Introduction for Gubernatorial Debate, October 2018

Thank you Dr. Stefanco. Good evening. I’m Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of NYS, representing 50 local Leagues and 4,000 members across New York State. As a reminder, the League of Women Voters is nonpartisan and never supports or opposes any candidate or political party. We are pleased to be organizing tonight’s debate and we are greatly appreciative of the help and support from the College of St Rose for the facility, operations and live streaming of this event.

All candidates appearing on the ballot for the office of NYS Governor were invited to attend tonight’s debate. Thank you to the 4 of you who agreed to participate and allow the public to hear directly from you about your vision for New York State. The format for tonight’s debate, as agreed to by all candidates, is as follows:

There will be no opening statements

Questions will be asked by our esteemed media panelists: Susan Arbetter, Ken Lovett, Takora McIntyre and Josefa Velasquez. Follow up questions are allowed but will be limited to allow for more questions to be asked. Bios about these panelists are in your program.

The candidates selected numbers prior to the debate to determine the order of responding. The order is as follows:

1
2
3
4

That order will rotate for each question based on this numbering. Each candidate will have 1 minute to respond to the question. There are League members in the front row who are the official timers for the evening; a yellow paddle will be raise when there is 30 seconds left and a red paddle when the time has expired and the candidate MUST stop his or her response.

Each candidate has also been given 2 red cards. They may use these red cards during the debate to ask for 30 seconds more to offer a rebuttal or increased time on a specific question. They are limited to 2 during the entire debate and the time will be provided to them after all candidates have responded to that question. The additional time cannot be used during their closing statements.

Candidates will be allowed to present a 2 minute closing statement after the last question with the next candidate starting the closing statements.

The candidates and campaigns have also agreed to the following rules for the debate and I assume you all in the audience will as well:

There is absolutely no audio or video taping allowed by any campaign staff or audience members. A League volunteer will ask anyone seen taping to stop; if the person does not stop, the debate will be interrupted until that person stops taping or is escorted out of the building.
I also ask that there be no cheering, clapping or booing during the debate. This activity takes away time from the debate reducing the amount of questions and responses – and I think we can all agree that we’d like to hear as much from the candidates as possible in this next hour. Any unruly audience member will be asked to leave and if continues, will be escorted out of the venue.

Finally, the table in the entry way has campaign literature from each candidate’s campaign. There is no distributing of these materials in the venue, but feel free to pick up materials on your way out.

Before we start the questions, I would just like to ask each candidate to consider this debate as a discussion of ideas. Instead of criticizing another candidate for what he or she has or has not done, let’s hear what your plans are to improve New York State if elected Governor. A civil discourse on ideas would be a nice way to spend this evening. Thank you.

First question is from:

End of Debate

Thank you to all the candidates, media panelist, College staff and League volunteers for making tonight’s debate happen. A special thank you goes to Jennifer Wilson, state League Legislative Director, for her enthusiasm and determination to make this debate happen. I encourage everyone to go to votingnewyork.org to read more information about all the races and candidates on your ballot. AND PLEASE REMEMBER TO VOTE NEXT TUESDAY, NOV. 6. Thank you.