

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 8<sup>th</sup>.** 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: Lester Chang

Party Affiliation(s): Republican, Independence, Reform,

Age: 55

Education: Accounting Degree-Brooklyn College

Masters Degree in International Transportation and Management-SUNY Maritime College, Bronx, NY

Occupation/Employer: Shipping & Logistics Consultant

---

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: U.S. Census Bureau coordinator for Chinatown & Lower Manhattan Election Worker and Translator for 25 years-NYC BOE

See attached bio for military service, etc.

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

### **Campaign Contact Information**

Campaign Spokesperson Name: Rob Ryan 917-658-0195

Staff Contact: Bob Morgan 646-326-8710

Address: Hdqts, 217 Park Row - 2nd floor

Telephone:

Fax:

Website: lesterchangforny.com

Email: lesterforny@gmail.com

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/lesterforNY>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lesterforny>

### **Affirmations**

Have you completed required campaign finance filings? YES

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? YES

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

Signature of Candidate:



Date:

06 April 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.	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
3. Empower the attorney general to investigate and prosecute cases involving public corruption, including serious election law malfeasance.	Support
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

### ELECTIONS AND VOTING

5. Amend the constitution to allow for ("same day") voter registration on Election Day.	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
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	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
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
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.	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
12. Allow primary winners to decline party nominations, ending use of judicial appointments to lure candidates off the ballot.	Support
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.	Undecided

## CAMPAIGN FINANCE

14. Establishing 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.	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.	Support
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.	Oppose
17. Restrict campaign contributions from registered lobbyists, placement agents, and those who do business with the state.	Support
18. Improve disclosure of independent expenditures such as requiring disclosure of electioneering activities.	Support
19. Require candidates to include the full name, home address, and employer/business name for each contribution and bundler.	Support
20. Require that two periodic campaign finance reports be filed during the legislative session to reflect contributions given during the session.	Support

## 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.	Support
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 Increase opportunities for public testimony at legislative committee proceedings.	Support

## BUDGET PROCESS

23. Require state use of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles rather than cash accounting.	Support
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.	Support
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.	Support

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.	Support
<b>BUDGET PROCESS (CONTINUED)</b>	
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
28. Establish a later start date for the fiscal year.	Undecided
29. Incorporate performance budgeting with outcome measurement, to promote the more rational appropriation of state funds	Support
<b>JUDICIARY</b>	
30. Ensure that proposals to increase the retirement age of judges include all of the state's trial court judges.	Support
31. Simplify the state's court system by consolidating the nine trial courts into a two-tiered system.	Need to know more.
32. Create a merit appointment system for all state judges.	Support
<b>MUNICIPAL HOME RULE</b>	
33. Make mayoral control of city schools permanent, with a governance system that provides for accountability, transparency, parent engagement, and democratic participation.	Support
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.	Support
<b>CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION</b>	
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.	Support
36. Simplify voting for delegates by allowing voters to cast one vote for district delegates and eliminating slate voting for at-large delegates.	Support
37. Reduce barriers for delegate candidates by lowering petition signature requirements and provide public financing.	Undecided
<b>ADDITIONAL STATE GOVERNMENT ISSUES</b>	
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.	Support
39. Ensure continued posting of data on NYS open data portal, and improve transparency of lobbying, campaign finance, and budget.	Support



## 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.	<i>Term Limits for elected officials, legislative leaders and Committee Chairs. Ethics reform and transparency for all Elected officials.</i>
2.	<i>More Charter Schools in lower Manhattan. Pass Tuition Tax Credits for families sending their children to private and nonpublic schools Maintain Admissions Standard at NYC Specialized High Schools as mandated by state legislation.</i>
3.	<i>New York City is still the number one target for terrorist attacks and lower Manhattan is the bulls-eye. The 65<sup>th</sup> AD is home to targets like NYPD Headquarters, Court &amp; law enforcement center, Federal Reserve, the World Trade Center site etc. I plan to use my Homeland Security background to ensure that the district and the city have the necessary funding and resources to protect us from another attack.</i>
4.	<i>NYC residents are some of the highest tax people in the nation. Work for tax reform that will level the playing field for small businesses that are the life-blood of the city &amp; state.</i>
5.	<i>Work with non-profits and municipal government to provide affordable senior housing.</i>



---

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

**Lester Chang - Republican Candidate - 65<sup>th</sup> Assembly District**

Lester Chang was born on the Lower East Side to immigrant Chinese parents, who were determined to provide a better life for their three children. When Lester was 8 years old, his father, who worked as a cook in a Chinese restaurant, lost his battle with cancer and the family briefly returned to Hong Kong to live with relatives. When his family returned to New York City they settled in Midwood, Brooklyn.

A product of New York's public education system, Lester is a graduate of Midwood High School and holds a degree in accounting from Brooklyn College (CUNY) and a Masters Degree in International Transportation and Management from the State University of New York's Maritime College in the Bronx.

Lester worked in the banking and finance before choosing a career in global shipping and logistics which has included living and traveling throughout Asia. Over the course of his career he has served in senior management positions overseeing operations in India, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Hong Kong and China. He currently works as a consultant to a Long Island based international logistics firm with extensive operations in China.

In addition to his private sector career, Lester has served as a member of the U.S. Navy Reserve since 1998. In the aftermath of the terror attacks of 9/11 he was called up to active duty as a counter-intelligence analyst; first in Washington, D.C. and then at Fort Wadsworth Staten Island in support of the Joint Intelligence Fusion Cell. In 2009, he was deployed to Afghanistan where he served as an intelligence analyst assigned to Special Operations Forces at Bagram Air Base.

As a member of the New York State Naval Militia he was most recently called up for active duty in October 2012 by Governor Cuomo where he served as a member of Task Force Hurricane Sandy providing relief services to residents of Far Rockaway. He currently holds the rank of Chief Warrant Officer 2 in the U.S. Navy Reserves.

Lester and his wife are longtime residents of Cleveland Place in Nolita. He is also active in American Legion Post 1291 in Chinatown where he serves as an Executive Member. He speaks English and Cantonese.

D.O.B: 3/26/61