

2010 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR  
CANDIDATES FOR NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE

Citizens Union would appreciate your response to the following questionnaire related to policy issues facing the State of New York and our interest in reforming how state government operates. 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. If you seek our support, we would also need to schedule an interview with you as part of the evaluation process.

We plan to make responses to this questionnaire public in our Voters Directory and other appropriate venues.

We thank you very much for your response.

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Candidate Name: Robert Giuffre

Age: 27

Office to Which You Seek (Re) Election: Assembly District #: 80

Campaign Address: 1921 Wallace Avenue; Bronx NY 10462

Campaign Telephone Number: (347) 538-6231

Fax: None

Party Affiliation(s): Democrat Campaign Manager Name: None/Self

Website & Email: Giuffreforassembly.com; robagiuffre@gmail.com

Education: John Jay College (BA / MPA pending)

Occupation/Employer: Student / Food Service / Campaign Consultant

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: Morris Park Civic Association; 49<sup>th</sup>

Precinct Community Council; District Representative for State Senate District 34 (2006-2007); Legislative Intern 2005 for Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver; Regional Field Director Kucinich for President 2007; Field Organizer Nevada State Democratic Party / Obama for America 2008; Campaign Manager Tom Cooke for NYC Council 2009

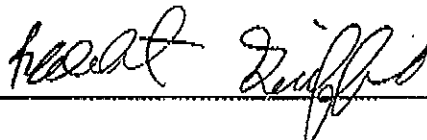
Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? **YES**

*(Please note: Citizens Union can grant its "Preferred Candidate" and "Endorsed Candidate" rating only to candidates we have interviewed.)*

Have you completed requisite campaign finance filings?

**YES**

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



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

July 2, 2010

## I. CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

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

### ELECTION REFORM

1. What is your position on establishing by statute an Independent Legislative Redistricting Commission charged with drawing congressional and state legislative lines and removing the responsibility from the Legislature, through the passage of S.1614B/A.5279B? **Support**

*This is an obvious reform that even the most entrenched politicians and interests cannot logically oppose.*

2. What is your position on a process where the legislature directly appoints the members of a districting commission, as in S.7881-A or S.7882-A, as an alternative to the independent commission referred to in Question 1? **Oppose**

*An appointed commission would defeat the purpose and spirit of redistricting reform. Oppose*

3. What is your position on maintaining the current redistricting process in which legislative lines are drawn by the legislators with support and research from the New York State Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment (LATFOR)? **Oppose**

*It is foolish to expect legislators to redistrict their own districts without prejudice.*

4. What is your position on the adoption of stricter redistricting rules that would ensure that every district is: more equal in population (within 1% deviation from the mean), contiguous and compact, formed without regard for protecting an incumbent or political party, mindful of the need to keep neighborhoods intact, and not drawn to undermine racial, linguistic, and ethnic representation? **Support**

*We have some very odd looking legislative districts in the Bronx, and that should change.*

5. What is your position on restructuring the state Board of Elections and changing the administration of elections by amending the constitution to abolish the two-party system of governance and operation? **Support**

*BOE administrators should be subject to the same principles that apply to other civil service jobs: competitive testing for job placement and job protection based on performance. BOE jobs should not be patronage jobs.*

6. What is your position on making it easier for candidates to appear on the ballot by, for example, lowering signature requirements and utilizing less burdensome witness signature requirements? **Support**

*I think current signature requirements are reasonable; it proves that a candidate has grassroots viability; however, I think the concept of third party objections needs to end. Often incumbents and well financed candidates wage wars of attrition (trivious specific objections and fraud allegations) against candidates with little money to drain resources and time. Auditing and review of peritions should be left to civil servants who work in the BOE (not appointed workers)*

7. What is your position on amending 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**

*It is obviously undemocratic.*

8. What is your position on removing prisoner populations from the census counts for the purpose of redistricting and instead counting those populations in their last known place of residence? **Support**

*This is a left over practice from when the State Senate was controlled by the Republican Party and makes little sense in reality.*

9. What is your position on amending the constitution to allow for Election Day Registration? **Support**

*Not allowing for election day registration is a tool used by the political establishment to hinder the chances of a grassroots, people-powered campaign from succeeding.*

10. What is your position on amending the constitution to allow for no-excuse absentee voting? **Support**

*As long as someone is an active voter and is eligible to vote in a given election, the reason for requesting an absentee ballot is irrelevant.*

#### **CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM**

11. What is your position on lowering campaign contribution limits for legislative and statewide candidates for public office? **Support**

*The limits are much too high; if a candidate has a few wealthy friends or business interests, a seat can be bought for all intents and purposes.*

12. What is your position on establishing a system of public financing for state legislative and statewide races? **Support**

*I 100% support creating a system of public financing at the state level that is similar to the system in New York City.*

13. If you support public financing, what is your position on a system where public funds are awarded on a matching basis (similar in design and function to the New York City system) rather than a system of full public funding of campaigns? **Support**

*A candidate should first have to prove their viability by gathering small donations from members of his or her community before receiving public funding.*

14. What is your position on restricting campaign contributions from registered lobbyists and those who do business with the state? **Support**

*I support this idea – although the lobbyists would find loopholes like “bundling.”*

15. What is your position on banning campaign contributions from corporations, LLCs, and LLPs, while still allowing such entities to form separate PACs? **Support**

*Similar to the previous question, I support this idea, but suspect ways around the law would be found.*

16. What is your position on limiting transfers from party committees to candidates, or other committees, to twice the limit set on individual contributors and limiting contributions to party committees to the same ceiling placed on candidates? **Support**

*Machine politics always give advantages to their chosen candidates, but this would limit the amount of support and help level the playing field.*

17. What is your position on increasing disclosure and reporting of campaign contributions and expenditures by requiring candidates to include full name, home address, and employer/business name for each contribution? **Support**

*Again, I think the NYC Campaign Finance Board is a good starting point for the state to model.*

18. What is your position on requiring that two periodic campaign finance reports be filed during the legislative session to reflect contributions given during the session? **Support**

*This would help the public locate and identify “pay to play” situations.*

19. What is your position on stricter requirements on the use of campaign contributions for non-campaign related activity, such as personal use? **Support**

*I support this idea. Although I would like to disclose that I did take a small loan from my campaign to help pay for moving expenses when I took my job working on the Obama campaign, but will repay the loan in full. My \$1,200 loan is minor when compared to what other candidates do with their campaign money: vacations, car leases, trips to Disneyland, dinners are some examples.*

20. What is your position on requiring disclosure of independent expenditure campaigns? **Support**

## ETHICS REFORM

21. What is your position on changing the representation of the Commission on Public Integrity so no one elected official makes a majority of the appointments? Support

22. What is your position on expanding the jurisdiction of the newly formed Commission on Public Integrity to include legislative ethics violations, lobbying and campaign finance enforcement? Support

*The status quo has proven to not adequately self-regulate time and time again.*

## BUDGET REFORM

23. What is your position on requiring all budget documents, including budget bills and legislative additions, to be presented in a format that is organized into programmatic categories and facilitates public and legislative review?

*As an MPA student, I am amazed at how antiquated NY's budget review and accountability systems are when compared with other local and state governments.* Support

24. 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

25. What is your position on establishing 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

*Cities and states on the west coast, like Portland, Seattle and Oregon State and Washington State provide very good models to emulate.*

26. What is your position on the use of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) rather than cash accounting for the state budget? Support

*While fund accounting does have its role in the non-profit world and at the agency or department level, I do believe that the overall state budget should employ GAAP principles.*

27. What is your position on requiring regular reporting of lump-sum appropriations and member items that includes detailed information on funds distributed, recipients, and remaining funds and bans on member item appropriations to organizations of which a close relative of the Member is on the staff or board?

*I support this 100%. In fact, the incumbent in my district has some questionable uses of member item money in her record. Her funding of a non-profit called "Bronx Overall Development Corporation" seems wasteful and begs some serious questions.* Support

28. What is your position on distributing member item allocations equally amongst all legislators and requiring for greater accountability as expressed in S. 7007/A10116?

*Not only does every member of the legislature deserve the same amount of money for their communities, it would limit the horse trading involved with leaders and the rank and file members.* Support

29. What is your position on incorporating the use of performance budgeting and outcome measurement to promote the more rational appropriation of state funds?

Oppose

*In theory these concepts seem logical and practical, but I am unsure if they can be applied across the board. Some government services are very hard to quantify into dollars and cents.*

30. What is your position on instituting a later start date for the state fiscal year?

Support

31. What is your position on mandating the use of conference committees in the legislative budget process?

Support

#### **ADDITIONAL REFORM**

32. Do you support a system of selecting New York trial court judges through an appointment process in which candidates are recommended by citizens committees on the basis of merit?

Support

*Yes, judges should not owe a particular political party their jobs.*

33. Do you support further reform of the Wicks Law, which requires New York State government entities to award separate prime contracts for the major components of a construction project?

Support

## 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 or goals you are making to the voters during this campaign for this position.

If elected, Citizens Union will use these promises or goals 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.

### TOP FIVE 2010 CAMPAIGN PROMISES OR GOALS

1. I WILL SIMPLY AND TRULY ONLY REPRESENT THE PEOPLE OF MY DISTRICT, NOT SPECIAL INTERESTS OR ANY OTHER ENTITY.
2. YOU WILL ALWAYS KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME, AND I WILL ALWAYS BE ACCESSABLE (I HAVE BEEN GIVING OUT MY PERSONAL EMAIL ADDRESS AND VOICEMAIL TO VOTERS).
3. I WILL NOT MISUSE MEMBER ITEM MONEY AND WILL PUT WHATEVER MONEY THAT I HAVE AVAILABLE DIRECTLY INTO THE COMMUNITY – WITHOUT USE OF ANY SORT OF UNEEDED MIDDLE MAN.
4. I WILL WORK ON JOB CREATION IN MY DISTRICT THROUGH ALL POSSIBLE AVENUES.
5. I WILL INTRODUCE LEGISLATION THAT WOULD HELP FUND YOUTH ATHLETICS PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE STATE THAT WOULD COMBAT CHILDHOOD OBESITY (SEE MY WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS).

Please return to: Citizens Union, Local Candidates Committee  
299 Broadway, Suite 700 New York, NY 10007  
via fax to 212.227.0345 or via email to [asenteno@citizensunion.org](mailto:asenteno@citizensunion.org)