Keesha Gaskins-Nathan and Barbara Lifton Appointed as Commissioners and Carl P. Zeilman Appointed as Co-Director of the Public Campaign Finance Board

ALBANY, N.Y. (November 3, 2022) – At its Tuesday, October 25th meeting, the New York State Public Campaign Finance Board announced the appointment of two new Commissioners, former Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton and long time advocate and attorney, Keesha Gaskins-Nathan and new Co-Director Carl P. Zeilman.

Barbara Lifton was appointed by New York State Governor Kathy Hochul. Commissioner Lifton served as the representative for the 125th Assembly District for eighteen years. She is widely known for her contributions towards New York's implementation of the *Help America Vote Act (HAVA)* as she advocated for accessible and reliable voting machines to protect the security and accuracy of elections. Lifton was a leader in the successful effort to ban high-volume hydrofracking in New York State and has strongly supported the move to a sustainable energy future based on energy efficiency and renewable resources.

"I am pleased to have the opportunity to serve the people of New York as Commissioner to the Public Campaign Finance Board. Our new public matching program will be the largest in the nation and give New York State the chance to be a leader in campaign finance reform." Said Commissioner Lifton.

Keesha Gaskins-Nathan was appointed to the Board by State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins and Speaker of the Assembly Carl Heastie. Commissioner Gaskins-Nathan has an extensive background in public and nonprofit service aimed at promoting civic engagement. Commissioner Gaskins-Nathan currently serves as the Director for the Democratic Practice-United States program and Racial Justice Initiative with the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. She previously acted as Senior Counsel to the Brennan Center for Justice and has served as an adjunct professor for the Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs and SUNY Purchase College. Commissioner Gaskins-Nathan will succeed former Commissioner Ekow Yankah.

"It is an honor to be appointed as a Commissioner to the New York State Public Campaign Finance Board. Once fully implemented, small donor matching will empower everyday New Yorkers to run for office by ensuring even the smallest donation has a tangible impact. I hope that my experience improving democratic engagement will ensure the program reaches the greatest number of potential candidates." Said Commissioner Keesha Gaskins-Nathan.

Carl P. Zeilman was confirmed as the new Co-Director of the Public Campaign Finance Board. Mr. Zeilman most recently served as the Saratoga County Emergency Services Commissioner where he managed the county's E-911 system and oversaw the response and recovery effort to the COVID-19 pandemic. He is a U.S. Navy reservist and a former member of the Albany County Legislature. He has a long record of government service that includes the New York State Assembly and the Town of Colonie.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to continue to serve the public and shepherd a new program into fruition," said Co-Director Zeilman, "The Public Campaign Financing program is a first in New York and we want it to be the best in the nation bringing new candidates forward who might never have considered running for state office."

The Public Campaign Finance Board was created by the State Legislature in 2019 as a result of action by a Blue-Ribbon Commission appointed in the state budget of 2019-2020 to study public campaign finance reform in the state. The Board is charged with the responsibility of administering a program of public matching funds for candidates for state office beginning with the 2024 general election. The Program will officially launch on November 9, 2022.

If you have any questions about this press release, please contact John Conklin or Jennifer Wilson at the Public Information Office, 518-474-1953; or by email at: info@elections.ny.gov.