

POLITICO

How noncitizens could change NYC elections

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New York City elections are in for another big shakeup, after the city passed a law letting noncitizens vote in its local elections. It's a move that translates into some 800,000 new eligible voters — immigrants from around the world, living in diverse corners of the city, who could make their presence felt at City Hall, [as Erin reports today](#).

Neighborhoods like Flushing and Jackson Heights in Queens and Washington Heights in Manhattan, home to many green card holders who haven't previously been able to vote, could see the biggest change in their City Council races. Look to next year's Council primaries, when the whole body is up for reelection due to a quirk of the redistricting calendar, for the first big test. As for citywide races, recall that Mayor Eric Adams won the Democratic primary by just a few thousand votes under ranked-choice voting, the last big overhaul to reshape city elections.

To proponents, this adds up to increased political clout for communities whose concerns have long been overlooked. The point is to “make elected leaders more accountable to their neighborhoods and push them in a direction of being more responsive,” said Nora Moran of United Neighborhood Houses, which supported the bill. How well it works will depend on voter outreach, which will determine whether newly eligible voters register and turn out in force or stay home.

But for opponents, the unintended consequences loom large. They don't trust the Board of Elections, which has been known to flub even the most standard election, to roll out such a change. Some have warned that giving more clout to immigrants may in turn reduce the influence of U.S.-born Black voters. That's if noncitizen voting ever actually happens: Republicans are fighting to stop it in court. Council Minority Leader Joe Borelli pointed out another roadblock — the Republican commissioners who share control of BOE and could stop implementation. “I don't think it ever goes into effect,” he said.

IT'S WEDNESDAY. Got tips, suggestions or thoughts? Let us know ... By email: EDurkin@politico.com and agronewold@politico.com, or on Twitter: [@erinmdurkin](https://twitter.com/erinmdurkin) and [@annagronewold](https://twitter.com/annagronewold)

WHERE'S KATHY? Announcing State Liquor Authority plans and discussing to-go drinks in Harlem, and speaking at St. George Ukrainian Catholic Church.

WHERE'S ERIC? Delivering introductory remarks at schools Chancellor David Banks' presentation of his vision for public schools.

QUOTE OF THE DAY: “Fuck them! The process exists. We follow the process. Breathing shouldn't be the only qualification for running for office.” — former Brooklyn Democratic Party leader **Frank Seddio** to City & State regarding those who think the petitioning process should be eased

WHAT CITY HALL'S READING

“N.Y.C. will soon end its main contact-tracing program for the coronavirus,” by **The New York Times' Sharon Otterman:** “New York City said it would end its main contact-tracing program for the coronavirus next month, in yet another sign that officials across the United States are shifting how they treat the threat of the coronavirus. ‘Trace will be coming to an end in late April — giving us eight final weeks to complete your current work and get New Yorkers ready for the next phase as we learn to live with Covid,’ Dr. Ted Long, the executive director of the city’s Test and Trace program, wrote in an email, shared with The New York Times, that was sent Monday night to the city’s remaining contact tracers. People working as contact tracers also received a second email notifying them that their contracts would be ending in late April, and inviting them to apply for other positions in the city’s public hospital system.”

“District Leader, Husband of Brooklyn Dems Boss Lands New Job in Adams Administration,” by **City Limits' David Brand:** “The husband of Brooklyn’s Democratic Party boss is the latest campaign aide to land a gig in Mayor Eric Adams’ administration. Edu Hermelyn, a Democratic district leader married to party leader and Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn, has been named 'Senior Advisor for Strategic Initiatives' in the city’s Department of Social Services (DSS) — a position tasked with smoothing relations with local elected officials, according to job listings. He may have his work cut out for him in some pockets of his home borough after he ignited intraparty tensions by reciting a vulgar Spanish-language song that seemed to target another elected official at a meeting last year.”

“Adams Reaped Early Campaign Cash From Top Aide’s Associates Now Sued for Fraud,” by **The City’s Katie Honan:** “In 2018, seven employees of two medical companies in New Jersey began donating thousands of dollars to the campaign treasury of then-Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams. They worked for two companies — Ridgewood Diagnostic Lab and Interstate Multi-Specialty Group, both in Hackensack, and owned by Dr. Alexandr Zaitsev, who was among the Adams donors. They each gave what was then the maximum amount, \$5,100, or close to it, to the campaign account for Adams between April 19 and Nov. 29, 2018, Campaign Finance Board records show.”

New York City Police Pension Fund divests \$42.2M from Russian assets, by **POLITICO's Joe Anuta:** A police pension fund in New York City plans to pull all investments from Russian securities in response to the ongoing invasion of Ukraine — adding a local component to

international sanctions and divestment meant to deter further war. The trustees of the New York City Police Pension Fund voted to divest \$42.2 million Tuesday, according to the city comptroller, who oversees local pension funds and will now carry out the financial transactions. “New Yorkers, including current and retired police officers, stand in solidarity with Ukraine and are proud to play a role in contributing to cutting [Russian President Vladimir Putin] and his enablers off from global financial markets,” Comptroller Brad Lander said in a statement.

— **“Manhattan borough president calls for immediate seizure of Russian oligarch property,”** by the Independent’s Jade Bremner

“Food banks, pantries in high demand as inflation surges ahead of pandemic's third year,” by Gothamist’s Chau Lam: “Rising food prices are forcing New Yorkers struggling to feed themselves and their families to rely more on food banks and pantries. U.S. inflation has hit its highest level since 1982, eroding consumers’ purchasing power and exacerbating the food insecurity crisis that existed before COVID-19 swept through the city. But two years into a pandemic that has killed nearly 6 million people worldwide and nearly 40,000 New York City residents, the city is still recovering from the economic fallout. ... A survey released earlier this month by City Harvest and United Way of New York City polled more than 16,000 New Yorkers who received free food from the charity relief groups across the five boroughs. It found 87% of the respondents anticipate turning to food pantries and food banks more often in the coming months.”

WHAT ALBANY'S READING

‘Screw the Republicans’: New York’s GOP forgets Trump and angers Giuliani at convention, by POLITICO’s Bill Mahoney and Anna Gronewold: Former President Donald Trump was little mentioned during the festivities on Long Island as Republicans in New York look to win their first statewide seat since 2002 and after Trump fared poorly in his once home state in both presidential elections. Trump had an ardent pair of backers at the convention, though: The Giulianis. “President Trump has not been invoked at all, in a Republican convention,” bemoaned gubernatorial candidate Andrew Giuliani, a former aide to the then-president and the only major candidate who regularly praises him.

Giuliani’s father— former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani — alleged that state Republican leaders were defiling Trump’s legacy by attempting to rally support behind Rep. Lee Zeldin before a primary. Rudy Giuliani made the rounds at the convention to build support for his son’s candidacy, posing for pictures and signing autographs with party leaders. Zeldin, an outgoing Long Island congressman, easily won the convention with 85 percent of the vote. Andrew Giuliani got a mere 0.75 percent, but is vowing a primary contest in June along with two other candidates: businessman Harry Wilson and former Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino. “Screw the Republicans. A bunch of jerks,” Rudy said.

“New York GOP picks Rep. Lee Zeldin as gubernatorial nominee,” by The Associated Press’ Marina Villeneuve: “New York’s Republican Party leaders endorsed U.S. Rep. Lee Zeldin as their candidate for governor Tuesday at a convention on Long Island, though he could still face a primary challenger in June. Any Republican candidate faces tough odds in New York,

where registered Democrats outnumber GOP voters by more than 2 to 1. New York hasn't elected a Republican governor since former Gov. George Pataki in 2002. But Republicans scored some unexpected wins in local and county elections in November."

"Petitioning kicks off, with pandemic-era signature requirements gone," by City & State's Jeff Coltin

"State pension fund may divest \$111 million in Russian assets," by Times Union's Josh Solomon: "New York's \$280 billion pension fund includes nearly \$111 million in investments from Russian companies that state Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli said his office may divest from the pool as a result of the invasion of Ukraine. DiNapoli is also freezing future purchases with Russian companies 'due to the situation's unpredictability and the likelihood that conditions will deteriorate.' 'This will ensure that the (pension) fund does not increase its minimal exposure to the Russian economy while completing its divestment review, consistent with my fiduciary duty,' DiNapoli said in a statement Tuesday."

"Hochul Campaign Donors Blow Past Corporate Contribution Limits," by New York Focus' Sam Mellins: "On Oct. 30, the campaign fund for Gov. Kathy Hochul received \$25,000 in donations tied to a single company — even though state law bars companies from contributing more than \$5,000 total in a year. Hochul received five \$5,000 donations, each from a different limited liability company with nondescript names such as '13855 Cornhusker Partners, LLC' and 'Fort Worth Property Partners, LLC.' All five limited liability companies, or LLCs, made their donations from the same address in Miami, Fla., identical to the one listed for Southern Glazer's Wine and Spirits, one of the largest wine distributors in the nation."

FIRST IN PLAYBOOK — A rally today in Albany and an ad campaign will push for funding for health insurance coverage for low-income undocumented immigrants to be included in the state budget. The New York Immigration Coalition will run [ads on Facebook](#), arguing that thousands of immigrant essential workers died during the Covid-19 pandemic because they lacked health coverage. They are also placing a flatbed truck in front of the state Capitol with ads promoting the proposal, which would spend \$345 million to create a state-funded basic insurance plan for New Yorkers excluded from federal plans because of their immigration status. About 300 people are expected at a demonstration today. "Governor Hochul has promised heavy investments in our healthcare systems, but has done little to ensure equitable access to affordable care for every New Yorker," said NYIC executive director Murad Awawdeh.

#UpstateAmerica: 'Como Restaurant, Niagara Falls' iconic Italian eatery, to be auctioned off: "If you've always wanted to own a famous Italian restaurant with a loyal customer base in a city that draws millions of tourists each year, here's your chance."

TRUMP'S NEW YORK

"NYPD trial begins of cop who accompanied Trump adviser Roger Stone on Jan. 6," by New York Daily News' Rocco Parascandola and Graham Rayman: "An NYPD police officer faced a departmental trial Tuesday for allegedly working as unpaid security for Donald Trump adviser Roger Stone alongside members of the far right Oath Keepers militia. The

disciplinary proceeding against Officer Salvatore Greco pits free speech against a rule barring cops from hanging out with convicted felons. Greco faces a range of charges for associating with Stone from July 2019 through March 2021, in particular in Washington, D.C., during the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol.”

BIDEN AND THE BOROUGHES

“Biden salutes slain NYPD officers in State of the Union address, says 'answer is not to defund the police,'” by Spectrum News: “President Joe Biden honored slain NYPD officers Wilbert Mora and Jason Rivera during his State of the Union speech Tuesday night. Mora and Rivera were fatally shot while responding to a domestic violence call in Harlem in January. Less than two weeks after their deaths, the president traveled to New York City to discuss his administration’s efforts to combat crime and gun violence. ... Biden went on to say the deaths of Mora and Rivera speak to the need to invest in crime prevention, while restoring trust between communities and their police departments, as well as strengthening gun laws. ‘We should all agree: The answer is not to defund the police. The answer is to find the police with the resources and training they need to protect our communities,’ Biden said. ‘I ask Democrats and Republicans alike: Pass my budget and keep our neighborhoods safe.’”

AROUND NEW YORK

- **The city’s first** green taxi driver is calling it quits.
- **AG Tish James** wants Consolidated Edison to explain utility bill hikes last month that she said affected thousands of customers in Westchester and New York City.
- **White families** left city public elementary schools at a higher rate than any other demographic during the pandemic, according to an Independent Budget Office report.
- **A man is wanted** for attacking seven women within two hours in an anti-Asian assault spree.
- **Sen. Chuck Schumer** called for an influx of federal dollars to be used on the long-delayed cleanup of the Newtown Creek Superfund site.
- **City Comptroller Brad Lander** launched a \$26 billion tracking system to monitor how the city is spending billions in federal pandemic aid.
- **A Bronx man** was indicted for allegedly stashing \$1.25 million worth of cocaine in a food truck.
- **Student journalists** at Townsend Harris High School in Queens broke the story of a sexual misconduct scandal at their school.
- **Four people** were stabbed during a fight at a Brooklyn subway station.
- **Although the school mask mandate** is ending for all New York State school districts Wednesday, Buffalo Public Schools will keep wearing masks.
- **City officials** want to install 100 raised crosswalks each year to redesign the city’s intersections.

SOCIAL DATA BY DANIEL LIPPMAN

HAPPY BIRTHDAY: Kevin Madden is 5-0 ... Liz Oberg ... Caitlin McFall ... Joe Brettell ... NYT's Dave Itzkoff and Katherine Rosman ... Ashley Chang of the Rockefeller Foundation ... Eric Phillips, head of crisis management at Edelman

MAKING MOVES — Caitlin Conant is joining Disney as vice president of policy communications. She was most recently political director for CBS News. ... Maggie Margolis, Northeast digital content partnerships manager and former senior political producer at NY1 Spectrum News, is leaving her post to become Gov. Kathy Hochul's deputy digital director, starting next week. ... Maggie Gage is now head of public policy at OneMain Financial. She previously was head of U.S. government relations at MetLife and is a Patrick Leahy alum. ... Alexandra Stabler is now director of global corporate partnerships at Global Citizen. She most recently was partnerships director at the Giving List. ...

... Russell Coleman is now head of commercial sales at Code Climate, a software engineering intelligence firm. He most recently was regional sales director at Axis Security. ... Zongyuan Zoe Liu and Inu Manak are now fellows at the Council on Foreign Relations. Liu previously was an instructional assistant professor at Texas A&M's Bush School of Government and Public Service in D.C. Manak previously was a research fellow at the Cato Institute's Herbert A. Stiefel Center for Trade Policy Studies.

WHAT WALL STREET IS READING — “Business groups quickly take down their Russian oligarch ties,” by Hailey Fuchs and Daniel Lippman: “Names are disappearing from websites, and people are stepping down from boards in the wake of aggressive sanctions.”

BOOK CLUB — Frank Bruni's new book, “The Beauty of Dusk: On Vision Lost and Found” (\$28), came out Tuesday. He'll have events for the book with Maureen Dowd in New York City on Wednesday and with John King in Washington on Friday. NYT review by Min Jin Lee

MEDIAWATCH — “Journalists at Gizmodo and related websites go on strike,” by NYT's Katie Robertson: “The contract between about 100 workers at six publications and G/O Media expired on Monday night.”

REAL ESTATE

“New York elites are snatching up luxury real estate using a method that's against many realtors' code of ethics,” by Business Insider's Alcynda Lloyd: “In New York, people with the right money and the right connections are purchasing real estate before it goes on the market. While so-called ‘whisper,’ ‘pocket,’ or ‘off-market’ sales aren't new, they provide a major advantage at a time of limited housing availability and outsized demand — and many realtors say they are unethical. They're also surging in one of the most expensive cities in the world. According to Redfin, the amount of off-market transactions in the US has increased 67% since 2019. In New York City alone, 20.6% of homes that were sold in the third quarter of 2021 were pocket listings.”