

MEMORANDUM OF SUPPPORT for CONFIRMATION OF NADIA SHIHATA AS
COMMISSIONER OF DEPEARTMENT OF INVESTIGATION

Common Cause NY supports the confirmation of Nadia Shihata as Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI) for the City of New York. We are aware of the concerns that have been raised regarding Ms. Shibata's activities as a citizen supporting candidate Zohran Mamdani and her friendship with Mayor Mamdani's counsel. In assessing candidates for confirmation, we assess the candidate's relevant professional experience and use uniform standards for determining whether a candidate's political activities would be disqualifying. We believe that there are no credible issues disputing that Ms. Shihata has the requisite expertise and professional experience to merit confirmation to head DOI.

In assessing the impact, a candidate's political activities should have on confirmation, we consider the following activities to be disqualifying:

- (1) Current service or service within the past five years as an officer or member of the governing body of a national, state or local political party.
- (2) Being a paid consultant or employee of a federal, state or local elected official or political candidate of a federal, state or local political candidate's campaign or of a political party, legislative caucus or action committee; or
- (3) Made political contributions totaling \$1000 or more to any one political candidate, political party, party housekeeping account and/or any Political Action Committee in the last four years from the date of application, regardless of jurisdiction.

By applying these standards, we do not find Ms. Shihata's political activities, contributing less than \$1000 to the Mamdani mayoral campaign and volunteering for one evening to interact with members of the public through canvassing, disqualifying.

Nor do we consider casual social contact, even over several years, with a member of Mr. Mamdani's administration to be disqualifying. Casual professional and social contact with administration members is not unusual and does not raise the possible objections regarding independent judgment that being a partner, family member, member of an inner circle, or regular close adviser of key elected or official members of the administration would raise. Ms. Shibata's stated commitment to seeking advice of counsel to determine when her recusal would be appropriate properly addresses any concerns.

We urge Council members to confirm Ms. Shibata as Commissioner of the Department of Investigation.

PLEASE CONTACT SUSAN LERNER AT (212) 691-6421 WITH ANY QUESTIONS.