
THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

♦ District Leaders: Curtis Arluck, Paula Diamond Román ♦ President: Mary Peppito ♦

GENERAL MEETING:

Election of Club Officers & Steering Committee

and

Candidate Forum:

Manhattan District Attorney & District Leaders

Invited Speakers:

District Attorney Alvin Bragg

District Leader Curtis Arluck

District Leader Paula Diamond Román

Speakers will make brief presentations, followed by a question and answer session.

Thursday, January 23, 2025

**Bank Street College, 610 West 112th Street
(b/w Broadway and Riverside Drive)**

and on Zoom

6:45 pm Sign-in

7:00 pm Club Elections

7:30 pm Candidate Forum

Pre-register at bit.ly/Jan23Forum



please pre-register online whether attending in person or via Zoom
for more information: bwaydemsdistrictleaders@gmail.com

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Volume 50, Issue 1

January 2025

GENERAL MEETING THURSDAY JAN. 23: Election of Club Officers & Steering Committee and Candidate Forum: Manhattan District Attorney & District Leaders

At our General Meeting we'll be electing Club Officers and Steering Committee members for 2025. We'll also hear from the following unopposed Democratic candidates seeking re-election:

- **District Attorney Alvin Bragg**, who will address the meeting and take some questions
- **District Leaders Curtis Arluck** and **Paula Diamond-Román**

The meeting will be hybrid, on Zoom *and* in-person at Bank Street College, 610 West 112th Street (b/w Broadway and Riverside Drive), from 7:00 until 9:00 pm. In-person attendance is encouraged; virtual attendees will be able to follow along and vote but will have limited opportunities to participate. **Please pre-register and submit questions at bit.ly/Jan23Forum, whether attending via Zoom or in-person** (pre-registration helps speed in-person sign-in). Guests should also pre-register.

The following persons have been nominated for Club Offices and Steering Committee positions (nominations from the floor will also be accepted):

Officers	Steering Committee (vote for 12):	
President: Mary Peppito	Pat Almonrode	Susan Mehlman
Vice President: Laura Danford Mandel	Amy Brundage	Alice Phan
Recording Secretary: Jacob Kimbarow	Shelby Drescher	Mercedes Prendes-Estrada
Corresponding Secretary: Luis Román	Liam Elkind	Angela Rooks
Treasurer: Dan Zweig	Peter Flom	Richard Siegel
	David Isaacson	Risa Starr

To vote in a club election or endorsement, you must be an eligible voting member of the Broadway Democrats:

- You must live in the 69th Assembly District, or an area that used to be in the 69th AD before redistricting;
- You can't have voted in any elections in any other club in this calendar year;
- You must have attended at least one of the previous nine monthly public meetings; and
- You must be current with your dues.

Dues are \$25 (\$10 for students and seniors), and may be paid by check mailed to Broadway Democrats, P.O. Box 1099, New York, NY 10025 **or** at www.broadwaydemocrats.org/pay-your-annual-dues.html, using PayPal or a card. When you pay your dues, please include your email address and telephone number. **If attending in person you may pay your dues at the door.** Questions about your eligibility or your dues status? please contact District Leaders Paula Diamond Román and Curtis Arluck at bwaydemsdistrictleaders@gmail.com. Please attend this important meeting if at all possible!

In Memoriam: Laura Friedman

Curtis Arluck, District Leader

Dear Broadway Democrats,

As I write this I'm on a plane about to take off from (dry but fortunately for the residents in a different wind direction from LA) San Diego. I therefore won't be able to write an article about the problems we face from the incoming Trump Administration, or in planning for the upcoming City elections, especially to find an alternative to the almost as disastrous Adams Administration. But I did want to say a few words about my beloved former Co-Leader Laura Friedman, who passed away last month.

Laura came from a Labor background which was so important in forming the kind of leader she was, but perhaps more importantly she also came from strong family and musical backgrounds, which were so important in forming the kind of person she was. She was one of the very few people I know or know of who excelled as both a theoretical and a practical leader. She had a very strong practical progressive vision which determined every position she took. And she got so much done: for Broadway Democrats, for the Morningside Heights Historic District and Community Coalitions, and by establishing local programs to provide food for those who needed it.

Laura was fearless and outspoken, but knew how to work with people of different viewpoints. She had a great sense of humor. The only time I ever saw her shy was when she had to promote herself, like when we had to take photos for our first District Leader Campaign. In so many ways, I—and we—will miss her. Deepest condolences to Paul, Elana, Danya, and Laura's loving extended family.



President's Corner: *Trump 2.0 and his cabinet nominations, if confirmed, are set to implement a dangerous Project 2025 blueprint for autocracy.*

Mary Peppito

Confirmation hearings started Monday, with the allegations of heavy drinking, racism, misogyny, sexual assault, and misuse of funds, for Fox & Friends anchor Pete Hegseth, the unlikely nominee for U.S. Secretary of Defense. The former Army National Guard officer and leader of two failed small veteran non-profits that went bankrupt, he does not merit a position routinely held by generals.

Army veteran Sen. Tammy Duckworth, who lost both her legs in war, noted that Hegseth is “asking us to lower the standards to make [him] the secretary of defense simply because [he] is buddies with a president-elect.” Given his comments that women are not fit for combat and that the antiquated and debunked military policy of “don't ask, don't tell” should be re-implemented, his complete lack of qualifications make his nomination galling. And even though he claimed to not hold those discriminatory beliefs during his confirmation hearings Monday, Sen. Warren commented that he had changed his position in just 32 days, noting, “I have heard of deathbed conversions, but this is the first I've heard of a nomination conversion.”

As Ben Rhodes, former deputy national security advisor under President Barack Obama editorialized in the NY Times Monday, Trump's “choice of Mr. Hegseth is born out of right-wing grievances that have been building for a long time over the failures in Iraq and Afghanistan” ... and “in Mr. Hegseth, he has found a loyal vessel” for his views. It is clear that Trump wants a sycophant who will pledge fealty and implement whatever expansionist whims that Trump claims are just, including invading (aka “annexing”) Greenland and/or Panama.

And Hegseth is just *one* of the most controversial nominees that pose a serious risk to democracy and our nation. Hearings will be held this week on Trump's other cabinet nominees to hold posts that will affect every aspect of American lives – OUR lives. The federal agencies involved will set policy on health, national security, education, the environment, justice and every other aspect of our lives. As has been noted by Indivisible, “[t]he stakes couldn't be higher, and the time to fight is now.” While there are other concerning nominees, these are the most dangerous to democracy, presidential independence and our health.

Kash Patel, Trump's amoral pick for the FBI:

To lead the FBI, Trump has nominated Kash Patel, a staunch Trump loyalist. Initially, as David French noted in the New York Times, Trump's nomination of Patel “demonstrates Trump's commitment to repression and revenge.” As French noted, Patel is dangerous because he doesn't have any morality, plan or ideology except to carry out the “mercurial president's wishes tomorrow.” Patel has worked to discredit legitimate investigations into election interference and other abuses of power. Patel's history of politicizing national security and undermining accountability makes him unfit to lead the FBI. His confirmation would erode trust in law enforcement and weaponize the agency against political opponents. *continued next page*

Russell Vought, Office of Management and Budget and author of Project 2025:

Russell Vought is a proponent of the use of executive orders and other unilateral actions to enhance presidential powers for direct control of independent agencies such as the FCC and the SEC. As Trump's OMB director, Vought prioritized tax breaks for the wealthy, slashed essential programs, and worked to turn the government into His confirmation would entrench harmful, exclusionary policies and fast-track Project 2025, concentrating power at the expense of everyday Americans. Vought wants to eliminate the powers of administrative agencies who are experts in their fields and to hand that power instead to the whims and desires of Trump. Goodbye EPA, FDA, Federal Reserve, etc.

Robert F. Kennedy Jr., dangerous pick for the Department of Health & Human Services:

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is a danger to our health. RFK, Jr., aka "Mr. Brainworm" (he acknowledges that a brain-eating worm is lodged in his brain), is a notorious believer and promoter of conspiracy theories, involving vaccines and public health. His misinformation campaigns have eroded trust in science and contributed to public health crises. His nomination to lead HHS—a role requiring evidence-based decision-making and public trust—would jeopardize the health and safety of millions.

RFK Jr.'s past behavior—carrying around baby bear carcasses that he claims were roadkill and leaving them in Central Park with a bike posed over them because he had to attend a fancy dinner before leaving on an international flight, as well as sawing off of a whale head and tying it to the roof of his family's station wagon for the trip back home, traumatizing his children with the accompanying whale juices sloshing into the car—call his judgement and honesty into question.

What can we do about these nominations? Call our Senators and make sure that they lobby the Republican 53-47 majority. Both Schumer and Gillibrand need to hear from us. The time for action is now.

And – please join the "The People's March," a massive simultaneous demonstration to be held around the country, including Washington, DC and here in NYC, this Saturday, January 18, just two days prior to Trump's inauguration.

The march is organized by leading civil rights, racial justice and reproductive health organizations, including the Women's March, Planned Parenthood and the National Women's Law Center. A big

showing is necessary to counter Trump's "Victory Rally" to be held at Capitol One Arena on Sunday, January 19.

The People's March – DC and New York

DC: Sat. 1/18, 10-3

Franklin Park, 1332 Eye Street NW

Free buses: <https://www.peoplesmarch.com/bus>

NYC: Sat. 1/18, 10-2

Foley Square, 50 Centre Street

Info: <https://tinyurl.com/Jan18NYCPeoplesMarch>

See you in the streets!



The Laken Riley Act: Locking Up Falsely Arrested Green Card Applicants, Asylees, and Teenage Shoplifters, and Letting Ken Paxton Run US Immigration Policy.

David Isaacson

The House of Representatives recently passed (as H.R. 29) and the Senate is now considering (as S. 5) the "Laken Riley Act" (here, the "LRA"). The bill has been popularly described as a measure to detain undocumented immigrants who have committed crimes, but in reality it unfortunately goes much, much further than that.

The LRA would add a new paragraph (1)(E) to the list of those subject to mandatory detention during removal proceedings in section 236(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. § 1226(c), the "INA"), covering "any alien who ...

- (i) is inadmissible under paragraph (6)(A), (6)(C), or (7) of section 212(a), and
- (ii) is charged with, is arrested for, is convicted of, admits having committed, or admits committing acts which constitute the essential elements of any burglary, theft, larceny, or shoplifting offense,"

Thus, immigration judges would not be able to release such people on bond during their removal proceedings even if a judge determined that the person was not a flight risk or a danger.

The LRA would also require the Secretary of Homeland Security to "issue a detainer for an alien described in [that paragraph] and, if the alien is not otherwise detained by Federal, State, or local officials, [to] effectively and expeditiously take

custody of the alien.” In addition, it would allow “[t]he attorney general of a State, or other authorized State officer” to file lawsuits challenging the release of aliens in alleged violation of INA § 236 and various other sections of law relating to immigration.

The most obvious problem with this new language is that it does not require a conviction, only that one be “charged with” or “arrested for” the crimes in question. Not everyone who is charged with or arrested for a crime is actually guilty of anything. “Innocent until proven guilty” is, or at least was, a core tenet of American criminal law.

Mandatory detention following an arrest or charge that may never lead to a conviction would be bad enough if it only applied to people who one would otherwise expect to be placed in removal proceedings, since even they are entitled under the Constitution to due process of law. There has been at least one recent and notorious incident of an asylum-seeker exonerated after being accused of a more serious crime than shoplifting before being exonerated (see [here](#) and [here](#)).

In addition to these due-process concerns, there are public-safety reasons not to want to force the Department of Homeland Security to detain people who have never been convicted of anything, in limited space that it could be using to detain actual convicted criminals. But for reasons that may be less obvious, the LRA would go significantly farther even than that. I am a lawyer who primarily practices immigration law, so when I read the LRA after the House first passed a version of it last year, I was able to notice some of these less-obvious problems.

One problem is the breadth of the inadmissibility grounds which, together with any charge or arrest for burglary, theft, larceny or shoplifting, would trigger the mandatory detention. As written, the bill would cover anyone who entered without inspection, even if they have since been, for example, granted asylum, at least as the law has been interpreted by the Board of Immigration Appeals. Even a grant of asylum would not save someone from being considered inadmissible under the LRA. The same would be true of people granted Temporary Protected Status (“TPS”) due to a natural disaster or similar nationwide problem in their home country, since such a grant is not technically an admission either.

Those scenarios would at least bear some distant, tenuous resemblance to the cases that the bill’s authors presumably thought they were trying to address, although the thought of an asylee or TPS recipient, granted permission to stay in the United States for safety from persecution or other danger,

being subject to mandatory detention due to potentially false charges of theft or shoplifting, is nonetheless horrifying. But the reach of the LRA’s grounds of inadmissibility is even broader, and stranger, than this.

The ground of inadmissibility under the INA, which applies to documentation requirements such as having a proper visa or passport, was presumably included in the Act to capture parolees, as the alleged murderer of the LRA’s namesake had been paroled into the United States. While the bill’s authors may have had in mind those who first arrive in the United States on parole, however, the language of the bill is broad enough to cover those who use what is called “advance parole” to leave and re-enter the United States while they have a pending application for an immigration benefit, most commonly an application for adjustment of status to that of a Lawful Permanent Resident (green card holder). Under the LRA, therefore, someone who is admitted on a nonimmigrant visa (such as an H-1B temporary worker or their H-4 spouse or child), applies for a green card, travels on advance parole while that application is pending, and is later incorrectly charged with or arrested for theft or shoplifting, would need to be detained by immigration authorities until the completion of those removal proceedings. These proceedings could potentially drag on for years, and during all of that time, the LRA would require the detention of the adjustment applicant.

Another problem is that while a “conviction” under immigration law has been defined by case law to exclude many juvenile delinquency proceedings, there is no such case law regarding an arrest or charge, nor does the text of the LRA include any such carve-out. Thus, the LRA as written would subject even a teenager charged with shoplifting under juvenile delinquency procedures to mandatory immigration detention, if that teenager had previously entered without inspection or traveled on advance parole, and had not yet become a Lawful Permanent Resident. This would be true even if the teenager had Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA or “Dreamer”) status, or had been granted TPS, since neither of those is technically an “admission” under immigration law.

It gets worse. If state authorities had not considered it worthwhile to detain the falsely accused adjustment applicant or teenage shoplifter while sorting out a minor criminal charge, the Act would mandate that DHS “effectively and expeditiously take custody of the alien.” And if DHS did not do this, the attorney general of any state that could claim at least \$100 in damage *could sue DHS*

“to obtain appropriate injunctive relief.” So an attempt by DHS to be somewhat reasonable in enforcing these overly broad criteria under unjust circumstances would simply lead to litigation, and possibly a court order to more rigorously enforce the LRA’s peculiar requirements.

Nor is this the only provision of immigration law that the LRA would authorize state Attorneys General to enforce. The Act would create similar rules regarding mandatory detention, procedures for processing arriving noncitizens, detention of noncitizens who have been ordered removed, parole, and—perhaps most ludicrously—for INA § 243, which governs the decision to stop issuing visas to nationals of a country that refuses to accept its citizens when the US attempts to deport them, or “unreasonably delays” accepting them. The list of countries that reputedly delay accepting their citizens for deportation includes India and China. So under the LRA, AG Ken Paxton of Texas or one of his red-state compatriots could sue the government to force it to stop issuing visas to anyone from India or China! The foreign-policy consequences, not to mention the economic consequences, could be disastrous.

I am grateful that Representative Nadler voted against this monstrosity in the House; I am hopeful that Senators Schumer and Gillibrand will do the same when the time comes. The key then will be whether enough other Democrats—or, one might hope, any remaining reasonable Republicans, should such mythical creatures still exist—will block the bill from passing. With 53 Republicans in the Senate once the vacancy caused by J.D. Vance’s resignation is filled, if more than six Democratic Senators vote for cloture, the LRA could achieve the required 60 votes for cloture and move forward to final passage.

I would urge readers to call our Senators and make clear that the LRA should be defeated. I would also urge any readers who have friends or family in other states with Democratic Senators to try to get them to do the same. After all of the good things that the Republicans blocked in the Senate by filibustering when they were in the minority—including the DREAM Act in 2010, which, if it had passed, would have protected some of the very folks who could be affected by the LRA—it would be a real shame if a 47-vote Democratic minority in the Senate did not block something this bad in return.

👍

Buy Cookies *and* Help Girls in NYC Shelters

Sally Petrick

I love Girl Scout cookies, and the Girl Scout cookie sales are about to start. The cookies are exactly as I remember them over 60 years ago, except that now, in 2025, it’s possible to order them online *and* help a troop for girls in shelters here in NYC: Troop 6000.

Troop 6000 works all year to provide girls in the shelters with as many typical Girl Scout activities as possible. You’ll help these truly needy girls when you order and designate your purchase specifically for Troop 6000. 100% of sales will go directly to them.

It’s a little too early to order just yet, but not too soon to get ready. So I want to be sure everyone knows about this. You can sign up here to be notified when sales begin: www.girlscoutsnyc.org/troop6000.

I can’t wait for my Thin Mints and Trefoils, and for the chance to help a troop of girls in NYC shelters who really need it.

👍

Pedestrians for Safe Streets

Dan Zweig

When I have somewhere to go in the city, I like to walk whenever I can. New York City is a great walking town and I’ve been walking here for many years.

And especially as I get older and maybe not quite as nimble as I was a few years ago, I need the streets to be safe. Manhattan is great, in that there are lights on almost every corner and the traffic flow is engineered to be predictable.

You can watch for the Walk sign as the light changes and yes, check when the light changes that an automobile isn’t trying to just make the light at the last second, but the vehicle’s direction of travel on the street is predictable and except for that last second to get through the light, the automobiles and trucks stop at the lights.

And with the Vision Zero program (thank you cycling community), we pedestrians have become even safer with the reduction of speed and the increased turning drivers’ awareness of crossing pedestrians.

It's important to stay alert on the street, watch where you are going (and keep your head out of your cellphone), but I know I can be safe sharing the streets with the mostly predictable behavior of motor vehicles around me.

But as a pedestrian, I cannot feel safe on the street when vehicles do not follow the traffic rules and their behavior is unpredictable. I cannot feel safe when vehicles fail to stop at red lights or ride the wrong way on the street (no thank you cycling community). This is frightening and dangerous to all pedestrians and has gotten completely out of control.

Years ago, it used to be just a few cyclists, but as the numbers of bicycles on the street has increased and especially now that so many bicycles have become motor powered, it is crucial for pedestrian safety that all cyclists observe the vehicular rules of the road. And this doesn't just mean the delivery people. All cyclists need to follow the rules for vehicles – ride in the correct direction and stop at the red lights. And except for kids 12 and under, that means no riding on the sidewalks, too.

We have looked the other way and allowed this dangerous behavior to become normalized in our city for too long. And it has gotten much more dangerous than it used to be with the advent of motor-powered bicycles.

Pedestrians deserve to be safe AND feel safe on the street.

We need to stop looking the other way and enforce the proper behavior of not just automobiles and trucks, but all street vehicles – bicycles of all kinds and all other electric or gas-powered vehicles, too.

The flagrant violation of vehicular rules must stop. We need enforcement.

I call on our local and state officials to take action to see that existing vehicular laws are enforced for all vehicles to enable pedestrians to feel truly safe walking on the street.

I will not vote for any city or state elected official if you will not pledge to take meaningful action to have law enforcement correct this situation. I look forward to hearing your plans.

We pedestrians deserve better.

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INFO YOU CAN USE!

Board of Elections
NYS Political Calendar:

<https://tinyurl.com/2025PoliticalCalendar>

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We Want To Hear What You Have To Say!



Email submissions to the editor
(in MS Word, please) at palmonrode@gmail.com.

Please note that we will consider all submissions,
but we reserve the exclusive and final right to
determine what to publish.

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Send to: **The Broadway Democrats, P.O. Box 1099, Cathedral Station, New York, NY 10025**

Special Interests: _____

E-mail: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____ (title, honorifics, and pronouns optional)

To join the Broadway Democrats, please fill out the form below and mail with your check (made out to "Broadway Democrats") to the address at the bottom. Welcome!

In order to vote in club elections (endorsements, elections of officers, judicial convention, amendments), you must be an eligible, voting member of the Broadway Democrats. You must have attended at least one of the previous nine monthly public meetings and you must pay your dues. Dues partially defray the costs of presenting forums and putting out this newsletter. Dues are \$25; senior dues are \$10.

Membership

The Broadway Democrats Newsletter

January 2025

FIRST
CLASS

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District Leaders:
 Curtis Arluck,
 Paula Diamond Román
President: Mary Peppito
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