



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: Jo Anne Simon

Age: 61

Campaign Address: 356 Fulton St. 3rd Fl Brooklyn, NY 11201

Campaign Telephone Number: (917) 669-5391 Fax: (718) 875-5728

Party Affiliation(s): Democrat Campaign Manager Name: Paul Nelson PaulNelsonNYC@gmail.com

Website & Email: www.SimonforBrooklyn.com JoAnneSimon52ndAD@gmail.com

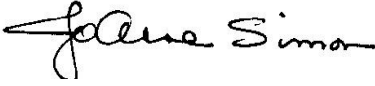
Education: Fordham University School of Law, J.D. 1990; Long Island University, course work towards Ph.D. degree in Clinical Psychology; Gallaudet University, Washington, DC. MA, Education of the Deaf 1976; Iona College, New Rochelle, NY. BA, Communication Sciences 1974

Occupation/Employer (or years in currently held elected office): Attorney with a practice that provides direct representation to people with disabilities who believe they have been discriminated against in higher education, high stakes standardized testing, or employment due to their disability.

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: NY Democratic State Committee Member/District Leader since 2004. Candidate for NYC Council in 2009

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU’s Local Candidates Committee? YES X NO _____
(Please note: Citizens Union can grant its “Endorsed Candidate” rating only to candidates we have interviewed.)

Have you completed requisite campaign finance filings? YES x NO _____

Signature of Candidate: _____  _____

Date: July 10, 2014_

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
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
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*
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
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
6. What is your position on amending the constitution to allow for Election Day Voter Registration?	Support*
7. What is your position on amending the constitution to allow for no-excuse absentee voting?	Support
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
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
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*
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
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*

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
14. What is your position on lowering campaign contribution limits for legislative and statewide candidates for public office?	Support
15. What is your position on restricting campaign contributions from registered lobbyists, placement agents and those who do business with the state?	Support

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
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
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
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
20. What is your position on stricter requirements on the use of campaign contributions for non-campaign related activity, such as personal use?	Support
21. What is your position on improving disclosure of independent expenditures such as requiring disclosure of electioneering activities?	Support
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
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

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*
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

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
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

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
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
30. What is your position on the use of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) rather than cash accounting for the state budget?	Support
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
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
33. What is your position on instituting a later start date for the state fiscal year?	Support
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

ADDITIONAL REFORM

35. What is your position on enactment of legislative rules reform to strengthen rank-and-file members’ roles in the legislative process and create more equity between members?	Support
36. What is your position on the webcasting of all legislative proceedings for both houses of the legislature, including committee meetings, hearings and session proceedings?	Support
37. What is your position on having the Executive Director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey appointed directly by the Board of Commissioners, and having the position of Chair of the Board rotated between representatives of New York and New Jersey?	Support

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.

I have testified at virtually every opportunity before State legislative and City Council hearings on election reform and the conducting of our elections. As such I have testified in support of Items 7 and 8 in the past, as well as supported and advocated for the Board of Elections’ implementation of legislation signed by Gov. Patterson, permitting 17 year olds to work as pollworkers and to permit poll workers to work one of two shifts. The Current 18 hour day is simply too long, and leads to excessive pollworker fatigue and decreasing concentration – especially needed at closing, when they are hungry and exhausted, which inevitably leads to lowered quality of performance and reduced voter confidence.

3. I do not believe that the current number of signatures required to be on the ballot for Assembly (500), is burdensome and witness signature requirements have become less stringent. I have serious concerns regarding County Committee Members. The process to qualify individual members, by Election District, seems pointless; it is so burdensome, that some AD’s don’t even bother to fill such positions through petitioning. I would support lowering the number of signatures (12,000) currently required to appear on the ballot for Supreme Court through direct petitioning, outside the county judicial convention system. See *Lopez-Torres v. Board of Elections*.

6. I will not support Election Day voter registration until the Board of Elections enters the 21st Century and can verify that a person has not registered at another location. There are too many names listed on the current roles of voters who no longer reside in the district, whether the voter has moved or is deceased.

10. I support the idea wholeheartedly. I have grave doubts as to the feasibility. See No. 6 above.

12. See No. 10.

24. I have mixed feeling about this item. Conceptually, I support it, but as a professor who taught the judicial externship seminar at Fordham Law School for many years, I have studied this issue. History shows us that no system is immune to political influence, power brokering or money.

II. CAMPAIGN PROMISES MADE TO VOTERS (PAST AND CURRENT)

As a candidate who presently does not hold elected office, CU is interested in knowing your top five campaign promises you are making to the voters during this campaign for this position.

If elected, Citizens Union will use these promises 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 2014 CAMPAIGN PROMISES OR GOALS

1. **Health Care:** The closing of Long Island College Hospital (LICH) has shown us that our health care system has become more concerned with profit than patients. One of the most disturbing aspects of the LICH issue was that it brought to light the appalling lack of reliable data on local health care needs. If I am elected to the State Assembly one of the first bills I will introduce will be a Health Care Management Information Act, to ensure that decisions about the future of health care facilities is based on fact, not political conjecture. Under this legislation information would be collected for such things as wait times in ER's throughout each county, the length of time from admission in ER to reaching a bed on the floor in the hospital, the length of time from calling 911 to reaching an ER, deaths due to asthma, any other pulmonary disease, cardiac disease presented by neighborhood, numbers of births at each hospital, wait times for pregnant women needing beds/stretchers pre and post partum at each hospital, and the percentage of women admitted in labor with no pre partum care. The State Department of Health would be required to report this data annually to the legislature.
2. **Education:** our first obligation is to our children and fulfilling the promise of the court's decision in the Campaign for Fiscal Equity decision. I would achieve this by working with the network of parents I've and educators I been working with to expand awareness, address issues of class size (a top priority of parents for many years), and equal access to precious resources in other areas inside and outside NYC who are also being shortchanged by NYS.
3. **Transportation:** As an experienced and effective advocate for progressive and environmentally just and sustainable transportation policies and as an advocate for those with disabilities I will continue to fight for a transportation system that serves all of our citizens.
4. **Election Reform:** I will continue to work for key reforms like public campaign financing, overhauling the administration of elections, and voter reforms like early voting and no-excuse absentee voting. I will work with other progressive legislators to build a coalition in support of these long overdue reforms.
5. No Albany fundraiser- to help reduce the "pay-to-play" culture that persists in Albany, I will not hold a fundraiser in Albany.

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 candidates@citizensunion.org
Call us at 212-227-0342 with any questions.