



Legislation Text

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Int. No. 938

By Council Members O'Donovan, Clarke, Michels and Pinkett; also Council Member Spigner

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to requiring debates for all candidates who participate in the campaign finance program.

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Subdivisions 1, 4, 5 and 11 of section 3-709.5 of the administrative code of the City of New York, as added by local law 90 of 1996, are amended to read as follows:

1. In any year in which a primary, runoff primary, general or special election is to be held, any participating candidate for nomination or election to a city-wide, borough-wide, or city council office shall participate in two pre-election debates held pursuant to this section for each election in which he or she is on the ballot except that in the second general election debate the candidate shall meet such criteria for participation as may be specified in the application submitted by the debate sponsor pursuant to paragraph (b) of subdivision five of this section. In the case of a primary, the debate shall be among participating candidates seeking nomination of the same political party. If there is no contested primary for an office in a political party then no debate for that party's nomination shall be held pursuant to this section. Each debate held pursuant to this section shall be at least one hour's duration.

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4. Organizations which are not affiliated with any political party or with any holder of or candidate for public office, which have not endorsed any candidate in the pending primary, special, general, or runoff election for the city-wide, borough-wide or city council office shall be eligible to sponsor one or more of the required

debates. The rules for conducting such debates shall be solely the responsibility of the organizations selected but shall not be made final without consultation with the campaign finance board. The organizations selected shall be responsible for choosing the date, time and location of the debates.

5. Written applications by organizations to sponsor an election debate shall be submitted to the campaign finance board on a form provided by the board not later than a date chosen by the board in any year in which an election is held for city-wide, borough-wide or city council offices.

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11. Nothing contained in this section shall preclude any candidate from agreeing to participate in any number of additional debates between any and all candidates for a city-wide, borough-wide or city council office, including those candidates not participating in the campaign finance program. These debates need not be held under guidelines or the purview of the campaign finance board.

§ 2. This local law shall take effect immediately.