



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

2021 New York City Council Candidate Questionnaire

About Us

Launched in 2017, Voters For Animal Rights (VFAR) is a New York based 501c(4) grassroots multi-issue animal advocacy organization that is building political power for animals. In 2020, VFAR helped elect our former board member, Jabari Brisport, to the New York State Senate. In 2019, VFAR led the successful campaign to ban foie gras in NYC, to stop wild bird poaching and to establish an Office of Animal Welfare within the Mayor's Office. In 2017 we led the campaign to ban the use of wild animals in circuses in NYC. We look forward to working with you to win more victories for animals and make New York City a leader in compassionate public policy.

Our mission is to help elect candidates who support animal protection, lobby for stronger laws to stop animal cruelty, and hold elected officials accountable to humane voters. VFAR mobilizes public concern for animals through the political process. We know that animal protection is not only a moral issue but a bi-partisan political issue as well. Over 90% of Americans believe that animals need protection from abuse and exploitation. To that end, we organize humane voters to support candidates that care about animals. If you support animals, then we want to support you! There are over 60,000 humane voters throughout New York state, hundreds of which are volunteers for VFAR who are ready to knock on doors, make phone calls and get out the vote to elect people who will stand up for animals. We deliver the vote – for the animals and for you.

As an example, here is our [animal-friendly voter guide](#) from the 2020 NYS General Elections.

Endorsement Process

Candidates seeking VFAR's endorsement for the 2021 New York City Council primary elections are required to fill out this questionnaire, which will be posted on our website. Submit to woof@vfar.org by **November 27, 2020**. Please let us know if you need more time.

Questions

If you have any questions about the topics in our questionnaire, please don't hesitate to reach out to Allie Feldman Taylor, allie@vfar.org and David Karopkin, david@vfar.org. We are happy to help you better understand animal protection policy, and we're happy to advise your campaign.



VOTERS FOR ANIMAL RIGHTS

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

Candidate Contact Information & Campaign Information

Candidate Name	Pronouns	Cell Phone	Email
<i>Amanda Farias</i>	<i>she/her</i>	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Campaign Manager	Pronouns	Cell Phone	Email
<i>Christian Amato</i>	<i>he/him</i>	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

District #	Borough
<i>18</i>	<i>Bronx</i>

Neighborhoods In Your District
Soundview, Castle Hill, Parkchester, Clason Point, Harding Park

Party	Office Sought
<i>Democrat, Working Families</i>	<i>New York City Council Member, District 18</i>

Incumbent/Challenger/Open Seat:
Open seat, vacated by non-term-limited Ruben Diaz Sr.

Name of Campaign Committee:
Friends of Farias

Campaign Field Office Address:
NA - as of right now.

Campaign Website:
amandafarias.nyc

Social Media Handles (Facebook/Twitter/Instagram):
@AmandaFariasNYC on Facebook and Twitter and @amandafarias.nyc on Instagram

Occupation or Employer:
Assistant Director, Consortium for Worker Education

Organizational Affiliations (if any):
*Former President, Women of Color for Progress
Member, NAACP - Parkchester Branch
Board of Directors, Riders Alliance
Dues-paying member of Teamsters Joint Council 16, Local 210*

Endorsements (if any):
Labor and Organizations: Working Families Party, 1199SEIU, Make the Road Action, Community Voices Heard Power, Road to Justice NYC, Women of Color for Progress, 21 in '21, Treeage, Run for Something, Our Progressive Future



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

Elected Officials: NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer, State Senator Alessandra Biaggi, State Senator Gustavo Rivera, State Senator Jessica Ramos, Assembly Member Harvey Epstein, Council Member Brad Lander, Council Member Helen Rosenthal, Council Member Antonio Reynoso



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

Personal Initiatives

1. Do you feel that promoting the humane treatment of animals should be a priority for the New York City Council?

Absolutely. Animals play such an important role in our city-- they're our companions and part of our natural environment-- and it should be a priority for our City Council to make sure they're valued and treated humanely. The City Council has tremendous power to stand up for animals through passing legislation to codify their rights and create stronger protections, and it is their responsibility to do so.

2. What achievements or advocacy for animals are you most proud of, e.g. supporting humane legislation, adopting a shelter pet, volunteering with an animal rescue organization, supporting any national or local animal protection orgs, living a plant-based (vegan or vegetarian) lifestyle, etc.? Did you grow up with or currently live with any companion animals?

All of my I have felt a connection and responsibility to animals. A few years ago, I spent a month in Paramaribo, Suriname at a Catch, Release and Rehabilitation Center working with sloths, anteaters and other natural wildlife. Annually I have tried to support in different capacities like donating, helping with translations or helping raise money. This organization is near and dear to my heart not only because I believe in their mission of fighting against deforestation, but also because I saw first hand that they do not monetize off of the animals through tourism or shows which are abusive to animals, they truly are catch and release or rehab and release.

I also have adopted a stray cat and have a dog from a puppy mill who currently are the king and queens of my household, I just live with them; and I've always grown up with dogs, birds and reptiles! I publicly supported past humane legislation against selling of cats, dogs and rabbits in pet stores, stealing of wild bird life, and circus animals.

3. What animal issues will you prioritize and lead on as a member of the New York City Council? How would you work to empower the animal advocacy community to reach new success and growth into the 2022-2025 term, and ensure that New York is on the forefront of animal protection?

1. Ensuring that all housing is pet friendly: Our city is in the midst of a housing crisis, with many barriers making it difficult for New Yorkers to find affordable homes that meet their needs.
2. Supporting the expansion of subsidized no-cost or low-cost spay/neuter programs
3. Working to secure a healthy, sustainable retirement for our NYPD horses

I want to work with animal advocates on helping set priorities for legislation through consistent communication and meetings/town halls, as well as, develop ways to communicate with communities that priorities may impact to ensure they aren't being kept out of the process or cultures aren't being ignored. Setting animal protection as a priority is important to me and I hope to be able to work together on it.

4. Do you have, or would you consider developing, a platform on animal protection issues and posting the information onto your campaign website to outline your positions? If you receive



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

an endorsement from VFAR, will you promote our endorsement on your website and social media pages?

At this time, I do not have a complete platform on animal protection issues, but am hoping to develop one as my campaign and policy platform continues to grow in the coming weeks and months. I will be sure to post this platform to my campaign website alongside all of my policy priorities. I would be honored to receive VFAR's endorsement and would gladly include it on my campaign website and share it on each of my social media pages.

5. Will you commit to designating a member of your staff to handle animal issues?

Yes. In every City Council office, small teams take on a wide variety of major policy and constituent issues. To make sure that animal issues are always a priority in this environment, I would designate a member of my staff to be the go-to point person for animal-related policy and legislation as well as for working with constituents who bring relevant concerns to our office.

6. Do you believe that the pursuit of animal rights is part of a broader vision of social justice? Please explain your answer.

Yes. Animal rights and social justice are bound by the same fundamental principle: respect and compassion. Social justice requires having respect and compassion for others, and animal justice extends that respect and compassion to animals. Expanding the rights of animals and valuing them in our society is an essential part of the work towards a more just society.



Positions on Legislation and Policy

1. New York City's Companion Animals

A. Increased Funding for ACC and Independent Animal Rescue Organizations

Animal Care Centers of NYC (ACC) is a non-profit organization contracted with the New York City Department of Health to manage New York City's three full-service municipal animal shelters located in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Staten Island, as well as two admissions centers located in the Bronx and Queens. ACC is an open admission shelter required by law to accept every animal brought through its doors and cannot turn away any animal like most other shelters, whether arriving due to homelessness, family crisis, abuse, or abandonment. ACC relies on public funding for operational costs necessary to save and find homes for these animals in need, but resources are needed to ensure that these facilities always have sufficient capacity, staff and other resources to increase adoptions, perform spay and neuter operations, provide pet retention services and other efforts to ensure a successful and humane NYC shelter system.

Do you pledge to allocate funding to maintain ACC and other non-profit animal rescue organizations?

YES

Additional Comments: Having a robust and well-funded network of animal rescue organizations is essential to making sure that no animal faces life abandoned or abused-- non-profit animal shelters in particular are on the front lines of protecting our city's animals. Within that network, Animal Care Centers of NYC uniquely provides a vital and necessary service to the city and our animals with its legal mandate to keep its doors open to any animal in need of shelter and care. In order to be successful in their mission to save as many animals as possible, Animal Care Centers of NYC and the citywide network of non-profit shelters must have funding and support. As a City Council Member, I will make sure that our shelter system has the resources it needs to save animals and find them loving and safe homes.

B. Trap Neuter and Release (TNR) of feral cats

Tens of thousands of stray and feral cats, collectively called community cats, live in the outdoor spaces of New York City. They live in groups called colonies, and they establish themselves near human activity — in backyards, around businesses, in parking lots, etc. — attracted by a food source such as trash or rodents. Community cats have no legal guardian, though many people care for them by feeding and sometimes providing outdoor shelter. These cats are not socialized to humans. They are timid and fearful around people and are not suited for adoption. Because most of these cats are not suited to living indoors, bringing them to a shelter is not the humane answer. Taking them to a shelter also doesn't solve the population problem — if cats are simply removed from an area, others will soon move in and breed. This is called the "Vacuum Effect."



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

The most humane and effective approach to managing the growing population of community cats is Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). In TNR, entire colonies of community cats are trapped, sterilized, vaccinated, ear tipped, and returned to their territory of origin. TNR halts reproduction and many of the nuisance behaviors associated with unneutered cats, such as yowling, fighting, and marking territory. The cats are healthier, free from the stresses of mating and motherhood. TNR also includes colony management to ensure the cats' well-being and their peaceful coexistence with the rest of the community. Community cat programs not only provide life-saving options for cats who might otherwise be euthanized when admitted to a shelter but also can stabilize, and even reduce over time, the population of community cat colonies. Such efforts require support and funding and rely on many thousands of volunteer hours and out-of-pocket expenses incurred by dedicated New Yorkers.

Do you pledge to support increasing funding to programs that support these community cat operations?

YES

Additional Comments: Keeping the population of feral cats under control is imperative to ensuring that their existing colonies are healthy and can peacefully coexist within the city. But, this must be done in a humane way that also suits the needs of cats who are not fit for the shelter and adoption system. Trap-Neuter-Return is the best way to accomplish each of these goals and it comes with additional benefits to cat health and reducing nuisance behaviors. Therefore, increasing funding for these programs and supporting the organizations and volunteers that do this work must be a key priority in the City Council's work to make our city better for animals.

2. Pursuing a More Humane City: Education, Health Care, and Social Services

A. Pet-Friendly Housing

As New York City continues to experience a housing affordability crisis with high displacement rates, housing must be accessible to people with companion animals. Keeping people and companion animals together reduces the burden on animal shelters and allowing New Yorkers to stay in their homes. This is a particularly significant concern for especially vulnerable populations such as low-income families, the elderly, and victims of domestic violence. Housing legislation and policy should expand affordable pet friendly housing options as well as the ability of those experiencing homelessness and victims of domestic violence to seek refuge in shelters with their pets.

Would you support and vote for legislation soon to be introduced (Brannan, Cabrera) which would preserve the right of individuals over the age of 62 to not be denied housing on the basis of having a companion animal?

YES

Additional comments: As our city faces a severe housing crisis, the City Council has a responsibility to reduce or eliminate as many barriers to accessing housing as it statutorily can. No one should face



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

additional difficulty renting a home because they have a companion animal, especially for populations that are particularly vulnerable to displacement like senior citizens. Supporting and voting for this legislation is essential to that end, and additionally ensures that additional animals do not have to be surrendered to our already busy shelter system.

B. Homeless Services Accommodations for Companion Animals

Currently, shelters provided by or under contract with the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) do not allow or accommodate pets. Individuals seeking shelter are forced to abandon their animals to be admitted, and thus, often choose to live on city streets. More info [here](#) and [here](#).

Would you support and vote for [Intro 1483 \(Levin\)](#), which would require the DHS, in collaboration with the Department of Social Services, to develop a plan to accommodate pets of homeless individuals and families with the objective of providing pet-friendly shelters and identifying other temporary pet care arrangements that would allow homeless pet-owners to keep their companion animals?

YES

Would you support and vote for [Intro 1484 \(Levin\)](#), which would require DHS to report, on a monthly basis, information on the placement or disposition of companion animals that belong to people who enter homeless shelters?

YES

Additional Comments: Just as the City Council should work to reduce barriers to renting a home, they must also reduce barriers to entering homeless shelters. No one should have to choose between having a safe and warm place to sleep and abandoning their companion animal. Making it possible for individuals with companion animals to use homeless shelters means both that fewer people will choose to live on the streets and that fewer animals will be abandoned. Without this legislation, we will continue to let down both individuals experiencing homelessness and their companions.

C. Fulfilling New York's Humane Education Mandate

Section 809 of the New York State Education Law requires instruction in the "humane treatment and protection of animals ... in every elementary school under state control or supported wholly or partly by public money of the state." Although there is a penalty for non-compliance, the legislation has remained unenforced, and many educators and administrators are unaware of this statutory requirement. [More info](#).

Would you support and vote for [Intro 1465 \(Dromm\)](#), which would require the Department of Education to report on humane animal treatment instruction in public elementary schools?



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

YES

Additional Comments: For legislation to be effective in promoting animal rights and well-being, there must be enforcement measures and reporting. As a City Council Member, I would support and vote for Intro 1465 to strengthen the State's mandate. Intro 1465 will ensure that our city's children fully benefit from Section 809 of the New York State Education Law. If passed, children will carry the values of humanely treating and protecting animals they learned in elementary school throughout their lives. This is a benefit for our entire city as it will make our population more respectful and caring to our animal community.

D. Animals Used for Experimentation: School Hatching Projects

Principals and school teachers should end the use of bird-hatching projects and replace them with learning activities that teach life processes without the use of live animals. School classroom incubation and hatching projects of baby chicks and ducks is cruel and leads to the abandonment and death of countless young birds each year. Once the eggs develop and the cute baby birds grow up, schools realize that they have no plan for the adult birds. These hatching-project birds are deprived of a mother hen to raise them, which may lead to developmental issues. The birds are often abandoned in city parks where they cannot survive on their own or dumped at local animal shelters and rescues who are already overburdened with unwanted animals.

Hatching projects encourage the view that animals are disposable objects instead of living creatures requiring a lifetime of care and commitment. Humane alternatives have been developed by the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), HEART, and other humane educators. More info [here](#).

Would you support and vote for legislation that would prohibit New York City schools from using mail-ordered eggs, live baby chickens and ducks for classroom projects?

YES

Would you co-sign a letter urging the NYC Schools Chancellor to ban the use of eggs, live baby chickens and ducks for classroom projects?

YES

Additional Comments:

E. Fireworks

The booming sounds of fireworks are terrifying and overwhelming for pets and wildlife, as well as for veterans with PTSD, children on the autism spectrum, and survivors of gun violence. [According to the ASPCA](#), more dogs get lost on the Fourth of July than any other day of the year due to panicking and running off. On July 5th shelters notoriously have increased numbers of frightened lost pets.



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

Additionally, baby birds and other infant wildlife become orphaned and starve to death as their parents panic from the sounds and take off. Wildlife are known to race into the road to escape the sounds, resulting in dangerous car collisions. A solution that has been instituted in many cities in Europe and Canada are silent fireworks. Silent fireworks deliver the same beautiful cascading colors but without the daunting decibels and startling explosions. Read more [here](#).

Would you support and vote for legislation that would require all fireworks displays to be of the silent type?

YES

Additional Comments: This seems like a logical next step in using fireworks for celebrations, outside of no longer using them for the environment. This not only is mindful of animal welfare, but also those of community members and veterans who suffer from PTSD.

3. Animals Used For Food

A. Factory Farms

As the global COVID-19 pandemic exposes the [dangers inherent](#) in our highly concentrated food system, [legislation](#) introduced by Senator Cory Booker, co-sponsored by Senator Elizabeth Warren, as well as its [House companion](#), introduced by Rep. Ro Khanna, would place a moratorium on new and expanding factory farms and provide a transition for farmers who want to transition out of operating a factory farm. The scale, density, and practices associated with Large Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) aka Factory Farms are heinously cruel to animals and present a range of public health, worker safety, and environmental problems.

Would you support and vote for a New York City Council resolution calling on Congress to adopt [S.3221/H.R.6718](#), legislation to end factory farming?

YES

The Green New Deal is a set of policy proposals that seeks to transform our energy system to 100% renewable energy while creating jobs needed to solve the climate crisis, and ensuring a just transition for workers and vulnerable communities, and has the potential to improve the welfare of countless animals, wild and domestic. The Green New Deal calls for massive investments in weatherization, public transportation, modern infrastructure and high-speed broadband, reducing emissions throughout the world, transitioning to sustainable farming, conserving public lands as wildlife habitat, as well as holding the fossil fuel industry accountable for our current environmental crises.

Do you support the [New York State](#) and/or [federal Green New Deal legislation](#)?

YES

Do you believe the Green New Deal does enough to address the impact of CAFOs?



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

YES

Would you support and vote for [Res. 1151 \(Constantinides\)](#) calling on corporate and government entities operating in New York City to divest from agricultural industries that benefit from deforestation and the acceleration of global warming?

YES

What do you believe the NYC Council should do to end factory farming?

Additional Comments: We need to invest in more small family farms to end factory farming, and the NYC Council must work to create grants, promote sustainable agricultural systems, and pass legislative initiatives such as reform New York's Right to Farm Law, which allows local municipalities to pass laws designed to protect public health and environment.

B. Live Animal Slaughter Markets and Transportation

There are 80+ slaughterhouses and live animal markets in NYC – more than any other U.S. city. [These facilities in New York are functionally no different than the live animal markets abroad where Coronavirus started.](#) In addition to horrific treatment of animals in these facilities (tiny cages, no vet care, severely limited food and water), these facilities pose a significant health and safety hazard to the community affecting the quality of life for neighborhood residents. Blood, feces, urine, body parts, and feathers are routinely found on our public sidewalks and streets due to the unsanitary conditions associated with slaughterhouses. Many of these slaughterhouses are located close to schools and playgrounds. Of critical concern, these facilities are rarely if ever inspected by regulators, and despite the animal cruelty and other impacts of these facilities, there is no meaningful oversight.

Especially in light of COVID-19 and the threat of pandemics that are believed to originate from crowded, unsanitary animal markets, would you support and vote for legislation to increase regulations, inspections and reporting requirements for live animal markets and other facilities in New York City where live animals are kept, and increased penalties for health code or animal cruelty violations?

YES

Would you support and vote for legislation that would require licensed slaughterhouses in New York City to have video recording systems in all areas with live animals?

YES

Additional Comments:

C. Shipments of Live Animals



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

Small animals such as chicks are regularly shipped through the US Postal Service. This terribly cruel practice is tragically routine. They are not provided with any food and water, and many animals suffer terribly or perish during transit. It is not uncommon for thousands of animals to be transported this way in the same shipment. The result is that animals often [arrive at their destinations dead](#).

Would you support and vote for legislation that bans or restricts the shipment of live animals into New York City through the mail?

YES

Additional Comments: This is an inhumane practice, and should not be legal to do.

D. Restaurants

Would you support and vote for [Intro. 1405 \(Dromm\)](#), which would offer clarity for consumers who wish to avoid animal-derived food products and allergens?

This legislation would require the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to establish a food protection course and certification program for restaurants to demonstrate compliance with food allergen safety, and require restaurants to post a sign for customers on food allergen awareness. The bill would also establish a voluntary certification program for food service establishments who advertise themselves as capable of accommodating certain dietary restrictions, such as gluten-free, nut-free, vegetarian, and vegan, among others.

YES

Additional Comments:

E. Aquatic Animals

There is widespread scientific consensus that aquatic animals such as fish, lobsters, octopus, squid, and other marine life can experience pain and suffering. Cruel and neglectful treatment of all animals, including aquatic animals, is a misdemeanor under New York State law. See, N.Y. Agric. & Mkts. Law § 353. New York courts have held that intentionally causing extreme pain to a pet fish is a felony. See, *People v. Garcia*, 29 A.D.3d 255, 257, (App. Div. 1st Dept.). In spite of this prohibition, commercially farmed aquatic animals live in filthy, barren tanks so overcrowded they can barely swim and where they are victims of disease outbreak, rough handling, and months to years of psychological deprivation.

Would you support legislation to establish minimum animal welfare standards for procurement of aquatic animal products by city agencies relating to the following production practices?

YES Extreme overcrowding

YES Barren tanks unlike their natural habitats



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

- YES** Deprivation of food for several days during transport
- YES** Being slaughtered while fully conscious

Additional Comments:

4. Protecting and Coexisting with Urban Wildlife

A. WildlifeNYC

New York City is home to an immense diversity of urban wildlife. Our five boroughs are home to hundreds of species, including geese, deer, squirrels, ducks, raccoons, opossum, coyotes, hawks, eagles, whales, dolphins, seals, turkeys, beavers, bats, pigeons, rats, migratory birds, and so many more. While many animals inhabit New York year round, other species pass through on their annual migrations. The City has initiated a program, WildlifeNYC, aimed to promote awareness, tolerance, coexistence, and understanding of the wild critters we are so fortunate to share our city with.

Will you support funding for the continuation and expansion of New York City's WildlifeNYC program?

YES

Additional Comments:

B. Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation

New Yorkers often come in contact with injured wildlife and have no idea what to do. There is only one brick and mortar wildlife rescue facility in New York City, the Wild Bird Fund. There is no centralized administration of wildlife rescue and rehabilitation, or reliable information for what New York City residents should do when they encounter injured wildlife. Because of the limited information on the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's website, independent volunteer licensed rehabilitators are called upon to respond to emergencies and provide care to wild animals in need on a near daily basis. There is much more that New York City can do to support this vital service.

Would you support increased city funding for wildlife rescue and rehabilitation facilities and services?

YES

Would you support establishing city-funded wildlife emergency response units as an alternative to untrained police officers responding to such situations?

YES

Additional Comments:



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

C. Canada geese in NYC parks

After the 2009 "Miracle on the Hudson", Mayor Bloomberg set forth on a policy of hiring USDA Wildlife Services, a federal agency notorious for inhumane wildlife killing practices, to exterminate Canada geese and goslings in New York City parks. This policy was always wrongheaded. Mayor de Blasio was elected on a promise to pursue alternative non-lethal approaches to Canada goose management. The current administration cancelled the contract with USDA Wildlife Services that compensated USDA to kill geese, instead opting for a non-lethal form of population control known as egg oiling. However, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which leases and controls the city's airports, has continued to contract with USDA to exterminate geese, and Mayor de Blasio has allowed the Port Authority and USDA to access city parks to do so. USDA Wildlife Services has killed hundreds of geese in New York City parks every summer for the past 10 years, decimating the local population. The regional population of Canada geese is significantly reduced and should now be stabilized exclusively through non-lethal management practices going forward.

Will you call for a complete end to killing of Canada geese in New York City parks, and demand that the Port Authority and USDA Wildlife Services pursue exclusively non-lethal methods of wildlife management in areas within the City's jurisdiction?

YES

Additional Comments:

D. Staten Island Deer

In the past decade, white-tailed deer have taken up residence on Staten Island, believed to have swum across from increasingly developed areas of neighboring New Jersey. The City first responded by implementing conflict reduction efforts, including measures like increased traffic signage, a reduction of the speed limit, and the inclusion of white-tailed deer in New York City's [WildlifeNYC program](#) aimed at educating New Yorkers about coexistence and tolerance with urban wildlife. In May 2016, the City took a bold and unprecedented step of implementing a non-lethal deer management program that sought to stabilize the deer population by performing vasectomies on bucks. Over the past few years, vasectomies have been performed on more than 1,500 bucks that have stabilized and reduced the total deer population and have reduced conflicts caused by their presence.

Despite these encouraging results, some have pushed for a "controlled hunt" of Staten Island's deer. Controlled hunts require killing some number of deer every year, which often leads to a bounce-back effect that ultimately increases the population. In addition to the cruelty involved, annual culls are unlikely to achieve any long-term reduction in the deer population or actually address any of the conflicts associated with their presence.

Will you support continuing the City's deer management program that has successfully stabilized and reduced the population of deer on Staten Island humanely and effectively?



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

YES

Will you oppose lethal management of deer on Staten Island, including a “controlled hunt”?

YES

Additional Comments:

E. Raccoons

Even though the incidence of rabies has been [extremely rare](#) in New York City, with only one human case over the last 50 years, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) requires that any raccoons brought to Animal Care Centers (ACC) be immediately euthanized, regardless whether they are sick or injured or healthy. Every year, hundreds of healthy raccoons are brought into ACC, usually by police officers responding to nuisance complaints, and killed instead of being assessed and potentially released or rehabbed.

Would you join VFAR in calling on the DEC to allow healthy raccoons to be rehabilitated and/or released when suitable?

YES

Would you support establishing alternative protocols for emergency responders such that healthy raccoons are not brought to ACC?

YES

Additional Comments:

F. Rats

Historically, rat control invariably relies on cruel and imprecise extermination methods - poison bait, glue and snap traps, and more recently dry ice and drowning devices. Needless to say, these methods have failed to achieve lasting impacts on New York’s total rodent population for decades (if not centuries). The Department of Health's Rat Academy [public education](#) on nonlethal rat management methods, debuting nearly 10 years ago, has been shown to be effective. [Feral cats](#) are also a potential way to manage rat populations.

Would you support a comprehensive humane rat control program that would be focused on prevention, deterrence and infrastructural improvements?

YES

Additional Comments:



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

5. Animals Used for Fashion: Fur

Fur farms breed and confine animals in tiny, filthy cages where they suffer intense stress and unimaginable cruelty. They are beaten, bludgeoned, electrocuted, and skinned alive. Trapping animals in the wild is no better — animals are trapped in cruel leg hold traps where they can suffer for days in excruciating pain — starving, until a trapper returns to shoot or bludgeon them to death. Coyotes are known to attempt to chew off their own legs trying to break free. Many other animals are unintentionally caught and killed in these traps, including household pets. California has enacted a ban on the sale of fur. Several countries such as Norway, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, and the U.K. have taken steps to close fur farms, and Israel is on the verge of [banning the entire fur trade](#). With public awareness and innovative alternatives on the rise, many popular designers have stopped using all animal fur. There are ethical alternatives to fur which are not only stylish and warm but environmentally friendly. More info [here](#).

Would you cosponsor and vote for [Intro 1476 \(Johnson\)](#) that would ban the sale of new apparel products using real animal fur?

YES

Additional Comments:

I would like to see the promotion of upcycling/recycling fur, and a re-training or upskilling of furriers so they do not lose work. I would also like to learn more about a religious exemption in this bill, for example as fur is used in the hasidic community.



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

6. Animals Used in Entertainment:

A. Carriage Horses

Advocates have long called out the poor working and living conditions for horses used for NYC carriage rides. Despite common belief, the horses do not live in Central Park, they are forced to travel through NYC traffic to get to and from Central Park. Despite improvements implemented over the years, the horses are often made to work long days - sometimes in extreme weather conditions, and they can go weeks without any opportunity for daily turnout. Over the course of the past three decades, there have been countless incidents and accidents involving New York City carriage horses. As recently as March 2020, a [12-year-old horse named Aisha was euthanized after collapsing in Central Park](#), a tragic incident that was captured on video camera by a horrified pedestrian. Many horses have died on the streets of NYC or been sent or sold to slaughter once they are unable to continue working. Carriage horse operations have resumed after a temporary hiatus for COVID-19.

Would you cosponsor and vote for legislation to ban horse carriages in New York City?

NO

Would you cosponsor and vote for legislation to enact stronger protections for all working horses in New York City, including a mandatory retirement age and restrictions on sales of exhausted horses to “kill buyers”?

YES

Additional Comments: I support finding a balance between the union labor and the humane treatment of the horses. I believe a system must be put into place to ensure that animals' rights remain prioritized and that they stay healthy through the year, as well as, ensuring carriage drivers remain employed so that all New Yorkers and those visiting can benefit from this one-of-a-kind experience. I would like to see the horse carriages contained within the park and out of the city traffic, that poses a threat to them and to the public. I would also like to see better enforcement on the horses' breaks, feedings, and usage; as well as, their off time and conditions in the stables. I believe that carriage horses, like police horses, should have a retirement age. By implementing this we are able to humanely consider the horse's life, enabling them to age gracefully and with dignity.

B. Rodeos

While New York State has limited the use of animals in circuses and other entertainment, rodeos have been left unregulated despite the display of similar, and in many cases more egregious, acts of cruelty. Rodeos typically include an event called “calf roping” where baby calves are shocked with electric prods, forcing them to run as soon as the holding chute opens, only to be “clotheslined” with a rope and tied at the legs. Panicked calves are routinely injured or killed during these performances. Rodeos also continue to use flank straps or bucking straps, which are tightly fastened around the animal's abdomen and may be used with sharpened spurs to cause pain to the animal, encouraging



**VOTERS FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS**

786 Jefferson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221
vfar.org

them to buck more violently. Rodeos are responsible for causing death or serious injury to countless animals, all for the sole purpose of entertainment and showmanship.

Would you cosponsor and vote for legislation which would prohibit these practices at rodeos?

YES

Additional Comments:

C. Captive Wildlife, Zoos and Aquariums

The Bronx Zoo currently has two wild-born female Asian elephants, Happy and Patty. Happy, has been confined alone for over fourteen years in a small enclosure that contains a one-acre outdoor yard, barren corrals, and an industrial holding facility. In the winter months, when it's too cold for her to be outside, she is confined to an industrial cement structure that is lined with windowless, barred cages. Happy has been documented engaging in unnatural behavior indicative of distress and suffering. Scientists who are experts in elephant cognition and behavior have attested that the Bronx Zoo cannot meet Happy's biological and psychological needs. There has been a longstanding campaign for the Bronx Zoo to close its elephant exhibit and send Happy to an elephant sanctuary.

Would you join VFAR and other advocates in demanding that the Bronx Zoo close its elephant exhibit and release Happy and Patty to an elephant sanctuary?

YES

Through extensive study and observation, scientists have found that elephants are self-aware, autonomous animals. In other words, they are cognitively, emotionally, and socially complex beings who have the capacity to exercise free will and make choices about how to spend their days and live their lives, just as human beings do. The right to liberty protects an individual's autonomy and ensures that she cannot be imprisoned (held in an environment that deprives her of her autonomy) or exploited (displayed, used for entertainment, or forced to breed).

Would you support legislation that would recognize and protect elephants' right to liberty?

YES

Additional Comments:

CANDIDATE SIGNATURE

11-27-2020

DATE