

TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION LOCAL 100

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CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Name: **Howie Hawkins**

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Campaign Headquarters

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Campaign Manager

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Campaign Committee

Full Name of Campaign Committee: **Hawkins 2010**

District Campaign

District #: **New York** Office Sought: **Governor**

Are you an Incumbent? **No** If yes, when were you first elected?

Which major party are you seeking a nomination from?

Not seeking Democratic or Republican nominations

Will you be seeking the nomination from a minor party?

Green Party

List here the unions, organizations, community groups, newspapers and issue groups that have endorsed you.

Green Party of New York State

Labor Committee for Howie Hawkins for Governor of New York State

(See my website, www.howiehawkins.org, under the Labor for Hawkins link for their statement and initial list of signers.)

Socialist Party of New York State

Broome County Peace Action

Candidate Experience

Please explain any activities, and/or experiences that demonstrate your commitment to labor and the trade union movement. What experience do you have to demonstrate you are the best candidate to represent the district you seek office in?

I unload trucks at the UPS hub in Syracuse, where I am a member of Teamsters Local 317 and active in Teamsters for a Democratic Union, US Labor Against the War, and the Labor Committee for Single Payer Healthcare. I have been a member of a union since joining the American Serviceman's Union when I entered the Marine Corps in 1972.

I have actively supported many labor struggles over the years, including the UFW grape and lettuce boycotts in the late 1960s and early 1970s, ACTWU's J.P. Stevens Campaign in the late 1970s, and USWA's Phelps Dodge Copper Strike in the 1980s. Since moving to Syracuse in 1991, I have walked picket lines and leafleted in support of organizing, contract, and worker safety campaigns and strikes at Landis Plastics, Crucible Steel, UPS, University Sheraton, Coyne Laundry, New Process Gear, and others. This year I have walked the picket line with the striking Mott's beverage workers in Williamson and joined and spoke at the demonstration of the Momentive Process Materials workers in Waterford.

I have also been a developer of cooperatives, having organized and worked in a construction workers' co-op in the late 1970s and early 1980s, worked as a co-op developer for a federation of cooperatives, and am currently helping to develop a food cooperative in my inner city Syracuse neighborhood which has no grocery stores left.

I have been an organizer in movements for peace, justice, labor, the environment, and

independent politics since 1967. I have advocated labor law reform, living wage laws, and public jobs programs in my previous Green Party `campaigns for Syracuse Common Council, US Congress, and US Senate. I am the only union member running for Governor. A Labor Committee for Howie Hawkins for Governor has been initiated by union members around the state to support our campaign. (See the Labor for Hawkins link on my campaign website: www.howiehawkis.org.)

The basic issue of the campaign is whether state government will start looking out for the interests of ordinary New Yorkers, or continue to look out for the interests of the big corporate special interests. I bring my experience organizing in popular movements fighting for just policies and contracts from government and employers.

Campaign Information

Please offer a brief description of the district and the race. Who are your opponents?

How many votes will you need to win? Who are your constituents? How strong is your community base?

Opponents:

Both major party opponents, Andrew Cuomo for the Democrats and Rick Lazio for the Republicans, are established New York politicians. While Cuomo is more liberal and Lazio more conservative on social issues like abortion and gay marriage, their conservative fiscal and economic policies are very similar.

Carl Palladino, a far right Republican challenger to Lazio, is petitioning for a Taxpayer Party line, which he says he will use as an additional ballot line only if he defeats Lazio for the Republican nomination.

Warren Redlich, another far right Republican challenger to Lazio, is also petitionin for the Libertarian Party line, which he will run on if the petition is successful. The core Liberatarian vote is about 15,000 in statewide elections.

The Working Families Party wants to run Cuomo on their line, but Cuomo has not agreed, citing an investigation into campaign finance improprieties, although that did not stop Cuomo from taking the Independence line, which also faces a similar investigation. It appears the Democratic leadership feels it can take the Working Families Party vote for granted, since it usually cross endorses their candidates anyway. As Hank Sheinkopf, a prominent Democratic strategist, said in a recent newspaper interview, "[Working Families Party's] time may just have passed." Working Families put a Legal Aid lawyer, Kenneth Schaeffer, as a placeholder on their petitions, hoping to get Cuomo to agree to take the line later. If Cuomo still refuses, they will have to run Schaeffer to get 50,000 votes to keep their ballot line.

Charles Barron, a Democratic New York city councilor, is petitioning for a Freedom Party line. This appears to be for the purpose of leveraging influence for African-Americans and Latinos inside the Democratic Party, since he and his wife, who is Democratic Assembly Member, remain enrolled Democrats and he has endorsed a slate of Democratic State Committee candidates for the September Democratic primary.

The Green Party ticket will be the only independent progressive ticket on the New York ballot this year is building a pro labor, peace, justice, and environment alternative party whose goal is to defeat, not merely lobby, the two old corporate-financed parties.

Votes Needed:

We expect about 5 million votes to be cast. In a close three-way race, 1.7 million votes could win the office with a plurality. The Green Party has three other objectives:

- Ballot Line: 50,000+ votes for the Green gubernatorial ticket wins party status and an automatic ballot line for the next four years, enabling the Greens to much more easily place candidates on the ballot for local, state, and federal races by party designation petitions in June/July instead of independent nominating petitions in July/August that require far larger numbers of petition signatures.**
- Change the Policy Debate: The Green ticket will raise reforms the corporate-sponsored major parties will not. The more votes the Green ticket receives, the more weight our platform will have in the political debate in New York among the people, in the media, and in Albany. A progressive's vote for a centrist Democrat is taken for granted by the Democratic leadership. An independent progressive's vote for the Green ticket cannot be taken for granted and sends a strong message in support of Green policies.**
- Strengthen Party Organization: The campaign will strengthen and widen the local Green Party organizations throughout the state, enabling more competitive candidacies and stronger issue campaigns in the future.**

Constituents and Community Base:

The Green Party's base includes over 22,000 enrolled Green Party members in New York, a core vote of around 50,000 in recent statewide elections, and organized party locals in the cities, including Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Ithaca, Binghamton, Albany, and New York City, as well as many rural counties, including Allegheny, Chenango, Tioga, Chemung, Ulster, Saratoga, Washington, and others.

The core constituents have been activists committed to independent political action by progressive social movements such as labor, peace, environment, and social justice. The potential constituency is the majority of voters who, according to polls, support progressive social and economic policies, such as progressive taxes, the right to a job, single-payer health care, cuts in military spending, and public investment in renewable energy and mass transit. With the Democrats in power in both Albany and Washington, we are finding that many of

these progressives who have been voting Democratic are more open to an independent Green vote than ever before.

Fundraising

How much money have you raised thus far for your campaign? How much money do you intend to raise? How much more will it take to win the campaign?

Raised thus far: \$6000

Fundraising Goal: \$100,000

Needed To Win: The corporate-sponsored Democratic and Republican candidates will have tens of millions to spend. With tens of millions we believe we could compete by saturating the airwaves with our message, which we believe would have majority support. We believe with \$100,000 we can meet our goals for this campaign: win the ballot line with 50,000+ votes, change the debate through earned media as well as limited paid media, and come out of the election with a much stronger party organization than we went in and able to wage a stronger fight for our policies in the future. Ultimately, we believe a pro-labor party like the Greens will have to do like unions do and labor parties in other countries have done: organize a mass base of dues paying members and affiliated unions and other popular organizations. There are far more workers than bosses. We could finance a competitive independent pro-labor party ourselves.

KEY ISSUES

Transportation & MTA Service Cuts

What transportation issues are most pressing in your district? How have the MTA service cuts impacted your district? Have you attended any MTA Board hearings or any public hearings on transportation? What would be your solution to the current MTA service cuts occurring in your district? Please list the current bus and subway lines that begin, run through, or terminate in your district.

The district for the Governor being all of New York State, all bus and subway lines run through my district. All of the service cuts by MTA and other public transportation agencies around the state are negatively impacting both the transit workers through lay-offs and the

riding public through fare hikes and route and schedule cutting, with disproportionate impact on low-income, working-class communities.

I have attended hearings on public transportation in Syracuse of the Central New York Regional Transportation Authority to advocate for better routing and scheduling for both low-income inner city communities and suburban communities that have little public transit options to commute to jobs in the the inner city, as well as for investment in buses that run on cleaner fuels that diesel to improve air quality in the inner city.

The solutions to the service cuts include:

- 1. Make the rich pay their fair share of taxes: Keep the \$16 billion Stock Transfer Tax. Institute a Bankers' Bonus Tax of 50 percent on their \$20 billion in 2009 cash bonuses. Restore a more progressive state income tax like we had in the 1970s, which would cut rates for 95 percent of New Yorkers while raising \$8 billion more a year. Add those together, that's \$34 billion more in state revenues. Subtract the \$9 billion projected deficit and that's still a surplus of \$25 billion that can used to end the service cuts in public transit and as well as expand public transit. The \$25 billion should also be spent on fully funding public schools and colleges and a public jobs program to put the unemployed to work improving out transportation, school, and infrastructure systems.**
- 2. Prioritize Spending on Public Mass Transit: Expanding mass transit is a high priority for the Greens on economic, environmental, and justice grounds. We need to convert to clean-fuel buses, expand bus and rail service to underserved areas, rebuild the interurbans (inter-city rails), and expand inter-city rails, not only subways and street level trolleys, but also personal rapid transit (PRT) on elevated rails, like the demonstration project funded by NYSERDA in Ithaca.**
- 3. Democratize Transportation Boards: We need elected boards, not the appointed boards. I think a board composed two-thirds of publicly elected members and one-third elected by the workers of the transportation district would best represent the public interest and the expertise and interests of the workers who run the system. Appointed boards allow these public agencies to be used to feather nests of powerful corporate interests and their political representatives in government whose campaigns they finance.**

This year, Senator Dilan in the New York State Legislature proposed an increase to the current mortgage recording tax (MRT) in the MTA service area from .30 cents per \$100 real estate transaction to a .50 cent rate, and in the upstate areas, from .25 cents per \$100 real estate transaction to a .50 cent rate. It is estimated that such an increase would generate \$200 million in revenue for the MTA, partly offsetting its growing budget gap.

Would you support the passage of this proposal and to mandate that the MTA use the

increase to reverse the harsh transit cuts it adopted early this year, so that riders in the hardest hit neighborhoods can still get to work and school? **Yes**

Also this year, Senator Perkins and Assembly Member Millman introduced the MTA Stimulus bill (S7433/A10345), which would direct the MTA to use 10% of over \$1.3 billion in stimulus grants for capital projects received from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

Would you back the passage of this bill, which would mandate that the MTA flex \$130 million from its capital budget for operating expenses, thereby saving jobs and avoiding service cuts?

Yes. I support this bill as an immediate measure to maintain the operating budget, service levels, and transit employment.

Beyond this immediate relief, the MTA needs a fully-funded capital plan. The riders need the service reliability and enhancement it provides. Workers need the construction jobs.

We need a new funding source for transit in New York City. I support the congestion pricing plan developed by Ted Khell and Charlie Komanoff to raise \$1.5 billion a year for the MTA while reducing or eliminating fares and increasing ridership. We also need increased, long-term dedicated transit funding from the federal government from gasoline and carbon taxes.

Contracting

The MTA hires private contractors while unionized transit workers complete the same work better and inexpensively. What steps would you take to ensure that work that can be done in house, and saves money, remains in house and doesn't end up in the hands of more expensive contractors? What is your plan to end this practice of privatization of public sector work?

What type of enforcement mechanisms would you put in place to guarantee responsible contractors? Would you support a VENDEX-like system for the MTA to ensure greater transparency to the public?

I agree that privatization ends up costing more for public services. I support doing this work in house. The Governor should support this publicly, support any relevant legislation to make it happen, and insure the state budget provides the Comptroller's and Attorney General's office with adequate resources for audits and enforcement. I support a VENDEX-like system for the MTA for public transparency.

Education and Healthcare

Public service is being cut across the board in everything from schools, to hospitals, to an assortment of city and state services. What is your plan to stop these service cuts?

What issues are most pressing in your district? Which groups have you worked with to help solve these problems?

I outlined my plan to stop service cuts and to expand services above under the MTA service cuts section, which is progressive tax reform that makes the rich pay their fair share to erase the deficit and increase spending on people's needs.

The most pressing issue in the state is jobs. We need a million jobs now for full employment, The government should be the employer of last resort, providing a living wage job in public works and services when private sector jobs are not available. I am a member of the National Jobs for All Coalition and attended their New York City conference last November.

The state should institute a state-owned bank, like North Dakota has had since 1918, to direct investments into a sustainable green economic recovery. The rich and corporations are speculating with their trillions in cash, merely rearranging ownership of existing productive assets, not investing long term in businesses that produce goods and services. We need a state bank to get the private economy moving again, as well as to finance public spending without being held hostage by the big money center banks on Wall Street, which can veto progressive policies by refusing to rollover the state's bond debt. Green Party candidates for governor have been advocating state-owned banks to help deal with the economic crisis across the country.

Home foreclosures are a huge problem in some parts of the state. The state should pass a moratorium on foreclosures and the state bank should refinance mortgages on a reduced principal, fixed rate, long term basis. State legislation should force the mortgage holders to do this refinancing on their own, or sell the mortgage to the state bank at current market cost, not this fantasy mark-to-model basis the federal government is letting the banks get away with.

The health care crisis is not resolved by the federal health care reform bill adopted last March. It leaves millions uninsured. There is no cost controls. The taxpayers are subsidizing private insurance policies. It will cost New Yorkers \$28 billion more a year by 2019 than a single public payer, according to a study commissioned by New York State that came out last July. The state

should adopt a single payer health care program. Not only will it save New Yorkers billions while covering everybody with comprehensive health care benefits, it will eliminate the Medicaid burden on county budgets. The burden is more than half of county budgets in most upstate counties, which accounts for the highest in the nation property tax rates, which are huge issue upstate. Single payer would eliminate the fiscal crisis in upstate local governments and enable a reduction in regressive local property and sales taxes. I am active in the Labor committee for Single Party Healthcare and work with Single Payer Action, Single Payer New York and the Syracuse chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program. I was arrested and convicted of criminal trespass for blocking the door of WellPoint's Syracuse office last November in civil disobedience action at a single payer health care picket organized by Syracuse PNHP after the WellPoint managers refused come out and receive our letter of protest.

Another huge issue upstate, as well as New York City since it affects the city's drinking water supplies, is the move by natural gas drilling to hydrofracking for natural gas. This involves breaking up rock formations by injecting water, sand, and toxic chemicals at high pressure to release the gas. It could transform upstate into a toxic industrial landscape and pollute drinking water supplies. The Green Party supports a ban on hydrofracking and directing energy investments into clean alternatives like wind, solar, ground-source heat pumps, and so forth. We are working the grassroots coalitions opposing hydrofracking throughout the state.

School funding is a major issue, particularly in upstate inner cities and rural communities with low property tax bases. I have participated in and spoken at several school funding advocacy events called by the Syracuse chapter of Citizen Action's Alliance for Quality Education and the Syracuse chapter of Parents for Public Education.

Taylor Law

What is your position on the Taylor Law? Should it be legal for public sector employees to strike?

The right to strike is an inalienable right. Anything less is a form of forced labor. The Taylor Law should be repealed, as I have advocated in my previous Green Party electoral campaigns.

Currently any striking employee covered by the Taylor Law would receive a two for one penalty (two days lost pay for each day out) and the Union would lose its dues check-off. During the last contract negotiations, language from Sec. 210 was altered and used to discourage the union from striking. This year the AFL-CIO Taylor Law Task force introduced legislation, which

was designed to ensure that language in Sec. 210 which is related to strike penalties, would be specific and unalterable. Next year we are going to reintroduce this legislation.

Can we count on your support? **Yes**

Another bill currently in the New York State Legislature is A5858, which would enhance the collective bargaining obligations of public employers and adjust penalties for striking of public employees.

Would you support passage of this bill?

Yes, I think so, if it reduces the penalties for striking public employees, as a reading of it online appears to indicate. But it's not clear without searching the references in the bill to the Civil Service Law. I need more education on the details of this bill.

Pension Reform

Recently, Governor Paterson introduced the Tier V pension for state workers, which TWU Local 100 is adamantly against. What would you do to ensure that transit workers can keep their Tier IV pension?

The richest man in New York City, Mayor Bloomberg, has a lot of nerve asking future city union workers to take lower pension benefits. The labor movement should resist every effort of employers to pit generations of workers against each other.

The budget crisis is a problem of the rich not paying their fair share, not workers taking pensions they have earned. We need progressive tax reform to deal with the budget crisis, including the pension obligations, not pension cuts.

The lower financial returns of the pension funds over the last decade are a consequence of the economic crisis where the banks made bad bets, got bailed out by working class taxpayers, and now speculate in private equity firms and hedge funds to get high returns, while the stock and bond market for small investors and workers' pension funds are in the doldrums. Federal Wall Street reform and economic policies are failing to change this situation. A state-owned bank to lead investments in New York State for a sustainable green economic recovery would create opportunities for state pension investments that generate a decent return with low risk. We need to keep pushing the federal government to do real financial reform and progressive economic policies, but we can do a lot to improve New York's economy, which would rank 16th in size on a list of the world's nations, and provide good opportunities to invest our pension funds.

A board, not the state comptroller, should govern state pension fund investments. The board should include representatives elected by state and municipal workers.

Budget Crisis

The people who are affected the most by the budget crisis are the public sector and civil service workers, especially those of economically disadvantaged backgrounds. How will you prioritize the state budget to ensure that the jobs and benefits of members of these communities are protected?

State workers' pay averages \$40,000 a year. State workers' pensions average \$16,000 a year. Their pay and benefits are under 10 percent of the state budget. The attempt to scapegoat and attack public workers for the state's fiscal problems is not only wrong, it's stupid economics.

Through progressive tax reform to make the rich pay their fair share, we can not only maintain current levels of public spending, we can increase it to meet the people's real needs for public services. That is the central policy priority of my gubernatorial campaign.

Among the public sector employees protected under Civil Service Law are transit workers, such as Station Agents, who must be redeployed in other titles in the event of layoffs. On May 11th of this year, 260 Station Agents were laid off with only \$10 million in savings, with up to another 800 transit workers threatened to be laid off this year.

Will you assist us in our fight to redeploy workers who have been laid off or displaced in the public sector? **Yes**

Due to the current budget crisis, there have been unprecedented cuts to transit, police, fire, sanitation, healthcare, and education. How will you maintain and improve the level of public service that people in your district so desperately need?

As outlined in more detail above: make the rich pay their fair share of taxes through progressive tax reforms and spend the increased revenues meeting the people's needs and investing in a sustainable green economic recovery.

Jobs and Taxes

Big Wall Street banks wrecked the American economy and killed American jobs—then took \$4.71 trillion in taxpayer bailouts. We are 11 million jobs in the hole—and we think it's time for Wall Street to share the pain. What would be your plan to bring some of Wall Street's bailout money back to your district's Main Street?

Progressive tax reform, starting with keeping the revenues of the Stock Transfer Tax instead of rebating them. The Wall Street rich are not investing in the real economy of Main Street businesses that produce goods and services. They are using speculative investments through private equity firms and hedge funds, as well as stock buybacks, mergers, and acquisitions, to further concentrate ownership of existing productive assets. We should tax the rich upfront instead borrowing from them and paying interest on it. We should make them pay their fair share and use that money to revive the real economy of Main Street, both public services and infrastructure and the productive public investments in private businesses. We need a state-owned bank to target investment into a sustainable green economic recovery featuring mass transit, renewable energy, clean manufacturing, and organize agriculture. The unemployed should receive immediate relief through a Works Progress Administration-style public jobs program in public works and services. We should fully fund public schools and colleges and take health care off the bargaining table through a public-financed, single-payer, cost-effective health care service for all New Yorkers.

National Transportation Funding

Our national mass transportation systems are in deep crisis. Every major system in America – from New York to San Francisco, Chicago to Atlanta, and Boston to Miami – is under severe financial crisis. Thousands of transit jobs, essential service, and stable fares to the public are at risk, especially in New York City. How will you support permanent, adequate funding for our city's transit systems?

The US tax on gasoline has been reduced to \$19 per 1000 miles driven, half of what it was in 1975 and the lowest it has ever been since the tax was instituted in 1929 in inflation-adjusted dollars. For immediate increased funding, the federal gas tax, which is dedicated to transportation funding, should be raised. More of it should be spent on expanding mass transit instead of roads and highways.

A better and more equitable solution would be a carbon tax. It would tax fuels based on their carbon content. The revenues would be rebated to consumers on a per capita basis and dedicated to investments in the efficient use of clean renewable energy, including mass transit. The tax would be escalated gradually, giving businesses and households predictable prices that will incentivize investments in energy conservation, efficiency, and renewables. Ideally a carbon tax should be harmonized internationally. Next best would be a federal carbon tax. In the meantime, New York State should implement a carbon tax, as British Columbia has done, to get a jump start on the conversion to clean energy and a world class system of convenient, low-fare mass transit throughout the state.

Wall Street's carbon pricing solution, cap and trade, opens up a huge market of trillions of dollars in which Wall Street will make money of fees, commissions, and derivatives. But it will create volatile carbon prices that make planning investments in energy conservation, efficiency, and renewables highly risky and uncertain, as the experience of the European carbon market has demonstrated.

Currently, there are two bills in the United States Legislature geared towards funding national public transportation. The transit flex spending bill (HR2746, Carnahan & Matsui/S3189, Brown) would allow New York City to spend up to 30% of its capital funds for operating expenses. The Public Transportation Preservation Act (S3412), introduced by eight senators, including Senators Chris Dodd (CT) and Chuck Schumer (NY), would deliver \$2 billion in emergency funding to transit systems nationwide. Accordingly, the New York City metropolitan area would receive over \$350 million in operating funds.

Would you support the passage of these bills?

Yes. I support HR2746, Carnahan & Matsui/S3189, Brown as an immediate measure to maintain the operating budget, service levels, and transit employment. I also support The Public Transportation Preservation Act (S3412) because the \$350 million for operating funds would go a long way toward closing the projected MTA budget deficit.

Beyond these bills, we need a long-term solution based on new funding sources, which I believe should be congestion pricing as developed in the Kheel-Komanoff plan for local funding, as well as larger dedicated funding for transit from the federal government based on gasoline and carbon taxes.

Do you pledge to support TWU Local 100 and the Keep America Moving coalition as we

attempt to save mass transit systems nationwide? **Yes**

Labor

Would you support the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act, a bill currently in the United States Congress, which would allow working people the freedom to form unions and bargain collectively? **Yes**

-- In two pages or fewer, please attach a detailed explanation of your political platform.--

Please Sign and Date this Questionnaire.

Signature: **Howie Hawkins** Date: **July 14, 2010**

Howie Hawkins for Governor of New York – Green Party

Platform Summary

PROGRESSIVE TAXES: Take the Rich Off Welfare to Erase the Deficit and Fund Jobs, Schools, Health Care, Homes, the Environment, and Revenue Sharing with Local Governments

REFORM ALBANY: Replace the Two-Party Corporate State with Multi-Party Democracy through Proportional Representation, Democratize Legislative Rules, Strengthen Disclosure Laws for Lobbying and Election Expenditures

FULL EMPLOYMENT: Jobs for All at Living Wages

HEALTH CARE FOR ALL: A Single-Payer, Community-Based Health Service

CLEAN ENERGY: Ban Hydrofracking, No Nukes, Renewable Energy, Public Power

GOOD SCHOOLS FOR ALL COMMUNITIES: Fiscal Equity for Fully Funded Schools in All Communities, Free Public Education from Pre-School through Graduate School, Oppose Privatization and Union-Busting, Support Community Schools with Parent/Teacher/Community Participation

ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY FOR ECONOMIC RENEWAL: A State Bank for Democratic Direction of Investment toward Worker and Consumer Cooperatives, Democratic Public Enterprises, Affordable Mortgages, and a Sustainable Green Economy

SUSTAINABLE GREEN ECONOMY: Renewable Energy; Green Retrofits on Every Residential and Commercial Building; Mass Transit, Freight Rail, and High-Speed Rail; Sustainable Farms and Factories; A Statewide Sustainability Plan with Goals and Timetables

ORGANIC FOOD AND AGRICULTURE: Ban corporate-owned farms. Support family farms with price supports, credit, and tax relief. Financial and technical assistance incentives to convert farms to organic methods. Bypass corporate food middlemen by supporting farmer-owned processing and marketing cooperatives and consumer-owned food cooperatives. Full organizing rights and decent wages for farmworkers.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING: A Moratorium on Foreclosures, State Bank to Refinance Affordable Mortgages, End Subsidies for Private Developers, Invest in Public Housing, Home Rule on Rent Control Laws

RETIREMENT SECURITY: A NY Social Security System to Supplement Federal Social Security

WORKERS RIGHTS: Repeal the Taylor Law against public workers' right to strike. End the exclusion of farmworkers and domestic workers from the state's fair labor laws. Defend public school teachers' due process tenure and seniority rights.

FAIR ELECTIONS: Proportional Representation, Instant Runoff Voting, Public Campaign Financing,

Fair Ballot Formats, Voter Information Booklets

END THE “WAR ON DRUGS”: Drug treatment on demand, not mass incarceration. End drug prohibition: legalize, regulate, and tax drugs, starting with marijuana.

REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM: Support the right of women to access all reproductive services, including abortion.

GAY MARRIAGE: Support Marriage Equality

PEACE: Recall the NY National Guard from overseas wars and occupations. Expel the predator drones from NY Air National Guard at Hancock Air Base in Syracuse. End the Wars, Troops Home Now, Dismantle the Global Military Empire, Invest the Savings in Economic and Environmental Renewal.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM: Fully fund public defenders. Abolish the death penalty. Community service and restitution for nonviolent offenders.

REGIONAL PLANNING: Move land use planning authority from local municipalities to elected metropolitan/regional planning boards in order to end economically and environmentally destructive sprawl, to protect farms, green space, and environmental resources, to reduce intraregional inequities in housing, education and fiscal capacity, and to renew city, town and village centers with transit-linked, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods of mixed homes, shops, jobs, schools, parks, and civic buildings.

AID LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY: End unfunded state mandates. State takeover of Medicaid costs. Progressive state tax reform and revenue-sharing to reduce burden of regressive local sales and property taxes. Support municipal charter reforms to empower directly democratic citizen assemblies in towns, villages, and city neighborhood in municipal governance.