



Candidate Questionnaire  
 Local Candidates  
 Committee NYS Elections  
 2018

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 July 20<sup>th</sup>.** Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union uses to evaluate candidates running for Governor of New York State, and to issue our preference for the Primary and endorsement for the General Election. 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: Governor Andrew M. Cuomo

Party Affiliation(s): Democratic

Age: 60

Education: Fordham University (BA); Albany Law School (JD)

Office Sought: Governor

Occupation/Employer: 56<sup>th</sup> Governor of New York State (2011-present)

Previous Offices, Campaigns, Community/Civic Involvement:

Attorney General, New York State (1997-2010)

Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (1997-2001)

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

**Campaign Contact Information**

Campaign Manager Name: Maggie Moran

Additional Staff Contact: Kate Dineen, Policy Director

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**I. 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:

Date:

8/16/18

## II. 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.

### 2018 PRIORITY ISSUES:

#### ETHICS

1. Limit outside compensation earned by state legislators and statewide officials to 25% of their salaries, while enacting a salary increase and eliminating stipends.	Support / Oppose
2. Reform the Joint Commission on Public Ethics to eliminate the ability of one party to veto an investigation and to increase disclosure of its decision-making.	Support / Oppose

#### ELECTIONS AND VOTING

<p>3. Do you support or oppose the following changes to the state’s current registration and voting system?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Early voting</li> <li>b. No-excuse absentee voting</li> <li>c. Election Day voter registration</li> <li>d. Re-enfranchisement of people on parole automatically <u>through legislation</u>, without requiring a Certificate of Good Conduct or Relief</li> <li>e. Automatic voter registration, unless the potential voter opts out</li> <li>f. Consolidated state and federal primaries</li> <li>g. Electronic poll books</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Support / Oppose</li> <li>b. Support / Oppose</li> <li>c. Support / Oppose</li> <li>d. Support / Oppose</li> <li>e. Support / Oppose</li> <li>f. Support / Oppose</li> <li>g. Support / Oppose</li> </ul>
4. Reform the special election process, utilizing a nonpartisan special election for state legislative seats and eliminate delays in filling vacancies.	<p>Support / Oppose</p> <p><i>NOTE: In order to answer this question, I would need to review the specific proposal.</i></p>

#### CAMPAIGN FINANCE

5. Establish public financing of campaigns for state legislative and statewide offices using a method similar to New York City’s Campaign Finance Law.	Support / Oppose
6. Close the LLC loophole to ensure that limited liability companies have the same contribution limits as corporations, rather than the higher limit for individuals.	Support / Oppose
7. Drastically reduce campaign contribution limits and reduce them even further from registered lobbyists and those who do business with the state.	Support / Oppose

**BUDGET PROCESS**

8. Require full disclosure of grants and contracts issued by the state, including the budget lines from which the spending is made and reporting on the results of each grant or contract over a certain amount.	Support / Oppose  <i>NOTE: I support increased transparency, but in order to answer this question, I would need to review the specific proposal.</i>
9. Provide for adequate online disclosure and itemization of spending from elected officials' lump sum appropriations, including reporting on potential conflicts of interest and how the funds are spent.	Support / Oppose

**POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY**

10. Repeal Civil Rights Law, Sec. 50-a, which shields from public view the disciplinary records of police officers, correction officers, and firefighters.	Support / Oppose  <i>NOTE: In order to answer this question, I would need to review the specific proposal.</i>
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**ELECTION ADMINISTRATION**

11. Restructure the state Board of Elections to abolish the strict two-party division of governance and operation and putting in place professional, nonpartisan administration.	Support / Oppose
12. Empower the attorney general to investigate and prosecute election law malfeasance and cases of public corruption.	Support / Oppose

**HOME RULE**

13. Make mayoral control of city schools permanent, with a governance system that provides for accountability, transparency, parent engagement, and democratic participation.

Support / Oppose

*NOTE: I have supported extending mayoral control in the past that included increased transparency, but in order to answer this question, I would need to review the specific proposal.*

14. How would you seek to further restore the public’s trust in government? What other steps would you take to expand transparency of state government, including the Executive Chamber?

In 2018, I proposed a package of reforms, including constitutional amendments to limit outside income for members of the New York State Legislature, and to impose term limits for members of the Legislature and state-wide elected officials. I have also proposed closing the “LLC Loophole,” requiring local elected officials to file financial disclosure requirements either the same as their state counterparts or approved by the state, and comprehensive reforms to the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) to achieve consistency and increase transparency.

15. How do you view the budget process with respect to timeliness, effectiveness, fairness, and public accountability? What improvements, if any, would you make?

After decades of late budgets and unsustainable annual growth, I restored fiscal discipline to state government—which has enabled major investments in New York’s future, including record investments in education aid and affordable healthcare. For eight consecutive years, I have delivered timely, balanced budgets, holding spending growth to 2 percent or less.

16. Further to your responses to questions 5, 6, and 7, related to campaign finance, in the previous section, what is your view about measures to limit the role of money in elections and politics? If elected, would you set an example on campaign finance reform by voluntarily (even unilaterally) limiting the size of campaign contributions you receive by an amount significantly less than the current limit, should reforms not be enacted? If not, why not?

I support campaign finance reform.

17. What is your view of the state's current financial situation? Are there specific programs or revenue sources that you would consider increasing, decreasing, eliminating or creating? How will you deal with the recent federal tax law changes that limit the tax deductibility of state income and property taxes to \$10,000?

Over the past eight years, I have restored fiscal discipline, while achieving historic progressive accomplishments and lifting up the middle class.

In the FY19 Budget, I took immediate action to combat Washington's curtailment of the SALT deduction—extending charitable contribution benefits to New Yorkers, creating an alternative Employer Compensation Expense Program, and strategically decoupling the state tax code from the federal tax code.

In addition, I recently joined with Attorney General Barbara Underwood to file a lawsuit against the federal government for the unconstitutional tax law that targets New York and its taxpayers.

18. What would be your approach to education? How would you ensure the provision of funding needed to ensure a sound basic education under the Campaign for Fiscal Equity decisions to all of New York's school districts? What is your view on the use of standardized tests?

Over the past two terms, I have fought to transform our state's education system—securing the largest investment in education aid in the history of the state and directing 72 percent of that aid to the neediest school districts. This record investment reflects a more than 35 percent increase in school aid since 2012.

I have also invested more than \$500 million to establish the first statewide community school program in state history and have increased support for prekindergarten, after-school programming, computer science and engineering, and early college high schools.

I have also enacted new requirements to ensure that school districts provide information on how they allocate funding to schools in order to increase transparency.

I support accountability, and also fairness, which is why I enacted limitations on the duration and overall number of standardized tests.

19. How do you plan to address the systemic failures of the Metropolitan Transit Authority and New York City's transportation infrastructure? What is your view of congestion pricing, both in general and as a source of revenue?

As Governor, I have made record investments in the MTA, including an \$8.3 billion commitment to the largest MTA Capital Plan in history. The State's FY19 Budget fully funds the \$836 million Subway Action Plan to advance critically needed repairs, with the City required to contribute half of the funding for the plan. I have also committed to fund 50 percent of the recently-released 10-year Fast Forward plan to modernize NYC Transit, with the City expected to fund the remainder.

I support congestion pricing as a vital source of revenue for the MTA and enacted a surcharge on for-hire vehicles below 96th Street, as an important first phase.

20. What is your plan for ensuring that New York State's economy is effectively positioned in the years ahead to create economic opportunity and address income inequality, and with regard to the growth of the upstate economy?

I have taken unprecedented action to address income inequality—including enacting a \$15 minimum wage, passing the nation's most comprehensive 12-week paid family leave program, reducing the cost of child care, providing tuition-free college, and expanding the youth jobs program to create economic opportunity for all. I am also implementing a \$100 billion infrastructure program that's creating good-paying jobs and driving local economies.

Over the next five years, I will advance a \$150 billion infrastructure program to continue this momentum and will continue to make strategic investments in upstate communities through the Regional Economic Development Councils, Downtown Revitalization Initiative, and Clean Energy Fund.

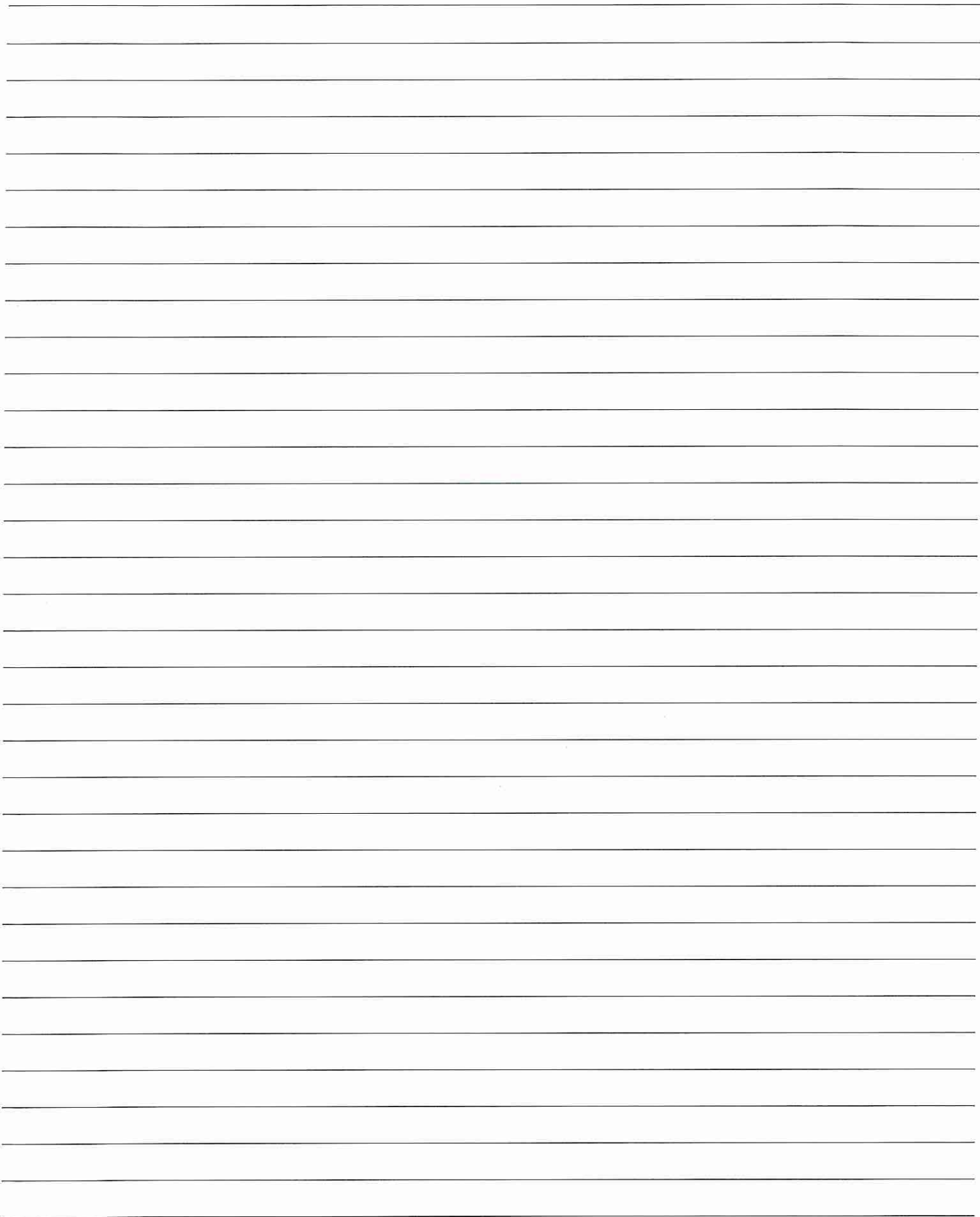
21. What is your view of recent federal policies as they affect New York? What should New York's Governor do, going forward, to address those issues?

Because of the smart, progressive policies we've enacted over the past eight years, New York is well positioned to fight back against the Trump Administration's unprecedented attack on New York values.

From protecting women's reproductive rights, to providing support to Puerto Rico, to carrying the mantle of climate leadership, to strengthening election cyber security to protect against Russian attacks, to launching lawsuits to fight SALT rollbacks and inhumane family separation policies—I will continue to lead where the federal government abdicates its responsibility.

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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.





### III. CAMPAIGN PROMISES MADE TO VOTERS (PAST AND CURRENT)

In addition to evaluating stances on the issues above, Citizens Union also assesses incumbents on their current campaign promises and how well they kept the promises made to voters during the previous election.

As an elected official who is seeking re-election,

- what are the top five promises you are making to the voters during this campaign, and
- what were the top five promises you made to your constituents when you ran for your current seat and what progress has been made in keeping those promises?

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. We thank you very much for your response.

#### TOP FIVE 2018 CAMPAIGN PROMISES OR GOALS

1. Advance commonsense gun safety.

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2. Protect New York's healthcare—including reproductive healthcare—from the federal onslaught.

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3. Expand educational opportunity for all, especially New York's neediest communities.

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4. Enact criminal justice reforms.

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5. Implement \$150 billion infrastructure and jobs plan for the next five years.

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## TOP FIVE CAMPAIGN PROMISES FROM LAST ELECTION AND ACTION ON

- 1. Continuing to provide property tax relief:** In my first year in office, I fought to enact one of the strongest property tax caps in the country. In 2014, I worked with the Legislature to enact the Property Tax Freeze, which provided homeowners an average of \$500 in direct relief over three years, bringing the combined average savings from the tax cap and the tax freeze to \$2,600. In 2015, I enacted the Property Tax Relief Credit, a progressively-structured four-year program that will ultimately deliver a total of \$3.2 billion to homeowners. I also implemented the County Wide Shared Services Initiative that has yielded more than an additional \$200 million in savings, as well as better delivery of government services.
- 2. Revitalizing upstate New York:** Taking the lead from Regional Economic Development Councils, my administration has made community-driven investments in industries with the potential for growth in each region, from biomedical in Buffalo, to agriculture in the Southern Tier, drones in Central New York and the Mohawk Valley, tourism in the North Country, and optics and photonics in Rochester. This strategy—which combines placemaking with targeted investments in assets like downtowns, waterfronts, and infrastructure—has helped increase private sector jobs upstate to the highest number on record. Unemployment has dropped to the lowest rate in over a decade and young people are moving back to many upstate urban centers.
- 3. Statewide universal broadband:** In 2015, I made the largest and most ambitious state broadband investment in the nation, committing \$500 million to achieve statewide broadband access by 2018. We have now secured high-speed internet upgrades for approximately 2.42 million locations statewide, which means 99.9 percent of New Yorkers will have access to broadband. I've also called upon the PSC to take the most aggressive enforcement actions possible to hold Charter/Spectrum accountable for deceiving the public and violating the conditions of their commitment to provide broadband coverage.
- 4. Passing the Women's Equality Act:** In 2015, I signed multiple pieces of legislation designed to protect and further women's equality in New York State—the laws help achieve pay equity, strengthen human trafficking laws and protections for domestic violence victims, and end pregnancy discrimination in all workplaces. Building on this record, I advanced the 2018 Women's Opportunity Agenda, delivering critical changes like the nation's most comprehensive sexual harassment protections and removing firearms from domestic abusers.
- 5. Improving education at all levels—K-12 and higher education:** I have made the highest ever state investment in public education and established the nation-leading Excelsior Scholarship, providing tuition-free college and breaking down the barriers to higher education. I have also expanded prekindergarten for both 3- and 4-year-olds, after-school programming and community schools in high-need districts, and innovative programs like early college high schools.

#### IV. ETHICAL REPRESENTATION OF CONSTITUENTS

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

**Please tell us how you have and would continue to conduct the political affairs of this office in an upright manner, and maintain the public trust.**

Since taking office, I have fought tirelessly for comprehensive ethics reform. This fight began with the Public Integrity Reform Act of 2011 to increase transparency and accountability throughout State government. Among other things, the Public Integrity Reform Act required elected officials and policy makers convicted of corruption to forfeit their pension and strengthened disclosure requirements for lobbyists and 501(c)(4) organizations.

We reached an historic agreement with the Legislature in 2016 to further advance critical election, lobbying, and enforcement reforms. One of the many pieces of this bill included first-in-the-nation legislation to curb the power of independent expenditure campaigns and end coordination in political campaigns unleashed by the 2010 Supreme Court case Citizens United vs. the Federal Election Commission.

I will continue to champion comprehensive ethics reform and continue to advance measures like Open NY, Project Sunlight, and Open FOIL NY to increase government transparency, accountability, and performance.

There can be no tolerance for those who seek to defraud the system to advance their own personal interests. Anyone who has committed such an egregious act must be punished to the full extent of the law.

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