



CITIZENS UNION CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE  
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL  
ELECTION 2009

Citizens Union would appreciate your responses to the following questions related to policy issues facing the City of New York that are of concern to Citizens Union and the citizens of the City. We plan to make public your responses to this questionnaire in our Voters Directory, on our website, and in other appropriate venues. Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union will use to evaluate candidates who are running for office in order to determine our "Preferred Candidates" for the primary election and "Endorsed Candidates" for the general election. In order to receive Citizens Union's "preferred" or "endorsed" status, in addition to completing the questionnaire, candidates must participate in an interview with Citizens Union's Local Candidates Committee.

We thank you very much for your response.

Candidate Name: Elizabeth Crowley Age: 32

Office to Which You Seek (Re) Election: Council District #: 30

Campaign Address: 69-39 Myrtle Ave Glendale 11385

Campaign Telephone Number: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (718) 381-6570

Party Affiliation(s): Democrat Campaign Manager Name: by Committee

Website & Email: www.elizabethcrowley.info

Education: MA in City and Regional Planning from Pratt's School of Architecture  
B.A. Magna cum laude in Preservation/Conservation from SUNY

Occupation/Employer (or years in currently held elected office): Council Member, 30<sup>th</sup> District - January 2009 - Present / F.I.T.

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement:  
Glendale Civic

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_  
Have you completed requisite campaign finance filings? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

*(Please note: Citizens Union can grant its "Preferred Candidate" and "Endorsed Candidate" rating only to candidates we have interviewed. We will make every effort to interview candidates in each race for City Council.)*

Signature of Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## I. CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

Please state your position on the following issues by indicating whether you support or oppose each. You may elaborate in the space provided at the end or on additional paper.

### VOTING AND ELECTIONS REFORM

- |   |         |   |
|---|---------|---|
| 1. What is your position with respect to allowing voters who are registered as independents to vote in party primaries?   | Support | Oppose<br><i>unless there is an independent prima</i> |
| 2. What is your position on passage of state legislation that would allow referenda initiated by the City Council and/or the public to appear on the ballot at the same time as a referendum initiated by a charter commission appointed by the Mayor?  | Support | Oppose  |
| 3. What is your position on increasing the pay of Election Day poll workers above the current \$200 they are allotted per election event?   | Support | Oppose  |
| 4. What is your position on restructuring New York's current board of elections model to eliminate political party responsibility for overall election administration and replace it with a system that narrows political party involvement to certification of candidate petitions and the actual counting of votes? | Support | Oppose  |
| 5. What is your position on having an election administration system where there is a local elections executive director appointed by the mayor upon recommendation by a new board that is chosen by the mayor and the city council?  | Support | Oppose  |

### CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

- |   |         |        |
|---|---------|--------|
| 6. What is your position on implementing "war chest" restrictions that would prohibit a candidate from transferring funds raised in a previous election cycle into a current campaign committee for a different office? | Support | Oppose |
|---|---------|--------|

7. What is your position on allowing campaign financing for ballot proposals?

Support

Oppose

CITY COUNCIL REFORM

8. What is your position on allowing Council committees to function more independently of the speaker than is presently the case?

Support

Oppose

a. Should committee staff be hired by and report to committee chairs?

Support

Oppose

b. Should committee hearings and votes be scheduled at the direction of the chairs?

Support

Oppose

c. Should committees be able to issue subpoenas by a vote of their members?

Support

Oppose

9. What is your position on:

a. limiting councilmembers' ability to earn outside income?

Support

Oppose

b. making the job of councilmember a full-time position?

Support

Oppose

c. eliminating or limiting stipends for committee chairs and leadership positions?

Support

Oppose

*responsibilities therefore it makes sense for Council Committee Chairs to get paid for their additional duties and time spent as Chair*

10. What is your position on requiring that any future increase in councilmember compensation not affect those serving in the current term of the council and only be applied prospectively to the following term?

Support

Oppose

11. What is your position on consolidating the current City Council committee structure and reducing the number of overall committees?

Support

Oppose

*Vital work is done at the committee level and committees allow for Council members to dive into specific topics and local issues*

12. What is your position on term limits for elected officials?

Support

Oppose

13. What is your position on modifying the City Charter to require that changes to term limits may only be approved by the voters?

Support

Oppose

14. What is your position on the recent extension of term limits for the city's elected officials to three consecutive four-year terms? Please explain your answer.

Support

Oppose

I oppose the vote to extend term limits and supported the public referendum so the people could decide on extending term limits rather than Council Members and the Mayor. I believe the will of the people should drive the City Council.

**POLICY ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE**

Please state your position on the following issues by indicating whether you support or oppose each, where applicable. Please also use the space provided below each question or on a separate sheet of paper to elaborate on your positions on the questions which require a detailed answer. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.

15. Knowing that the police department and commissioner retain ultimate authority for determining whether an officer is guilty and penalty, what is your position on transferring power to the Civilian Complaint Review Board to prosecute cases of police misconduct, such as force, abuse of authority, discourtesy, and offensive language?

Support

Oppose

16. What is your position on changing the current land use process under ULURP to increase the role of community-based planning?

Support

Oppose

17. What is your position regarding the creation of a Charter Revision Commission to review specifically the roles of the various offices of government and how well government has functioned since the 1988 and 1989 charter review commissions?

Support

Oppose

18. What is your position on reforming the current pension funding structure to create multiple tiers for future city government employees?

Support

Oppose

- a. In FY 2008-09, New York City spent \$12 billion on pensions and fringe benefits for City employees out of a total budget of \$62 billion. What would you do to address the growing pension costs borne by the city and New York City tax payers?

I stand steadfast opposed to any cuts to pensions or benefits. City employees render invaluable services to the people of New York. However, spending has increased at an alarming rate and we need to reassess where our money is going to eliminate wasteful spending.

19. What is your position with respect to the City Council passing a resolution calling upon the State Legislature to establish a State Constitutional Convention?

Support

Oppose

- a. If support, what are the three most important areas that need improvement?

① I would repeal the Urstadt Law so that New York City would be in control of its own rent control laws.  
 ② New York City should manage its own school systems and Albany should be cut from that process. ③ I would promote fair elections by removing the redistricting authority from legislative leaders to an independent commission.

- b. Do you believe that greater home rule should be granted to the City of New York? If so, in what areas should further sovereignty be given?

I believe the City Council could be used as a way to get New York City more autonomy. The City should have greater influence on issues that impact us directly, such as repealing the Urstadt Law.

20. Taking into consideration the lessons learned from the debates surrounding congestion pricing and the Ravitch Commission's recommendations to provide the MTA with long-term funding, what would you propose to address the MTA's fiscal solvency issues and ensure that the burden for funding the MTA is equitably distributed among all stakeholders?

I would propose to reinstate the Commuter tax so that commuters pay their fair share to keep our transportation system running.

21. What would you propose in terms of creating a greater role for the city council in determining and deciding the city budget?

The City Council should play the most important role in determining the City's budget, as Council Members are uniquely sensitive to the needs of NY's diverse communities. Our families depend on local schools, roads, hospitals and public transportation everyday. While they pay taxes to the City to support these services, NY'ers are too often held hostage by bickering in Albany. NYC should have greater control over its own taxation so revenue can be raised to keep public services running.

22. What is your position regarding the City's past practice of using surplus tax revenues to pay down future health cost and pension obligations, and the decision not to do so this year?

While paying down pension obligations is worthwhile during years of economic expansion, such a move is just not feasible right now, given the downturn in the economy and decrease tax revenue. The funds were rightfully used to maintain our critical public services.

23. What is your view of how the taxes paid by New Yorkers compare to the value that is received in City services? Do you believe that taxes should be raised or lowered? To the extent you believe taxes should be changed, please provide specific proposals about what taxes you would raise and what services you would cut, if you didn't raise taxes, listed in order of greatest magnitude.

New York City already has some of the highest taxes in the country and some of the strongest public services. However, there is always room for improvement, especially when talking about public safety and public health. To keep vital programs solvent, we must cut waste in the City budget to free up public money. We are currently in a recession and the families of NYC cannot afford additional taxes.

24. Many policy advocates champion the creation of a more diversified economy, and one that is less reliant on Wall Street. What is your position on such a plan? If you support it, what would you do to diversify the city's economy? How would you adjust spending in New York City to accommodate the anticipated reduction in tax revenue as the tax base shifts to lower paying jobs?

New York should assert itself as a leader in green technology, devoting more of our funding to energy-efficient and environmentally friendly projects. In doing so, we will create jobs at a time when they are needed most, as well as decrease our carbon footprint and control unnecessary energy costs.

25. What would you propose the Department of Education do to increase the ability for parents and teachers to become more meaningfully involved in the education system? What other positive changes can be made to the New York City public school system?

While Mayoral Control has resulted in highest test scores and better graduation rates, parents must retain a significant voice in how their children are educated. To that end, I propose that parents and educators should be consulted on the major decisions regarding our public school system. Teachers and parents, not bureaucrats, are best placed to make critical decisions about our schools. Therefore, I support Mayoral Control but with greater control to parents and educators.

26. What would you propose to increase the transparency of the Board of Elections in the City of New York's operations and accountability to the city and its voters?

There must be voting machines in NYC that have a proper paper trail. We must also have an open and transparent bidding process for the purchase of new machines and technology, especially with respect to training for voters and workers, implementation, maintenance and record-keeping.

27. What would you propose to further enhance transparency regarding the relationships between council members, their families, and nonprofits that receive funding from New York City?

All recipients of City funds, be they public or private, commercial or nonprofit, should be identified on the public record and should be available to citizens for review. In addition, any council members who sit on boards of nonprofits and other organizations that do business with the City should be identified at the beginning of each fiscal year. The Attorney General's

**Additional Comments:**

Project Sunlight is an important first step in increasing transparency regarding state government, but more should be done on the local level.





## CANDIDATE ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Citizens Union is adding a new element to its evaluation of incumbents running for re-election. In addition to evaluating their stances on the issues above, Citizens Union will assess incumbents on how well they kept the promises they made to voters during the previous election.

As an elected official who is seeking re-election,

- a. what were the top five promises you made to your constituents when you ran for your current position and what progress have you made to keep those promises, and why and why not have you met them?
- b. what are your top five campaign promises you are making to the voters during this campaign for this position?

We thank you very much for your response. Please feel free to use additional paper if the space provided is not sufficient.

### TOP FIVE CAMPAIGN PROMISES FROM <sup>2009</sup> 2005 AND ACTION ON THEM

- ① 1. Education improved throughout CD30 by securing funding for new extensions to alleviate overcrowding and bring modern <sup>classroom</sup> technology to schools.
- ② 2. Improving access to affordable and quality health care by moving 2/3rds of City Council to move Albany to free malpractice insurance rates to keep our female health providers from leaving New York.
- ③ 4. Supported our seniors and senior centers by securing funding for their services.
- ④ 5. Stopping overdevelopment by moving the City Planning Commission and then the City Council to rezone over 300 blocks in Maspeth, Middle Village and Glendale.

TOP FIVE 2009 CAMPAIGN PROMISES

- ⑤
1. Transportation issues addressed and
  2. fixed throughout CD30 including the
  3. ~~water~~ intersection at 80th street and
  4. Furmanville rd in Middle Village
  5. \_\_\_\_\_