New York State Public Campaign Finance Board Selects Debate Host for Primary Election

2026 marks the first year of mandatory debates for statewide candidates participating in the public campaign finance program

ALBANY, N.Y. (5/15/2026) The New York State Public Campaign Finance Board (PCFB) is pleased to announce that the organization selected to host the 2026 statewide candidate debates for the Primary Election is **Spectrum News / NY1**. The hosting responsibility for the Primary Election includes the Democratic State Comptroller debate, with PCFB participants Thomas DiNapoli, Raj Goyle, and Drew Warshaw.

The proposal from Spectrum News / NY1 demonstrated strong alignment with the PCFB's goals of promoting transparency, accessibility, and meaningful voter engagement. As the chosen host, Spectrum News / NY1 has committed to ensuring broad audience access and a fair and nonpartisan forum. The upcoming debate is expected to play a critical role in ensuring voters across the state are knowledgeable about their choices for statewide office this year, starting with the June 23rd Primary Election.

"From day one, the mission of the PCFB has been to encourage candidate participation and assist them in meeting program requirements, both of which lead to a better-informed electorate. We are excited to select Spectrum News / NY1 as the inaugural debate host as part of this responsibility," said PCFB Co-Director Carl P. Zeilman.

"Debates are an integral part of healthy campaigns. We are confident that Spectrum News / NY1 will help New Yorkers make informed decisions this election year and strengthen public confidence in the democratic process," added PCFB Co-Director Brian M. Keegan.

This year marks the first elections where statewide candidates are required to participate in at least one debate if they are receiving public matching funds. Applications from potential hosts were submitted between February 2, 2026, and March 2, 2026. Subsequently, the PCFB published all complete applications and there was a public comment period. A thorough review of all applications led to the ultimate selection.

Details of the Democratic State Comptroller debate will be announced by Spectrum News / NY1 in the coming days. We encourage all New Yorkers to tune in!

For more information about the Public Campaign Finance Program, visit pcfb.ny.gov. For more information about the upcoming Democratic Primary Election State Comptroller debate, please contact Charles May of Spectrum News / NY1 at charles.may@charter.com. If you have any questions about this press release, please contact Kathleen McGrath or Jennifer Wilson at the New York State Board of Elections Public Information Office at 518-474-1953 or info@elections.ny.gov.

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