

Executive Summary: 2026 Re-Election Strategy for Assemblymember Stefani Zinerman (AD-56)

Campaign Context and Goal

Assemblymember Stefani Zinerman is seeking re-election in New York's 56th Assembly District (Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights) with the ultimate goal of winning the June 2026 Democratic primary. In this majority-Black, strongly Democratic district, the primary victory is decisive for retaining the seat ¹. The 2024 primary underscored the urgency: Zinerman fended off a strong challenge from Democratic Socialist Eon Huntley by roughly 6 percentage points ². That race was widely viewed as a proxy battle between the local Democratic establishment (backing Zinerman) and the DSA's rising influence ³. With Huntley mounting another challenge, the campaign must act with focus and urgency. This plan outlines a comprehensive strategy to leverage the Assemblymember's strengths – her trusted community presence, effective record, and deep roots – to secure a decisive primary win in 2026.

Strategic Themes

The re-election strategy centers on five key themes that frame all campaign activities:

- **Highlighting Results:** Showcase Zinerman's tangible results for the district. As an incumbent, she has a strong record of delivering for constituents – from legislative victories like the Community Hiring Act and Plain Language Ballot Bill ⁴ to securing \$6 million for a new Bed-Stuy ambulance corps facility with the district's first birthing center ⁵. Emphasizing these accomplishments demonstrates that she produces real outcomes on jobs, housing, health, and education, reinforcing her effectiveness against any "promises-only" narrative from the challenger.
- **Cross-Demographic Coalition:** Build a broad coalition across demographic lines. The district's electorate spans long-time African-American and Caribbean residents, faith-based communities, younger professionals, and other groups. The campaign will unite these constituencies around shared interests – safe and affordable housing, quality schools, and community pride – to **expand Zinerman's base**. Outreach will be tailored to **engage both older voters** (who know Zinerman's community service) **and newer residents** drawn by her vision, bridging any divides. This inclusive approach combats the backdrop of gentrification and generational change by ensuring all groups feel heard and represented ⁶.
- **Countering the DSA Challenger:** Proactively counter Eon Huntley's campaign narrative. Huntley, backed by NYC-DSA, will likely press a message of transformative change, especially on housing. Our strategy is to **affirm Zinerman's commitment to progressive goals** (tenant protections, fighting displacement, equitable development) while highlighting her **real credentials** versus his **relative inexperience**. Every claim by the opponent will be met with fact-based responses – for example, if Huntley criticizes Zinerman on housing, we will publicize her efforts on tenant rights and anti-displacement programs. The campaign will also underscore Zinerman's **deep local roots and accessibility**, contrasting with the optics of Huntley's 2024 run (where many canvassers were from

outside the community) ⁶ . By framing the choice as **proven leadership vs. untested activism**, we aim to neutralize the challenger's appeal.

- **Mobilizing Trusted Community Networks:** Activate the district's most trusted networks – especially faith leaders, community elders, and civic organizations – to rally support. **Clergy and church communities** will play a pivotal role: local pastors and faith-based coalitions can testify to Zinerman's longtime dedication to the community, helping to turn out congregants in her favor. Similarly, partnerships with block associations, senior centers, tenant organizations, and youth groups will amplify endorsements from respected voices. These validators will help **drive a high-touch GOTV effort** by spreading the message through word-of-mouth and community events, reinforcing public trust in Zinerman as *"one of us"*.
- **Reinforcing Visibility and Trust:** Ensure the Assemblymember remains highly visible and her accessibility is well-known. The plan calls for frequent **community engagement** – regular town halls, street office hours, attendance at local cultural and civic events – so that voters consistently see Zinerman present and listening. A stepped-up communications effort (social media, local press, newsletters) will highlight her ongoing work in Albany and the neighborhood. By doubling down on visibility, the campaign strengthens the narrative that **Zinerman is a hands-on, responsive leader** the community can rely on. This will solidify voter trust and enthusiasm heading into the primary.

Top-Line Tactics

To execute these themes, the campaign will deploy a robust mix of tactics focused on grassroots outreach, messaging, and turnout:

- **Intensive Community Engagement:** Organize *"on the ground"* engagements weekly. This includes hosting listening sessions in churches and NYCHA developments, attending PTA meetings and precinct council meetings, and canvassing at community centers and small businesses. Zinerman and surrogates will maintain a constant presence, turning every gathering into an opportunity to discuss concerns and share her successes.
- **High Visibility & Positive Messaging:** Launch a visibility campaign that floods the district with Zinerman's message. Tactics will range from **street-level advertising** (posters, palm cards, and banners in key corridors) to a strong **digital presence**. We will share short videos of Zinerman's community work, testimonials from residents, and clear infographics of her achievements. Press outreach will secure coverage in local media about her initiatives (e.g. new funding for community projects) to generate positive headlines. All communications will hammer home her proven results and commitment to keeping long-time residents in their homes, which aligns with the community's top concerns ⁷ .
- **Coalition Endorsements and Events:** Proactively seek endorsements and co-hosted events with influential community figures and organizations. A **Clergy for Zinerman** roundtable, for instance, can both endorse her and organize voter drives through churches. We will also engage labor unions, given Zinerman's pro-worker legislative record, and civic groups (NAACP, neighborhood nonprofits) for formal endorsements. These endorsements will be featured in campaign materials to boost credibility. Joint events – such as a *"Community Unity Forum"* on housing or youth opportunities – featuring Zinerman alongside these leaders will visually reinforce her broad support.
- **Counter-Messaging & Issue Education:** Establish a rapid-response team to counter misinformation and define Zinerman's positions clearly. This team will monitor the opponent's statements and social media, and quickly deploy corrective messaging (via press statements, mailers, and social media graphics). For example, if Huntley attacks her stance on housing policy, we will release an easy-to-

read brief on Zinerman's housing plan (including her support for funding affordable housing and eviction prevention programs) to set the record straight. By educating voters on complex issues in simple terms, we **undercut polarizing soundbites** and equip supporters to defend her record.

- **Field Operations & GOTV:** Scale up a data-driven field operation well before Primary Day. Using voter data, the field team will identify core supporters, swing voters, and low-propensity voters in the district. We will prioritize **door-to-door canvassing** in high-density voter areas, with an emphasis on personal contact in the evenings and weekends when residents are home. Special attention goes to senior voters (historically high turnout) and younger voters who lean progressive but may be swayed by Zinerman's story of effective advocacy. As June 2026 approaches, a full **Get-Out-The-Vote plan** will kick in – including phone banks, text banking, community “souls to the polls” initiatives via churches, and arranged transportation for seniors on Early Voting days and Election Day. The objective is a turnout surge from Zinerman's base that will provide a winning margin.

Alignment with Borough-Wide Initiatives

A distinguishing element of this plan is its alignment with broader Brooklyn initiatives, underscoring that Assemblymember Zinerman's vision is part of a collective Democratic agenda for equity and justice. Her policy priorities intentionally echo and support Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso's *Comprehensive Plan for Brooklyn 2025*, whose goal is “to build a Brooklyn where all residents have what they need to be healthy, housed, and supported.”⁸ Zinerman will highlight how her work on affordable housing, youth development, and transit access in AD-56 complements the borough-wide strategy for sustainable growth – reinforcing that re-electing her helps advance this shared vision. Similarly, the campaign will uplift Zinerman's advocacy for criminal justice reform in tandem with DA Eric Gonzalez's **Justice 2020** framework, which reimagines public safety through fairness and community trust (a “progressive prosecutor's office” approach focusing resources on serious crimes while diverting low-level offenders to services)⁹. By integrating these touchstones into her messaging, Zinerman presents herself as a **team player in Brooklyn's future** – collaborating with city and borough leaders to deliver results on housing, public safety, and quality of life. This not only broadens her appeal to voters who support these initiatives, but also attracts potential endorsements and resources from aligned officials.

Conclusion and Outlook

This strategic plan lays out a focused, optimistic path to victory for Assemblymember Stefani Zinerman. It leverages her greatest strengths – **her reputation as a trusted, effective, and community-rooted leader** – in a campaign designed to both energize loyal supporters and win over new ones. The tone of the effort is intentionally hopeful and assertive: we are confident that by highlighting Zinerman's proven results and sincere engagement with constituents, we can inspire the district's voters to rally behind her once more. The 2026 primary will be hard-fought, but with a cross-demographic coalition united around *keeping Central Brooklyn's communities strong and intact*, and with an unmatched ground game mobilizing every church, block, and community center, **Team Zinerman** is poised to prevail. By executing this plan, the Assemblymember will not only secure re-election but also deepen the public's trust – affirming that *steady, compassionate leadership* will continue to guide Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights into the future.¹⁰ In sum, the campaign enters this race focused and battle-ready, yet optimistic that our positive message and proven track record will carry the day on Primary Day 2026.

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