



2014 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CANDIDATES FOR NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE

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 11th. Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union uses to evaluate candidates running for office in order to determine our "Preferred Candidates" for the September 9th Primary Election, and our "Endorsed Candidates" for the November 4th General Election.

If you seek our support, we will also need to schedule an interview with you as part of the evaluation process. We will not automatically schedule an interview with you if you return this questionnaire, as we prioritize competitive races and resources constrain us from evaluating all races. Please contact us if you wish to be interviewed and have not heard from us.

We plan to make responses to this questionnaire public on our website, Voters Directory and other appropriate venues. We thank you very much for your response.

Candidate Name: James F. Brennan Age: 62

Campaign Address: - NONE - JBhoma is 221 McDonald Avenue Apt. 4K, PH 1128

Campaign Telephone Number: () 345 201-744-3211 Fax: () 718-916-8158

Party Affiliation(s): D-W-F. Campaign Manager Name: Contact: Bob Carroll

Website & Email: lauriewheelock@gmail.com Laurie Wheelock

Education: B.A. Yale University 1975; J.D. Brooklyn Law School 1982; M.B.A. Baruch College, City University 2013

Occupation/Employer (or years in currently held elected office): Elected to the New York State Assembly 1984 and every two years since.

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement:

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? YES [checked] NO

Have you completed requisite campaign finance filings? YES [checked] NO

Signature of Candidate: James F. Brennan Date: 8/27/14

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 the redistricting proposition amending the constitution on the November ballot that would create an independent commission with appointees split evenly between the majority and minority parties?	Support/Op pose
2. What is your position on restructuring the state Board of Elections and changing the administration of elections by amending the constitution to abolish the strict two-party division of governance and operation?	*Support/Op pose
3. What is your position on making it easier for candidates to appear on the ballot by lowering signature requirements and utilizing less burdensome witness signature requirements?	*Support/Op pose
4. 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/Op pose *
5. What is your position on automatically granting New Yorkers on parole the ability to vote? Currently those on parole may obtain a Certificate of Good Conduct or Relief to have their right to vote restored, but few of these are granted, and they cannot be applied for immediately upon release.	Support/Op pose
6. What is your position on amending the constitution to allow for Election Day Voter Registration?	Support/Op pose
7. What is your position on amending the constitution to allow for no-excuse absentee voting?	Support/Op pose *
8. What is your position on instituting early voting in New York State to allow voters to cast their votes at more convenient times over a period of several days?	Support/Op pose *
9. What is your position on reforming the special election process, utilizing a nonpartisan special election for state legislative vacancies, as proposed by S.161/A.5290?	Support/Op pose
10. What is your position regarding automatic voter registration in which voter registration information of individuals who consent to be registered is provided electronically to the Board of Elections, and address information is updated automatically?	Support/Op pose
11. What is your position on consolidating the state and federal primary to the third week in June, while ensuring that the legislative session ends at least two weeks prior?	Support/Op pose
12. What is your position on instituting Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) for primary elections in citywide election in New York City, effectively eliminating the need for a separate runoff election?	Support/Op pose

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

13. What is your position on establishing a matching public financing system for state legislative and statewide races similar to the New York City model?	Support/Op pose
14. What is your position on lowering campaign contribution limits for legislative and statewide candidates for public office?	*Support/Op pose
15. What is your position on restricting campaign contributions from registered lobbyists, placement agents and those who do business with the state?	Support/Op pose

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM (CONTINUED)

16. What is your position on limiting or banning campaign contributions from corporations, LLCs, and LLPs? (Note: such entities would have the constitutionally-protected right to form separate political action committees.)	Support/Oppose
17. What is your position on closing "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?	* Support/Oppose
18. What is your position on requiring candidates to include the full name, home address, and employer/business name for each contribution and bundler?	Support/Oppose
19. 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/Oppose
20. What is your position on stricter requirements on the use of campaign contributions for non-campaign related activity, such as personal use?	Support/Oppose
21. What is your position on improving disclosure of independent expenditures such as requiring disclosure of electioneering activities?	Support/Oppose
22. What is your position on limiting the ability of candidates to accumulate "war chests" and then transferring funds raised in one race to another in which they run?	* Support/Oppose
23. What is your position on clarifying the definition of coordination between candidates and political committees to ensure candidate contribution limits are not exceeded, and expenditures and contributions are properly reported?	Support/Oppose

JUDICIAL REFORM

24. What is your position on a merit-based appointment system through creation of a commission for the selection of judges in all of New York's trial courts?	Support/Oppose
25. What is your position simplifying and modernizing the state's court system by consolidating the nine trial courts into a two-tiered system?	Support/Oppose

ETHICS REFORM

26. What is your position on empowering the Attorney General to investigate and prosecute cases involving public corruption, including serious election law malfeasance?	Support/Oppose
27. What is your position on amending the State Constitution to extend pension forfeiture, subject to due process safeguards, to all public officers and legislators who have been convicted of felonies?	* Support/Oppose

BUDGET REFORM

28. 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/Oppose
29. 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/Oppose
30. What is your position on the use of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) rather than cash accounting for the state budget?	* Support/Oppose
31. What is your position on ensuring adequate disclosure and itemization of discretionary funds, including member items and lump sum funds, as well as reporting on their usage?	Support/Oppose
32. What is your position on incorporating the use of performance budgeting and outcome measurement to promote the more rational appropriation of state funds?	Support/Oppose
33. What is your position on instituting a later start date for the state fiscal year?	Support/Oppose
34. What is your position on limiting the ability of the governor to enact policy changes governing the use of resources in appropriation bills by requiring that such bills be consistent with existing law or proposed changes in separate legislation?	Support/Oppose

CITIZENS UNION QUESTIONNAIRE: EXTENDED RESPONSE TO CERTAIN QUESTIONS

I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the Citizens Union questionnaire. The Citizens Union is a highly respected good government organization and I value its endorsement. I have included a flyer used during the petitioning period about me and have placed an asterisk next to some of your questions that I felt an additional response is warranted. Some of your questions have more than one issue in the body of the question.

2. I support the governance of the Board of Elections. This past session the Legislature and the Governor enacted the creation of the Independent Enforcement Counsel for the Board of Elections, a top reform priority. I also support the creation of a civil service appointment for a substantial number of administrative and clerical positions at the State and county boards of elections to professionalize operation.

3. Many of the top priorities for reform of ballot access have been achieved, in some cases many years ago. For instance, the legislature passed the standard of "substantial compliance" with the election law twenty years ago, eliminating many technical problems, and also reduced cover sheet requirements, such as specifying the signature amounts and eliminating election district/assembly district specifications for each signer of the petition.

The courts threw out the requirement that a witness live in the district where the candidate is running, and the legislature later codified that decision. For instance, a registered Democrat in the State of New York may witness a signature for a Democratic candidate for any office in the state. This is a major reform.

The minimum signature requirements for some offices are out of proportion, i.e. the State Senate's requirements are proportionately larger than the Assembly's and should be reduced. However, municipalities are allowed by law to reduce signature requirements for their own offices, and a charter revision several years ago reduced signature requirement for city offices, including mayor, borough president, and city council.

Signature requirements for candidates running on independent lines are extremely burdensome and should be reduced.

4. I support the anti-bumping bill in your question and voted for it many times. As Chair of the Cities Committee in the State Assembly for five years, I sponsored and continue to sponsor another major proposal in this area which the Citizens Union should take note of, A.5381, which prevents other abuses associated with mayoral charter commissions, such as "last-minute" commissions, by requiring the creation of the Commission by Feb.15 of the year of ballot placement.

7. I am the chief sponsor in the Assembly of A.4526, a constitutional amendment to allow early voting, and

8. I sponsor A.3188, to study implementing voting by mail, internet, and other methods of early voting.

14. I am the chief sponsor of A.5137, a comprehensive campaign finance reform that contains contribution limits, bans or limitations on corporate and LLC contributions, restrictions on housekeeping contributions, and other reforms. It should be noted, however, that U.S. Supreme Court decisions in Citizens United, McCutcheon, and other litigation is upending the campaign finance regulation to permit unlimited independent spending by the wealthy and big corporations. Under these circumstances, big reductions in contribution limits, limitations on political party contributions, and others threaten to disarm candidates of limited means and make them vulnerable to the independent PACs. Further limitations need careful evaluation.

17. See response to q.14. However, I would support limits on housekeeping contributions.

22. I support additional transparency in this area, such as notifying donors to provide options for return of funds.

27. Legislators elected in 2012 and beyond are subject to pension forfeiture.

30. At this time the budget is adopted on a cash basis, but the Governor's submission contains a transparent GAAP presentation for comparison and analysis. Going to GAAP would take 3-5 years and requires careful study and evaluation.

37. My office is chief sponsor of A.3944-c, a comprehensive overhaul of the ethics, transparency, and standards of operation for the Port Authority that has

passed both houses of the New York State Legislature and is introduced in both houses in New Jersey. This bill has been endorsed by the Citizens Union; the particular provision in your question is not included in this bill. Rather, no matter who is appointed, there are standards set for their conduct and for agency operation.

New York State Legislature and is

endorsed by the Citizens Union

standards set for their conduct

Assemblymember Jim Brennan: CAMPAIGN PROMISES

I have been elected to office every two years for the past 28 years and am now running for a sixteenth term in the State Assembly. I won primaries in 1984, 1990, and 1992, as well as all the general elections. The district into which I was elected in 1984 changed radically in 1992 in the redistricting, and the two redistricting since then (2002, 2012) have also made significant changes to the district lines. Over the years I have represented parts of Park Slope, Windsor Terrace, Kensington, Sunset Park, Bay Ridge, Boro Park, Kensington, Flatbush, and Midwood. I maintain two district offices and have an active presence in the community.

I have chaired four committees of the Assembly, including the current one, the Standing Committee on Corporations, Authorities, and Commissions. There are more than 80 Brennan laws on the books of the State of New York, and I have won three national awards for my work as a State legislator.

My campaign commitments have tended to be thematic; to stay independent and not knuckle under to the party bosses, to fight for social and economic justice, and to curb corporate power. My literature stressed independence and integrity, and to fight for homeowners, tenants, senior citizens, and consumers.

2012 Promises and 2014 Goals are similar: in addition to what is stated above, I have included and continue to include fighting for more education funding, transportation, and housing, and to make sure the wealthy and big business pay their fair share of taxes.