



2013 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CANDIDATES FOR CITY COUNCIL

Citizens Union would appreciate your response to the following questions related to policy issues facing the City of New York that are of concern to Citizens Union and residents of the City. We plan to make public your responses to this questionnaire in our Voters Directory, on our website, and in other appropriate venues. 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 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. We thank you very much for your response.

Candidate Name: Debra Cooper Age: _____

Campaign Address: 290 West End Ave, Apt 9A

Campaign Telephone Number: (917) 881-5016 Fax: (212) 496-0181

Party Affiliation(s): Democratic Campaign Manager Name: Richard Fife

Website & Email: DebraCooper2013.com; Debra@DebraCooper2013.com

Education: B.A. – Brandeis University; M. Ed. – Boston College; Ph.D Matriculate – CUNY Graduate Center

Occupation/Employer (or years in currently held elected office): Licensed Salesperson/Corcoran; Democratic State Committeewoman 67 AD/ 7 years

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement:

Board – Stephen Wise Free Synagogue; President and Board – 290 West End Ave Coop; NYS Democratic Committeewoman; Board – NARAL Pro-Choice NY; Board – Progressive Congress Foundation and Action Fund; Director – Women’s Desk 1996 Clinton and Gore Campaign

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU’s Local Candidates Committee? YES X NO _____

(Please note: Citizens Union can only grant its support to candidates we have interviewed. If you would like to be interviewed, please follow up with Citizens Union staff, as resources constrain us from interviewing every candidate.)

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

Signature of Candidate: _____ Date: _____

I. CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

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

VOTING AND ELECTIONS REFORM

1. What is your position with respect to eliminating party primaries and establishing a non-partisan election system in which all candidates and all voters participate in the first round and the top two candidates advance to the second round?	<u>Oppose</u>
2. What is your position on instituting Instant Runoff Voting for all citywide offices and for all special elections for city offices? (Int. No. 1066)	<u>Support</u>
3. What is your position on creating a voluntary municipal poll worker program to supplement poll worker recruitment by district leaders? (Int. No. 721)	<u>Support</u>
4. What is your position on requiring city agencies to report the number of applicants that they register to vote as required by current law (Int. No. 760)?	<u>Support</u>
5. What is your position on transmitting electronically voter registration information collected by city agencies to the Board of Elections in the City of New York?	<u>Support</u>
6. What is your position on requiring the Board of Elections to report performance metrics to the City Council that conform to the Mayor’s Management Report? (Int. No. 778)	<u>Support</u>
7. What is your position on modifying the City Charter to require that laws enacted by referendum only be changed through approval by the voters?	Support/Oppose
8. What is your position on expanding the Voter Guide published by the Campaign Finance Board to cover all races occurring in New York City, such as state and federal contests, and providing the opportunity for voters to receive the guide electronically rather than in print form? (Int. No. 769)	<u>Support</u>

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

9. What is your position on eliminating matching funds for contributions bundled by lobbying organizations or lobbyists?	<u>Support</u>
10. What is your position on banning placement agents from bundling contributions for any elected official who influences the selection of pension investors?	<u>Support</u>
11. What is your position on prohibiting participants in the city's campaign finance program from using public matching funds to purchase strategic campaign consulting services from firms that also provide lobbying services?	<u>Support</u>

CITY COUNCIL REFORM

12. What is your position on creating a bill drafting service independent of the Speaker's Office, similar to the New York State Legislature's bill drafting commission?	<u>Support</u>
13. What is your position on the following proposals enabling Council committees to function more effectively and independently of the speaker :	
a. Should committee chairs have the ability to hire at least one committee staffer?	<u>Support</u>
b. Should committee hearings and votes be scheduled at the direction of the chairs?	<u>Support</u>
c. Should committees be able to issue subpoenas by a vote of their members?	<u>Support</u>
d. Should the number of overall committees be reduced so members can participate more meaningfully in fewer issues?	Support/Oppose
14. What is your position on greater disclosure of councilmembers' outside income?	<u>Support</u>
15. What is your position on limiting stipends or "lulus" to only members holding majority or minority leadership positions?	<u>Support</u>
16. When the Quadrennial Compensation Commission is reconvened, what is your position on requiring that any future increase in councilmember compensation only apply prospectively to the following term?	<u>Support</u>

17. What is your position on ensuring a more equitable and needs-based distribution of discretionary funding?	<u>Support</u>
18. What is your position on increasing transparency of discretionary funding by requiring the list of capital and expense funds and their sponsors be provided to councilmembers and the public three days in advance of any vote, and expanding the online searchable database of expense funds to include all capital fund recipients and applicants?	<u>Support</u>

PUBLIC SAFETY AND OVERSIGHT OF POLICE MISCONDUCT

19. What is your position on reducing the frequency of stop, question and frisks by conducting stops more judiciously?	<u>Support</u>
20. What is your position on establishing the Commission to Combat Police Corruption (CCPC) as a permanent commission in the City Charter while empowering the CCPC to issue subpoenas?	<u>Support</u>
21. What is your position on enhancing the Civilian Complaint Review Board's (CCRB) authority to initiate an investigation into reported or known incidents of police misconduct without receipt of a formal complaint?	<u>Support</u>
22. What is your position on granting the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) with the authority to prosecute officers found guilty of lying during CCRB investigations?	<u>Support</u>
23. What is your position on reinstating the zero tolerance penalty for false official statements by public officers?	<u>Support</u>

BUDGET REFORM

24. What is your position on establishing independent budgeting for: a. the borough presidents?	<u>Support</u>
b. Conflicts of Interest Board?	<u>Support</u>
c. the public advocate ?	<u>Support</u>
d. community boards?	<u>Support</u>
25. What is your position on making the budget process more transparent by clearly defining units of appropriation and limiting their size?	<u>Support</u>

26. What is your position on release of revenue projections (other than property taxes) prior to Council hearings on the Executive budget?	<u>Support</u>
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LAND USE AND COMMUNITY BOARD REFORM

27. What is your position on designating urban planners for use by community boards and requiring borough presidents report to the Council the manner in which they advertise and make community board appointments? (Int. No. 913)	<u>Support</u>
28. What is your position on establishing a formal standardized and transparent process for community board appointments including written applications, interviews of candidates, and filling vacancies within 30 days?	<u>Support</u>

Additional Comments:

The recent events that have taken place in Albany have made it clear that measures to ensure more transparency and accountability are essential at every level. In addition, we need to make the City Council more small-d democratic where the majority of the power is not in the hand of the Speaker. Next year the Council will have an opportunity to elect a new Speaker. It should be possible for Members to negotiate with a new Speaker and choose one who has a more egalitarian approach that balances the power relationship between the Speaker and Councilmembers more fairly.

II. CANDIDATE ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Citizens Union is adding a new element to its evaluation of incumbents running for re-election. In addition to evaluating their stances on the issues above, Citizens Union will assess incumbents on how well they kept the promises they made to voters during the previous election.

As an elected official who is seeking re-election,

- a. What were the top five promises you made to your constituents when you ran for your current position and what progress have you made to keep those promises, and why and why not have you met them?
- b. What are your top five campaign promises you are making to the voters during this campaign for this position?

We thank you very much for your response. Please feel free to use additional paper if the space provided is not sufficient.

TOP FIVE CAMPAIGN PROMISES FROM YOUR MOST RECENT CAMPAIGN AND ACTION ON THEM

When I ran for State Committeewoman:

1. Be a strong progressive voice who doesn't back down – Wrote the State Committee Resolution in support of Millionaires Tax, despite strong pressure to not move forward.
2. Promote fairness, equality and basic justice – Championed women's rights and marriage equality.
3. Protect our environment – Leader on State Committee on resolution to ban fracking in New York State.

TOP FIVE 2013 CAMPAIGN PROMISES

1. Fight to ensure every child has chance for quality education
2. Work to protect affordability so middle class can prosper
3. Work to improve infrastructure
4. "Fix our Future" by promoting sustainability and planning
5. Promote greater transparency and democracy on Council

Please return to: Citizens Union, Local Candidates Committee
via fax to 212.227.0345 or via email to candidates@citizensunion.org
Call us at 212-227-0342 with any questions.