



Candidate Questionnaire  
 Local Candidates Committee  
 NYC District Attorney Elections 2017

Citizens Union appreciates your response to the following questionnaire related to policy issues facing New York City and our interest in reforming city and state government. **Please return the questionnaire to us as soon as possible, and no later than June 28<sup>th</sup>.** Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union uses to evaluate candidates running for the New York City Council, 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: **Eric Gonzalez**

Party Affiliation(s): **Democratic, WFP** Age: **48**

Education: **BA, Cornell University, 1992; JD, University of Michigan Law School, 1995**

Office Sought (including district): **Brooklyn District Attorney**

Occupation/Employer: **Acting Brooklyn District Attorney**

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: No previous offices or campaigns. **Scout Leader**

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

**Campaign Contact Information**

Campaign Manager Name: **Andre Richardson** Additional Staff Contact: **Jill Harris, Policy Director**

Address: **15 Putnam Avenue Brooklyn NY 11238**

Telephone: **718-816-0200** Fax: **718-285-3969**

Website: **www.ericgonzalez.com** Email: **info@ericgonzalez.com**

Twitter: **@EricGonzalez4DA** Facebook: **www.facebook.com/EricGonzalez4DA/**

**Affirmations**

Have you completed required campaign finance filings? YES

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU’s Local Candidates Committee? YES

*(Please note: interviews are prerequisites of being considered for Citizens Union endorsements.)*

Signature of Candidate:  
Eric Gonzalez

Date:  
7/31

---

## I. CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

Please state your position on the following issues by using the space provided below each question or a separate sheet of paper to elaborate on your positions on the following questions. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.

1. What trends do you see in criminal activity that the district attorney's office should address?

*See attached.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. What role do you think the district attorney plays in anti-corruption efforts and building public trust? What changes would you make to the structure of the office to help bolster public confidence in the DA's office?

*See attached.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

3. To what extent would your office use the district attorney's existing authority to investigate and monitor elected officials' conduct in relation to issues like campaign finance compliance and proper use of government resources and influence?

*Where there is an agency responsible for oversight of these issues, such as the NYC Campaign Finance Board, I would defer to them in the first instance, but when a breach of public trust rises to the level of criminal conduct I will not hesitate to bring the resources of my office to investigate and prosecute these cases. My office has a Public Integrity Unit that is charged with investigating and prosecuting cases of public corruption and that unit will be looking very closely at the conduct of elected officials with respect to how they use their resources and influence. This important work is part of my commitment to restoring confidence in the criminal justice system: If average people see that those in positions of power, such as elected officials, can engage in questionable or illegal conduct and not be held accountable, trust in the system is eroded.*

---





---

*directed officers to go to a neighboring precinct where they can obtain a recorded statement. This not only reduces the possibility of coerced confessions and wrongful convictions, but also helps my office show at trial that confessions were obtained lawfully and are reliable. Moreover, it adds to the transparency of the arrest and evidence-gathering process and helps to restore confidence in the criminal justice system.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

9. Earlier this year a commission led by Judge Jonathan Lippman and supported by Speaker Mark-Viverito and Mayor de Blasio made recommendations for the closing of the Rikers Island jail complex. How do you feel about the plan to close the complex? What concerns do you have and what are the potential benefits and pitfalls of the plan?

---

*See attached.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

10. In November, voters in New York will be asked whether they wish to hold a constitutional convention to amend the New York State Constitution. Do you support holding such a convention?

---

*As the sitting District Attorney, I do not intend to speak out publicly on the issue of the need for a constitutional convention, but I will say that I do not believe that meaningful criminal justice reform requires this strategy. I try to avoid taking stands on issues unrelated to the criminal justice system or the conduct of my office.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

11. If you support the constitutional convention, what actions, if any, will you take to ensure that it takes place? If you oppose the convention, what will you do to defeat it?

---

*See above.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



progress has been made in keeping those promises, and

- what are the top five promises you are making to voters during this campaign?

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 CAMPAIGN PROMISES FROM LAST ELECTION AND ACTION ON THEM**

1. N/A

---

---

---

2. N/A

---

---

---

3. N/A

---

---

---

---

4. N/A

---

---

---

---

---

5. N/A

---

---

---

---

---

**TOP FIVE 2017 CAMPAIGN PROMISES OR GOALS**

**1. Bail Reform** - *I will reduce the number of cases in which my ADAs request bail. I will institute a policy of presumptive ROR (Release on Recognizance) for all misdemeanors with narrowly tailored exceptions, and will have my ADAs also look closely at non-violent felony cases for opportunities to refer defendants to supervised release. I will increase the use of supervised release and other alternatives to cash bail in as many cases as possible, consistent with maintaining public safety. I will publicly announce the results of my bail policy and be held accountable for my promise to reduce reliance on cash bail.*

---

**2. Protecting Immigrants** - *I will implement a policy of minimizing immigration-related collateral consequences in case dispositions. I will have immigration attorneys in my office to advise my ADAs on their cases, and conduct trainings for my entire staff. I work with defense counsel to advise them, if they are unaware, of potential immigration consequences of plea offers, and will work with them to find just resolutions of cases where deportation or other negative immigration consequences would be an unjust result.*

---

**3. Conviction Integrity** - *I will maintain my commitment to seeking out, investigating and overturning wrongful convictions from the past, and will take steps to prevent new wrongful convictions in the future. I will have my entire staff trained on the mistakes that contribute to wrongful convictions, from a "win-at-all-costs" mentality that will have no place in my office, to strict compliance with Brady and other discovery obligations, to the science of eyewitness identification and ways to prevent tainted identification procedures, to the problem of coerced confessions and how to avoid them. I will communicate in the strongest terms that avoiding wrongful convictions is a top priority of my office and a personal commitment of mine, and that anyone who works for me must share this commitment.*

---

**4. Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD)** - *I will design and work with the Police Department to implement a Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program, a pre-arrest program to divert people with drug dependence out of the criminal justice system and into treatment and other services before arrest charges are filed. This program is modeled on one that began in Seattle and now also exists in Santa Fe, NM, Ithaca, NY, and a handful of other jurisdictions around the country.*

---





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.