

## REVISED: Hughes Center, Press of Atlantic City to Sponsor 2nd District Debates

### *Media release*

***Note: The Democratic party announced changes to its candidates after the original release was sent. See changes below in bold.***

July 31, 2023

**Atlantic City, N.J.** — The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy and The Press of Atlantic City will sponsor debates between State Senate and Assembly candidates in Legislative District 2 on Oct. 19.

Both forums will be held the same night beginning at 6 p.m. at the John F. Scarpa Academic Center, 3711 Atlantic Ave., on Stockton University's Atlantic City campus.

The debates will be held in person and livestreamed on the Hughes Center and Press of Atlantic City websites ([stockton.edu/hughescenter](http://stockton.edu/hughescenter) and [pressofatlanticcity.com](http://pressofatlanticcity.com)). A recording will be archived on the Hughes Center's site.

Major-party candidates in each of the races have agreed to participate. Other candidates who meet minimum campaign finance thresholds and file campaign spending reports will be invited to participate.

The District 2 debates, to be held in the Fannie Lou Hamer Room, will include the following candidates.

- At 6 p.m., Republican Sen. Vincent Polistina, an incumbent, will debate **Democratic challenger Caren Fitzpatrick, currently an Atlantic County commissioner.**
- In the Assembly debate at 7 p.m., Republican incumbents Don Guardian and Claire Swift will face off against Democratic challengers **Lisa Bender** and Alphonso Harrell.

John Froomjian, director of the Hughes Center for Public Policy, is expected to moderate the debates. Representatives of The Press and Stockton University's faculty are expected to serve as panelists.

The Press and Hughes Center will accept suggested debate questions from members of the public in advance of the event. Only the debate panelists and moderator will pose questions during the debate. More information on how to propose a question will be publicized closer to Oct. 19.

"Both the Hughes Center and The Press encourage active participation in the democratic process, and candidate debates help voters to make informed choices when they go to the polls," Froomjian said.

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