

Allen Cox

Bronx

Testimony at the Queens CRC Hearing June 22, 2026

My name is Allen Cox and I am a lifelong New Yorker, born in Harlem and now living in the Bronx. I am a community health outreach worker with COPE – the Coalition for Positive Health Empowerment. I am also the father of 4 children, and two of them living in NYC. My daughter and I are both independents.

I am one of those New Yorkers that has played Basketball my entire life -- from pick up games in Harlem and So. Jamaica, I've played with some great athletes like Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Tiny Archibald. I've been around long enough to have played the game before the Knicks' **last championship**—and I'm still playing now.

I've been a referee for the PSAL for the last decade. I love the game -- it is a team sport, and I am thrilled to see the KINCKS win with their grit and determination, and bring the city together in such a celebration of what it means to be a New Yorker.

Here we are –the Knicks and Basketball have brought our city together. Unfortunately, our politics do not. We don't treat all our voters the same way, not everyone is in the game. You can't tell people that we are obligated to vote given that so many leaders fought and died for the right to vote and at the same time have a system where 1.2 million folks who are independents are shut out of voting in the primaries. And that is where most decisions are made of who will be our elected officials. Malcolm X once said that American democracy is American hypocrisy. I think it is time for us to do what 85% of cities in the US do — let's make our primaries more democratic and let independents vote.

Thanks for the opportunity to speak tonight.