

**Candidate:** Wei-Li Tjong

**Office:** NYS Assembly District 65

**Question:** Please provide a brief statement about why you are running for this office. What would be your #1 policy priority if elected? And please provide one accomplishment that you believe illustrates why you're the best candidate for the job.

**Candidate Response:**

I'm seeking your endorsement as a candidate for Assembly in New York's AD65. In this critical moment, I believe I can be the most effective advocate for our district in Albany.

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I've lived in AD65 most of my life. My parents moved to the Lower East Side in the mid-1970s and won the lottery for an apartment in Seward Park Cooperative, where I grew up. 25 years ago, I recommitted to this community, purchasing my own apartment where I continue to live and volunteer, serving our diverse community of 5,000 residents.

I am the culmination of an immigrant experience. My father was Chinese, raised in Singapore, and emigrated first—sharing a tenement bed with a shift worker, translating by day, working nights at Wo Hop. My Brazilian mother came a year later. We spoke only Portuguese; she and I learned English together. Both became NYC public school teachers—my mother in preschool and kindergarten, my father running Bilingual Education Programs for District 1.

I grew up with the evolving diversity of downtown—Jewish, Chinese, Irish, Italian, Puerto Rican, Dominican—attending Torah Head Start, PS 124, playing stickball on the LES, and riding bikes through Loisaída.

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After Torah Head Start and PS 124, I earned scholarships to Dalton, Johns Hopkins (undergraduate, high honors), and NYU Law. For 25 years, I've practiced law in New York—at Skadden Arps, Chadbourne & Parke, in-house for AllianceBernstein, and as an NYC Administrative Law Judge. Fifteen years ago, I founded Tjong & Hsia LLP, a boutique corporate law firm with 16 lawyers advising clients across industries.

My legal expertise means I can draft bills, statutes, and regulations without draining constituent services resources or relying on industry lobbyists. I've worked across city, state, and federal legal regimes, understanding where laws succeed or fail in practice. I'm the only practicing attorney in this race, bringing unique professional skills to serve AD65.

As State Committeeman for AD65, I've pushed for progressive change: forcing party leadership to create communication systems among committee members, pressuring the party to support

Zohran Mamdani's historic campaign, advocating for educational curriculum on bodily autonomy, and voting with the committee for comprehensive ICE restructuring that safeguards human rights.

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If elected, I'll continue Grace Lee's missions and work as her partner in Albany, focusing on:

- Affordable Housing Crisis—advocating for new affordable housing from all large residential developments citywide
- Improving Housing Conditions—rent relief, proper maintenance, giving NYCHA residents voice in policy
- Group Healthcare Purchasing for co-ops, public housing, tenants' associations
- Fighting Anti-Asian and Anti-Jewish Hate/Violence
- Services to Immigrant Communities
- Climate Resilience and Community Parks
- Ethics and Accountability in Government
- Supporting Schools and Parents

This calling requires immense sacrifice. I'll take a significant pay cut to serve—a commitment reflecting my dedication, not venal interest.

I've acted as a fiduciary for clients and community for 25 years. Please give me your endorsement to serve you faithfully in the public trust.

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