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THE PARKSIDE GROUP

2026 Election Preview

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With early voting starting in three days, we wanted to provide an overview and analysis of the races to watch come Tuesday November 3rd. When looking at the November 2026 elections in New York, it's easy to focus only on the state's reputation as a blue bastion. And there are certainly facts that underpin that reputation:

- No Republican has won a statewide election in 24 years
- There are nearly 3.5 million more enrolled Democrats than enrolled Republicans, and more than 400,000 more voters enrolled in no party than enrolled Republicans
- In 2024 New Yorkers gave Kamala Harris a higher share of the vote than 38 other states, and she received more actual votes in New York than 16 other states combined

But these data points don't tell the whole story. From the Civil War until 2018, New York's history **almost entirely featured** either divided government or outright Republican control of the Governor's mansion and both houses of the Legislature.

Statewide

Four years ago, Kathy Hochul won a full term with just 53% of the vote. So is New York solidly Democratic, as **many national observers** believe? Or does Gov. Hochul's Republican challenger, Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman, stand a chance?

The national observers are looking at objective metrics, which suggest the race should not be close. Governor Hochul has a **massive financial advantage** in the campaign's closing weeks **over her challenger** and has **consistently led in most polling**. However, the environment is tough: in **the most recent Siena poll** only 38% of likely voters believe the state is on the right track, she is viewed favorably by 48% of likely voters, and 48% of likely

voters approve of the job she's doing. However, it may be more important that only 30% of likely voters approve of the job Donald Trump is doing as President, and 63% disapprove of him, all of which is consistent with the state's underlying partisan lean. Per Siena, Governor Hochul leads her opponent by nine points but is only receiving 50% of the vote (the general rule is that undecided voters will swing against a well known, well-defined incumbent). A more recent **Marist poll** has the Governor receiving 53% of the vote and Blakeman receiving 40%, while an **Emerson poll** has the Governor receiving 52% with Blakeman's holding steady at 40%. In short, she should win, but it is likely to be closer than the Governor would like.

Comptroller Tom DiNapoli and Attorney General Leticia James are also running for re-election, however both have comfortable leads in the **most recent public polls** and are expected to win easily.

Congressional

In Washington, Democrats hold 19 seats in New York's congressional delegation and Republicans hold 7. Democrats are defending three of those seats and are **favored to win all three**, though Republicans are hoping that a strong performance by Blakeman's Nassau County base could help them upset Laura Gillin (NY-4) and Tom Suozzi (NY-3). Republicans are favored to win one open seat in the North Country (NY-21), while Rep. Mike Lawler (NY-17) is in a toss-up race in one of the country's most competitive districts (he is one of just three Republican members of the House nationally to represent a district that Kamala Harris won in 2024).

Overall, the House of Representatives and the US Senate appear to be in the play as we enter the last weeks of the campaign. The most recent **Sabato's Crystal Ball** analysis from the Center for Politics at the University of Virginia shows both houses of Congress leaning Democrat. In the House of Representatives 223 seats at least lean Democrat, 200 at least lean Republican, and 12 seats are toss-ups. In the Senate, 49 seats at least lean Democratic, 46 at least lean Republican, and 5 are toss-ups.

State Legislature

In the State Legislature, Democrats are expected to maintain large majorities. In the Assembly, which they have controlled since 1975, Democrats hold 103 out of 150 seats (and have held a supermajority for all but 4 years since the start of the millennium). In the State Senate, which Democrats controlled for only three years between 1939 and 2018, Democrats currently hold 41 out of 63 seats. This is tied for the 3rd largest majority of any party in the Senate's history (only trailing the Democratic Senate conferences from 2021-

2022 and 2022-2023).

Both legislative leaders are firmly entrenched in their conferences. Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie is the 2nd longest serving Democratic Speaker in the state's history (trailing only his immediate predecessor Sheldon Silver), while Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins is the longest-serving Democratic Majority Leader in the State Senate's history. There will certainly be significant changes in the Assembly as senior members, such as the Majority Leader and Environmental Conservation Committee chair, are retiring and five incumbents lost primaries (four of whom were moderates who lost to members of the Democratic Socialists of America). While the Senate's Deputy Majority Leader has retired, there has been less overall churn on the Senate side.

Looking at specific races in the State legislature, based on a recent **Politico** analysis, the Assembly Democrats are investing resources in Assemblymembers Al Stirpe, Carrie Woerner, Didi Barrett and Karen McMahon with the Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee (DACC) spending funds to support their re-elections. Likewise, DACC has allocated funds to help Kim Keiserman to take an open seat on Long Island, and to flip two Republican seats in South Brooklyn currently held by Assemblymembers Michael Novakhov and Alec Brook-Krasny and one Buffalo area seat held by Assemblymember Pat Chludzinski. On the other side of the aisle, Assembly Republicans are spending to preserve the seats currently held by Assemblymembers John Lemondes and Joe DeStefano. In addition, Republicans are investing to support Becky Wydysh running for an open Niagara Falls seat and Mike Gentile, who's running in an open Utica-area district.

In the Senate, the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee (DSCC) has invested the most trying to flip the Albany-area seat held by Senator Jake Ashby. They have also invested in the race to defeat Republican Senator Jim Tedisco in Saratoga County. DSCC has invested to defend seats currently held by Senators Pete Harckham (Westchester County), Chris Ryan (Oswego/Syracuse-area), Pat Fahy (Albany), and Toby Ann Stavisky (Queens). Republicans are spending to defend Senator Bill Weber (Rockland County).

NYC Ballot Initiatives

Mayor Zohran Mamdani's **Commission on Government Efficiency** proposed five ballot initiatives to amend the New York City Charter. The questions are outlined below, and the text of the proposed changes can be found **here**. The League of Women Voters has compiled **explanations and analysis** of each proposal as well.

Question 1: Remove Mandatory Public Hearings and Council Review for Certain Uses of Public Space Charter Amendment.

- A "yes" vote supports amending the city charter to remove the requirement for mandatory hearings for uses of public space and the city council review of sidewalk cafes.

Question 2: Procurement Policy Board Authority Charter Amendment.

- A "yes" vote supports amending the city charter to authorize the Procurement Policy Board to reduce city contractor paperwork and require quarterly meetings of the Procurement Policy Board.

Question 3: Changes to Street Project Approval, City Property Disposition, and Office Leasing Charter Amendment.

- A "yes" vote supports amending the city charter to shorten timelines for street construction projects, the disposition of unused city property, and the leasing of offices for the city workforce.

Question 4: Changes to Building Permitting Charter Amendment.

- A "yes" vote supports amending the city charter to centralize construction permits, move waterfront permitting from the Department of Small Business Services to the Department of Buildings, and authorize construction approval by additional Department of Buildings officials.

Question 5: Contribution Targets for Rainy Day Fund Charter Amendment.

- A "yes" vote supports amending the city charter to set target contributions to the city's rainy day fund and require the mayor to develop a methodology for calculating future contributions.

Polling Sites and Future Updates
Outside of New York City you can find your voting location for early voting and election day **here**. New York City voters can find their voting locations **here**.

As the polls are closing on November 3, the Parkside Group will be monitoring state and

national returns, and provide an update before the end of the night.

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