS)
Community Food Advocates (CFA)
Community Voices Heard (CVH)
Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies (FPWA)
Jews for Economic and Racial Justice (JFREJ)
Islamic Circle of North America - New York (ICNA)
Legal Aid Society
Make the Road Action (MRA)
Muslim Community Network (MCN)
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI)
Pratt Center for Community Development
Professional Staff Congress at the at the City University of New York (PSC-CUNY)
Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU)
New Economy Project
Transportation Alternatives (TransAlt)
United Neighborhood Houses (UNH)
Working Families Party (WFP)

The Progressive Caucus and allies will encourage fellow Council Members to adopt this platform, organize rallies, mobilize constituents, advocate to the Mayor, and devote time, energy, and resources to making this progressive platform a reality.

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Resistance & Progress: 18 Progressive Policies for 2018

A Sanctuary City for All New Yorkers:

1. **“Right to Counsel” for Immigrants:** Any immigrant facing deportation or detention in New York City should have a right to be provided with an attorney.

Building a More Equal Economy:

2. **Fair Work Week:** Workers must have the right to advance notice of schedules, be protected from abusive scheduling, have access to full-time hours, and have a right to request flexibility.
3. **Economic Democracy through Worker Cooperatives & Day Labor Centers:** Innovative models can give workers more power in their working lives and increase their access to safe and dignified jobs.
4. **Living Wage 3.0:** When the City provides businesses with subsidies, tax-breaks, or contracts, workers should earn more than minimum wage, get COLA adjustments, and have the right to organize.
5. **Eliminate the Municipal Gender Pay Gap:** The gender pay gap of 18 cents on the dollar for city employees must be closed through equitable career advancement and protections.

Protecting and Creating Affordable Housing and Livable Inclusive Neighborhoods:

6. **Invest in Public Housing:** The City and our partners must fully fund New York City Housing Authority’s (NYCHA) \$17 billion capital deficit and prevent privatization.
7. **Required and Permanent Affordable Housing:** We must expand our tools to require affordable housing in all new multifamily developments and maximize the use of City-owned land.
8. **Reduce Homelessness:** We must provide a safe shelter system and a better pathway to housing for homeless New Yorkers through public housing, affordable housing, and permanent rental assistance.

Reforming Policing & the Criminal Justice System:

9. **Right to Know Act:** Improve community-police interactions by requiring officers to identify themselves and the reason for the interaction, and obtain fully informed consent before searches.
10. **Close Rikers:** Implement the proposals of the Lippman Commission to cut short-term incarceration in half, re-design detention in modern, borough-based, community jails, and close Rikers for good.

Public Education to Give Every Child a Real Chance:

11. **Universal Childcare from Birth to Four:** Extend access to child-care for all from birth to four, and create a “Birth to Four” pathway that supports and services families in need.
12. **End Youth Hunger:** 1.1 million public school students must have access to breakfast, lunch, snacks, and dinner, year-round, because children can’t learn on an empty stomach.
13. **Integrate Public Schools and Provide Culturally Responsive Education:** Adopt and implement a comprehensive plan to reduce school segregation, and increase diversity and inclusion.
14. **After School for All:** 1.1 million public school students must have after-school programs to provide enrichment and adult supervision so young people remain safe until parents come home from work.
15. **Free & Strong CUNY:** CUNY is a vehicle of upward mobility and opportunity. Students must have access to higher education without barriers. CUNY must have the resources to help them succeed.

Aggressively Combating Climate Change:

16. **Climate Works for All:** NYC must mandate strong energy-reduction retrofits for large buildings, which produce most of NYC’s greenhouse gas emissions, with labor standards to ensure good jobs.

Accessible Public Transport for All:

17. **MoveNY to Fund Public Transportation and Reduce Congestion:** Adopt a fairer tolling system for bridges and tunnels to reduce traffic and pollution, and increase revenue to expand public transport.

Renewing our Democracy:

18. **Pre-Citizen Voting:** Enfranchise approximately one million New Yorkers by expanding the right to vote in local elections to immigrants with Legal Permanent Resident (LPR) status.