

New York City Council
Memorandum in Support of Legislation

This memorandum is authored by the sponsor and explains the need for the legislation referenced below, in accordance with Rule 6.00(d) of the Rules of the Council.

Introduction Number:

Prime Sponsors:

Council Members Hudson

Bill Title:

A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to allowing candidates seeking nomination or election to city office to withhold their home addresses on petitions submitted to the New York city board of elections

Submitted by:

Council Member Hudson

Justification:

Political violence, including violence against elected officials, has escalated in recent years within the United States. A 2026 survey from Princeton University's Bridging Divides Initiative found that 39 percent of elected officials reported harassment and 17 percent reported threats. More than three in four officials said they were unwilling to engage in at least one major activity of their job because of concerns around threats, including 43 percent of elected officials who said they were less likely to run for reelection because of hostility. And women & Black and brown elected officials have reported higher levels of hostility than their white, male counterparts. These findings come after the 2025 murder of Minnesota State Representative Melissa Hortman and her husband, Mark, as well as the shooting of Minnesota State Senator John Hoffman and his wife, Yvette.

Elected officials across the political spectrum have been the targets of violent attacks, including US. Rep. Gabby Giffords (D-AZ) who was shot in the head in an Arizona grocery store parking lot in 2011 and US Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA) who was shot during a congressional baseball practice in 2017. New York City elected officials have been the target of political violence, most notably the late Hon. James E. Davis who was assassinated on the floor of the City Council Chambers on July 23, 2003.

It is clear the rising risk to elected officials jeopardizes not only the safety of those in office but also the ability to recruit and retain qualified public officials to represent our City.

This bill would allow candidates seeking nomination or election to city offices to withhold their home addresses on petitions submitted to the New York City Board of Elections. Withholding home addresses gives candidates and elected officials the ability to ensure potential agitators, including those threatening violence, cannot obtain their address through a readily available source: election petitions. This bill would still ensure candidates provide proof of address and a sworn affidavit to the Board of Elections and establish a civil penalty of \$1,000 to anyone knowingly providing false residence information to ensure the Board can validate and verify the candidate's address and that they qualify for a given seat.