



**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: **Mark Pollard**      Age: **47**

Office to Which You Seek (Re) Election: **Senate District 18**

Campaign Address: **248 Tompkins Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11216**

Campaign Telephone Number: **(646) 208 9847**      Campaign Fax Number: **(718) 978 1305**

Party Affiliation(s): **Democrat**      Campaign Manager Name: **Jennifer Joseph**

Website & Email: [friendsofmarkpollard@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmarkpollard@gmail.com) / [pollardlaw@gmail.com](mailto:pollardlaw@gmail.com)

Education: **State BA, State University of New York College at Purchase;  
JD, State University of New York at Buffalo Law School.**

Occupation/Employer (or years in currently held elected office):

**Law Office of Mark Pollard, Criminal Defense – Trials and Appeals;**

**Assistant Professor, Medgar Evers College, CUNY, School of Business;**

**Faculty Coordinator, Honor Society & Black Male Empowerment and Development Center**

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement:

**Assistant District Attorney, Office of the Kings County District Attorney 1987-1989: Felony Narcotics**

**Prosecutor & Criminal Court Bureau Supervisor;**

**Counsel, NYS Assembly & Assembly Black, Puerto Rican and Hispanic Caucus 1989;**

**Counsel, NYS Senate 2003**

Member, Community Board 3

Past Chairman, Brooklyn N.A.A.C.P. Criminal Justice Committee 2007

Member, Cornerstone Baptist Church

Member, Bedford Stuyvesant's Community Safety Taskforce

New York Urban League, Director of Sumner Youth Employment Program 1983;

DC 37, Legal Services Bureau, law school intern - 1985 & 1986

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: Mark Holland Date: 7/19/10

**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
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
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
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*
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?	Oppose*
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
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
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*

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

**CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM**

11. What is your position on lowering campaign contribution limits for legislative and statewide candidates for public office?	Support
12. What is your position on establishing a system of public financing for state legislative and statewide races?	Support
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
14. What is your position on restricting campaign contributions from registered lobbyists and those who do business with the state?	Support*
15. What is your position on banning campaign contributions from corporations, LLCs, and LLPs, while still allowing such entities to form separate PACs?	Support
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
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
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
19. What is your position on stricter requirements on the use of campaign contributions for non-campaign related activity, such as personal use?	Support
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

**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?	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

26. What is your position on the use of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) rather than cash accounting for the state budget?	Support
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?	Support
28. What is your position on distributing member item allocations equally amongs: all legislators and requiring for greater accountability as expressed in S. 7007/A10116?	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?	Support
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
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

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

**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\* So long as priority was given (in actual practice and not just intent) to keeping neighborhoods intact and the utmost of sensitivity given to racial, ethnic and language issues. Neighborhoods that have been represented together and kept whole through decades of significant change in NYC and NYS should be respected and provided every opportunity to maintain their status as "one" community in the eyes of public officials -- elected and appointed. As soon as they are split into different legislative districts, for example, different treatment begins.*

**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?**

*Oppose\* While disreputable events occur at the Board of Elections as result of political staffing, solutions to these very real problems should not involve removing political parties from what is an inherently political office. Until larger changes addressing the role of legislative leaders, the heads of county political organizations and other power-brokers are tackled, it may be better, perhaps, to open up the Board of Elections to all parties with ballot lines -- allowing for more "factions" to police each other. While I wholeheartedly support reform of the Board of Elections, I am not sure that removing political parties from the operation, alone, is the answer.*

**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\* While New York is a vast state of many varied regions (I do not subscribe to the artificial upstate-downstate divide), all of which need and deserve energetic support, the practice of artificially inflating county populations based on prison populations is an insulting gimmick whose time has come. However, and I point this out in the larger context of supporting efforts to do away with this trickery, I would also support a carve-out to address prisoners serving life sentences or sentences which, objectively measured as a certain length given the age of prisoner, are effectively life sentences. These "lifers" are never returning to their last known residence, they are staying where they are. As such, they should be counted in the county where their correctional facility is located. It is precisely this sort of compromise that may encourage the passage of legislation addressing the critical census issue.*

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

*Oppose\* While I enthusiastically support Election Day registration in person, and with appropriate identifying documents, the potential for ID fraud and fraudulent mass-mailings of absentee ballots is too great to answer this question in the affirmative without further details and safeguards discussed. The two-step process currently in place - first application with excuse and then a ballot - may be inefficient, but it does insist on a level of engagement with the process that prevents mass-mailing block votes that could swing a close election.*

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

*Support\* Lobbyists and those doing business with the state have way too much control over priorities and business in Albany. I am fully in favor of curtailing their influence by capping contributions and increasing disclosure and equalizing how businesses, corporations and labor unions are treated. However, there are community organizations and smaller social-service organizations, food-banks, charities and such, which use Board Members and friends to petition government. Some sort of carve out -- that distinguishes between large corporations and vendors and smaller community groups -- may be appropriate.*

**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?**

*Support\* While I support this common-sense and desperately needed reform, there are "mechanical" concerns that have to be considered: how agencies are funded and in what order these spending bills are prepared and voted on does matter. Such issues should be considered in advancing reforms.*

**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\* So long as these measures don't implicate constitutional issues surrounding state issuance of debt and referendum requirements, which is why public authority spending and debt were crafted in the first place. Of course I support this measure, but it would need to be crafted very carefully.*

## 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. Small Businesses & Health Care:** small businesses are the engines of our economies and job creators, especially in minority communities. Expanding NYS Health Plus, for example, to better include smaller businesses – those that employ ten to twenty employees – will be the cornerstone of our fiscal recovery. Small businesses do not have the same needs as larger corporate employers, and ensuring they have a prominent seat at the table where health care reform conversations are taking place is a critical priority. Small businesses want to provide generous health care for their employees; for those that don't it's because of costs – that needs to get better.
- 2. Expanding Availability of Mental Health Care:** while discussions concerning mental health problems and treatment options are more open and vigorous than ever before, there are large segments of our communities where both lag behind. Cultural and social stigmas in ethnic and immigrant communities are keeping our neighbors in Hispanic, Asian, African-American and West-Indian enclaves (and beyond) from being able to get the treatments that would immeasurably improve the quality of their lives. I look forward to working in the Senate to expand frank and open conversations around: depression; the root causes of substance abuse; violence & domestic abuse; and eldercare mental health.
- 3. Good Government Reform: Calendar Transparency & Full Disclosure of Outside Income:** utilizing common-place, easily accessible and easy-to-use technology, I will keep my calendar of events, meetings and Senate activities on-line. Any meeting I take, whether with a non-profit, lobbyist or advocacy group, is a meeting I should be comfortable having all of Brooklyn and New York State knowing about. Similarly, full disclosure of sources and amounts of income received by legislators other than their official salary should be fully disclosed so as to increase and maintain the integrity of governmental decision making.
- 4. Keeping A Sharp Eye On Atlantic Yards Development:** from expanding and enforcing community benefit agreements to mitigating disruption to local traffic and commercial strips during construction, and from leading muscular apprenticeship programs in the building trades to protecting commitments made to affordable housing, I will have staff in Brooklyn and in Albany dedicated to the Atlantic Yards Development.

5. **A Second Chance Expungement Opportunity For 1<sup>st</sup> Time Non-Violent Offenders:** 1<sup>st</sup> time non-violent criminal offenders (especially those just beyond juvenile years) should have the opportunity to have their records cleansed, if a strict set of community-service, educational and employment requirements are met. I look forward to working with Bar Associations, community groups and prosecutors from throughout New York to advance this compassionate social justice reform.

**Not included in the above, but of equal importance, are other important issues such as:**

Protecting and Expanding Educational Opportunities for all of our preK-12 students;

Generous funding of CUNY & SUNY colleges and universities;

Campaign finance reforms (addressed extensively in the support/oppose section);

Maintaining a reliable, affordable and green energy supply, &

Public transportation concerns.

Please return to: Citizens Union, Local Candidates Committee  
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via fax to 212.227.0345 or via email to [asenteno@citizensunion.org](mailto:asenteno@citizensunion.org)