



Candidate Questionnaire

Local Candidates Committee 2016

Special Election AD 65

Citizens Union appreciates your response to the following questionnaire related to policy issues facing New York State and our interest in reforming state government. **Please return the questionnaire to us as soon as possible, and no later than April 8th.** Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union uses to evaluate candidates running for Assembly in the special election in District 65, and to issue our endorsement. Please feel free to affix any additional information such as a résumé, campaign brochure, or issue statements.

If you seek our support, we will also need to schedule an interview with you as part of the evaluation process. **Please contact us if you wish to be interviewed.**

We plan to make responses to this questionnaire public on our website, printed voters directory, and other appropriate venues.

We thank you very much for your response.

Biographical Information

Candidate Name: Dennis Levy

Party Affiliation(s): Green Party of New York Age: 67

Education: Associate in Accounting, B.A. (Didn't complete)

Occupation/Employer:

president, New York State Committee to Legalize Marijuana

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement:

Founder and CEO of Black and Latino Aids Coalition, Inc (BLAC)

Co-Founder of Second Chance for ex-offenders

(Please feel free to affix any additional information such as a résumé, campaign brochure, or issue statements.)

Campaign Contact Information

Campaign Manager Name: None Additional Staff Contact: Denise Kinosh

Address:

Telephone: 347-524-6175 Fax:

Website: Email:

Twitter: Facebook:

Affirmations

Have you completed required campaign finance filings? YES / NO

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? YES / NO

(Please note: interviews are prerequisites for Citizens Union endorsements.)

Signature of Candidate: Dennis Levy Date: April 6, 2016

I. CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

Please state whether you support or oppose the following reform measures, and feel free to may elaborate in the space provided at the end or on additional paper.

ETHICS

1. Limit outside income earned by state legislators up to 25 percent, while enacting a salary increase and eliminating stipends.	Support / Oppose
2. Reform the Joint Commission on Public Ethics, giving it greater jurisdiction over investigations and hearings, reforming its voting procedures, and increasing disclosure of its decision-making.	Support / Oppose
3. Empower the attorney general to investigate and prosecute cases involving public corruption, including serious election law malfeasance.	Support / Oppose
4. Amend the state constitution to extend pension forfeiture, subject to due process safeguards, to public officers and elected officials who have been convicted of felonies.	Support / Oppose

ELECTIONS AND VOTING

5. Amend the constitution to allow for ("same day") voter registration on Election Day.	Support / Oppose
6. Institute automatic, electronic voter registration, in which individuals' voter information is provided electronically to the Board of Elections unless they opt out, and address information is updated automatically.	Support / Oppose
7. Remove barriers to voter participation by allowing for no-excuse absentee voting and for voters to cast their votes at more convenient times over a period of several days, otherwise known as early voting	Support / Oppose
8. Grant New Yorkers on parole the ability to vote automatically, without the need to obtain a Certificate of Good Conduct or Relief.	Support / Oppose
9. Consolidate the state and federal primary to the third week in June, while ensuring that the legislative session ends at least two weeks prior.	Support / Oppose
10. Institute Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) for primary elections in citywide election in New York City, effectively eliminating the need for a separate runoff election. <i>Note: Haven't studied the issue enough</i>	Support / Oppose
11. Reform the special election process, utilizing a nonpartisan special election for state legislative seats, eliminating delays for filling vacancies, and increasing voter choice.	Support / Oppose
12. Allow primary winners to decline party nominations, ending use of judicial appointments to lure candidates off the ballot.	Support / Oppose
13. Restructure the state Board of Elections and change election administration by amending the constitution to abolish the strict two-party division of governance and operation and putting in place professional, nonpartisan administration.	Support / Oppose

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

14. Establish matching public financing system for state legislative and statewide races similar to the New York City model, and lower campaign contribution limits for legislative and statewide candidates for public office. <i>Note: Need to study the issue more</i>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
15. Close the LLC loophole to ensure that limited liability corporations have the same contribution limits as other corporations, rather than the higher limit for individuals.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
16. Close "soft money" loopholes such as: limiting transfers from party committees to candidates or other committees to twice the limit set on individual contributors; and limiting contributions to party committees, including housekeeping accounts, to the same ceiling placed on candidates.	<i>Skip - Need to study the issue more</i> <input type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
17. Restrict campaign contributions from registered lobbyists, placement agents, and those who do business with the state.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
18. Improve disclosure of independent expenditures such as requiring disclosure of electioneering activities.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
19. Require candidates to include the full name, home address, and employer/business name for each contribution and bundler.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
20. Require that two periodic campaign finance reports be filed during the legislative session to reflect contributions given during the session.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose

LEGISLATIVE RULES AND PROCEDURES

21. Reorganize the committee system to encourage greater and use conference committees, particularly during the budget process, and improve public disclosure of committee proceedings via webcasting all legislative proceedings for both houses of the legislature, including committee meetings, hearings and session proceedings.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
22. Enact legislative rules reform to strengthen rank-and-file members' roles in the legislative process, create more equity between members, and establish equitable distribution of funds to legislators for staffing and resources regardless of party affiliation, and increase opportunities for public testimony at legislative committee proceedings.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose

BUDGET PROCESS

23. Require state use of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles rather than cash accounting.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
24. Provide for adequate disclosure and itemization of elected officials' lump sum appropriations and member items to eliminate vague placeholders in budget legislation, report on their usage, address conflicts of interest, and report all spending online.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
25. Establish an independent nonpartisan budget office to provide revenue projections, display economic and policy analysis and require that the state engage in long term, multi-year budget planning.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
26. What is your position on requiring the governor's budget submission to present the full scope of the state's financial obligations, including its public authorities.	<i>Skip - Need to study further</i> <input type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose

BUDGET PROCESS (CONTINUED)

27. Limit governor's ability to change policy via appropriation bills, by requiring that such bills be consistent with existing law or proposed changes in separate legislation.	Support / <u>Oppose</u>
28. Establish a later start date for the fiscal year.	<u>Support</u> / Oppose
29. Incorporate performance budgeting with outcome measurement, to promote the more rational appropriation of state funds	<u>Support</u> / Oppose

JUDICIARY

30. Ensure that proposals to increase the retirement age of judges include all of the state's trial court judges.	Support / <u>Oppose</u>
31. Simplify the state's court system by consolidating the nine trial courts into a two-tiered system.	skip - need to study further Support / Oppose
32. Create a merit appointment system for all state judges.	Support / Oppose

MUNICIPAL HOME RULE

33. Make mayoral control of city schools permanent, with a governance system that provides for accountability, transparency, parent engagement, and democratic participation.	Not: pro community control Support / <u>Oppose</u>
34. Amend the Municipal Home Rule Law to limit the ability of a mayor-appointed charter revision commission to "bump" other local charter amendments from appearing on the ballot.	skip - need to study the issue further Support / Oppose

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

35. Eliminate "double dipping" by requiring state legislators to vacate their seats if elected as delegates and limit accruing of pensions for all government officials.	<u>Support</u> / Oppose
36. Simplify voting for delegates by allowing voters to cast one vote for district delegates and eliminating slate voting for at-large delegates.	<u>Support</u> / Oppose
37. Reduce barriers for delegate candidates by lowering petition signature requirements and provide public financing.	<u>Support</u> / Oppose

ADDITIONAL STATE GOVERNMENT ISSUES

38. Reform the governance structure of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to have the Executive Director appointed directly by the Board of Commissioners, rotate the position of Chair of the Board between representatives of NY and NJ, place tighter rules on the Board, and extend the open meetings law to the Port Authority.	<u>Support</u> / Oppose
39. Ensure continued posting of data on NYS open data portal, and improve transparency of lobbying, campaign finance, and budget.	<u>Support</u> / Oppose
40. Expand the Governor's Executive Order on faster appeals for Freedom of Information Law requests for all government bodies.	<u>Support</u> / Oppose

Please use the space provided or a separate sheet of paper to elaborate on your positions on the issues contained in the previous pages. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.

Expand legalizing marijuana to include Hemp

II. CAMPAIGN PROMISES MADE TO VOTERS

As a candidate who presently does not hold elected office, CU is interested in knowing your top five campaign promises you are making to the voters during this campaign for this position.

If elected, Citizens Union will use these promises to evaluate your performance while in office, as well as to evaluate your candidacy in the future.

We thank you very much for your response. Please feel free to use additional paper if the space provided is not sufficient, and to affix additional information such as a résumé, campaign brochure, or issue statements.

TOP FIVE 2014 CAMPAIGN PROMISES OR GOALS

1. Legalize Marijuana for adults
2. Raise minimum wage to \$ 20 per hour (Higher living wage)
3. Ensure housing development for poor and Working poor.
(poor = people with fixed income, ⁱⁿ welfare, disability check)
(Working poor = poor people with jobs)
4. Gradually close down Indian Point nuclear reactor and introduce alternate energy source.
5. Push forward Governor Cuomo's plan of funding to end HIV/Aids in NY state by 2020.

REPRESENTATION FOR ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 65

Citizens Union believes that all New Yorkers deserve to be represented by officials who work for the public interest and honor public trust. With the corruption conviction of the most recent representative of your district, former Speaker Sheldon Silver, we seek to endorse a candidate who will demonstrate that he/she will honor the full commitment of the oath of office, and to always represent the public interest above all else.

Please tell us how you would conduct the political affairs of this office in an upright manner, and restore the public trust in your district.

- ① Hire multiracial and ethnic representatives in his office ensure that people who need help will get it.
- ② Be accessible to anyone (citizens) within 24 hours.
- ③ Utilize whatever funding that he has in office to provide after school programs and mentoring programs for youth.

Please return to: Citizens Union, Local Candidates Committee, 299 Broadway, Suite 700 New York, NY 10007
Via email to candidates@citizensunion.org or fax to 212.227.0345 • Call us at 212-227-0342 with questions