



Press Release

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League of Women Voters to Hold Virtual Candidates Forum in Advance of June 23rd Democratic Primary

Daniel Buttermann and Corey Mosher, the two candidates vying in the June 23rd primary to become the Democratic Party's nominee for New York State's 121st District Assembly seat, will meet in an online debate on Tuesday, June 9, 2020, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. The Assembly seat is currently held by Republican John Salka, who will be on the ballot in November. The League of Women Voters of the Cooperstown Area and the League of Women Voters of the Oneonta Area will be co-sponsoring the online debate, which will take place using the Zoom platform.

"An engaged and informed citizenry is more important than ever, given the challenges ahead. In light of this, our local leagues are committed to providing the public with opportunities to meet candidates, ask questions and cast informed votes on election day," says Julie Sorensen, co-president of the LWV of the Cooperstown Area. Using the Zoom Webinar platform, the two Leagues have planned a forum that will be conducted using standard debate formats. This will include opportunities for candidates to make introductory statements and to answer questions emailed from those viewing the online Zoom debate. **Up to 500 viewers can connect to the debate using a Zoom link that will be provided on the Cooperstown and Oneonta League of Women Voters Facebook pages, as well as the Oneonta LWV website (www.lwvoneonta.org).**

"Organizing this virtual debate is a new and exciting opportunity for the League," says Liane Hirabayashi, co-president of the LWV of the Cooperstown Area. "Those who have attended our in-person debates will recognize a familiar format, which we can now extend to many more viewers than we could accommodate in a physical space. And we're very pleased that the two candidates have been eager to join us on this venture."

Candidate Daniel Buttermann, from Oneonta, is a member of the Oneonta School Board, has served as a member of the Community Action Partnership and is co-founder and executive producer for TEDxOneonta. An insurance claims specialist, he graduated from the University of Arizona and received an MBA from Southern Methodist University.

Candidate Corey Mosher, from Hamilton, is a fourth-generation family farmer and a partner at Mosher Farms. He has served on the Boards of the Madison County Cooperative Extension and the New York State Vegetable Growers' Association.

The 121st Assembly District includes the majority of towns in Otsego County, including the city of Oneonta and the villages of Richfield Springs and Cooperstown. The District includes all of Madison County and the southern portion of Oneida County. Members of the New York State Assembly pass bills on public policy matters, set levels for state spending, and work with the State Senate and the Governor to create laws and establish a state budget.

Robert Cairns, managing editor of the *Oneonta Daily Star*, will represent the media at the online debate and will ask questions of the candidates directly.

Members of the public can join the meeting using the link posted on the Facebook pages for both local Leagues. Everyone attending the debate will be able to see and hear the statements, questions, and responses, but only the candidates, media representative, and the moderator will be seen and heard on the screen. **Members of the public may submit questions for candidates before or during the debate by emailing lwwcoop@gmail.com.** Senders must include their names, where they live, and which candidate(s) the question is for; these questions will be reviewed and vetted by the League before being posed by the debate moderator.

Steve Londner, Steering Committee member of the LWV of the Oneonta Area, notes that many people have become familiar with the Zoom format over the past months either through working at home or when keeping in touch with family and friends. "Educating the public about the issues in the campaign and stimulating public interest and participation in the election is crucial to our mission," he adds. "Although the dynamic will be a bit different without an audience, this format will still allow voters to learn the candidates' positions on the pressing issues that face New York State and inform our decision on election day."

The ballot for the June 23rd primary elections will include all contested congressional, state, and local seats as well as the presidential primary that was postponed from April. To vote in a party's primary election you must be a member of that party. All eligible voters in New York were mailed an application for an absentee ballot for these primary elections and may vote by mail. The other important dates for the upcoming election are:

- June 13-21: Early voting. Check your local county board of elections for times/places
- June 16: The last day to postmark application for absentee ballot by mail

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- June 22: The last day to apply in person at board of elections for absentee ballot
- June 22: The last day to postmark absentee ballot
- June 23: The last day to deliver absentee ballot in person at board of elections
- June 23: Election Day. Polls are open 6 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Visit the League's online voters' guide, VOTE411.org, to learn about races, compare candidates and develop your personal ballot. The League of Women Voters has also instituted a hotline for voters in the 2020 elections. Text VoteNY to 474747 to receive up-to-date notices on changes in the elections. For more information on the debate, contact Steve Londner at 607-267-8809 (phone/text) or lwvcoop@gmail.com (email).

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