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News Coverage on EffectiveNY

Millionaire Bill Samuels Raising Money for Brooklyn's Lincoln Restler

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08/08/2012

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After helping knock Pedro Espada out of the Senate in 2010, lefty millionaire Bill Samuels is getting involved this year in a Brooklyn district leader race.

Samuels, who is declining to use his reform-minded group the New Roosevelt Initiative to back any Senate candidates in 2012, writes in a fundraising pitch to potential donors that Restler is “boldly challenging the Brooklyn Democratic Machine” led by Assemblyman Vito Lopez, who is supporting Restler’s challenger, Christopher Olechowski.

Samuels, who formerly served as the finance chairman for the Senate Democrats, definitely has good connections among reform-minded, aspirational donor-types, and the email even notes that Restler’s own apartment was “gerrymandered” out of his district.

Restler, who narrowly won election in 2010, is facing a tough test from Olechowski, especially after some of Restler’s Fort Greene base was cut out of his district leader seat. But Restler currently has \$57,000 on hand, while Olechowski had \$17,000.

To that end, a reader points out that Brooklyn Councilman Steve Levin, at a recent fundraiser for Olechowski, made mention of the fact that Restler had the ability to raise quite a bit of money. [[Here's the](#) [4] video of Levin, who recruited Olechowski to run.] In 2013, it's widely speculated that Restler could challenge Levin for his City Council seat, but a Restler loss this fall could weaken his position going into that possible race.

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