



Candidate Questionnaire

Local Candidates Committee

New York City Council 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 28th. 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: Margaret S. Chin
Party Affiliation(s): Democrat Age: 64
Education: PS 130, JHS 65, Bronx Science, CUNY City College of New York
Office Sought (including district): NY City Council District 01
Occupation/Employer: City Council Member

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement:

Community Boards 1 & 3, NYS Democratic Committee

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

Campaign Contact Information

Campaign Manager Name: Paul Leonard Additional Staff Contact: Paul@margaretchin2017.nyc
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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 of being considered for Citizens Union endorsements.)

Signature of Candidate:

Date:

### I. POLICY QUESTIONS

Please state whether you support or oppose the following reform measures, and feel free to 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?	Support / Oppose
2. What is your position on instituting Instant Runoff Voting for all citywide offices and for all special elections for city offices?	Support / Oppose
3. What is your position on creating a voluntary municipal poll worker program to supplement poll worker recruitment by district leaders?	Support / Oppose
4. 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?	Support / Oppose
5. 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

#### CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

6. 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?	Support / Oppose
7. What is your position on increasing the Campaign Finance Board's public matching grants from a partial match of 55% to a full match of funds raised (Int. 1130-A)?	Support / Oppose

#### CITY COUNCIL REFORM

8. How do you feel the reformed bill drafting process is going under the enacted 2014 Council Rules Reforms and do you think we need a more independent process similar to New York State Legislature's bill drafting commission?

The rules reforms instituted in 2014 were a good step forward. This session, the legislative process is more transparent and inclusive of advocates, community members and other council members. I look forward to being part of an active discussion on building an even more transparent and inclusive process as we move forward on selecting the next Speaker.

9. 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?	Support / Oppose
b. Should committee hearings and votes be scheduled at the direction of the chairs?	Support / Oppose
c. Should committees be able to issue subpoenas by a vote of their members?	Support / Oppose
d. Now that committee chair stipends have been eliminated what is your position on reducing the overall number of committees so members can participate more meaningfully in fewer issues?	Support / Oppose
10. What is your position on greater disclosure of councilmembers' outside income?	Support / Oppose
11. 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?	Support / Oppose
12. What is your position on ensuring a more equitable and needs-based distribution of discretionary funding?	Support / Oppose
13. 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?	Support / Oppose
14. What is your position on extending term limits from two four-year terms to three four-year terms?	Support / Oppose
15. What is your position on making all actions designed to influence any City Council outcome, including the choice of Speaker, reportable as a lobbying expense?	Support / Oppose

**PUBLIC SAFETY AND OVERSIGHT OF POLICE MISCONDUCT**

16. 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?	Support / Oppose
17. 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?	Support / Oppose
18. 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?	Support / Oppose
19. What is your position on reinstating the zero tolerance penalty for false official statements by public officers?	Support / Oppose
20. What is your position on requiring the Police Commissioner to explain divergence from NYPD trial judge and CCRB disciplinary recommendations and to make the explanation public?	Support / Oppose

21. What is your position on requiring the NYPD to publish a regular report of use of force incidents with data disaggregated by race?	<u>Support</u> / Oppose
22. What is your position on granting the CCRB authority to prosecute officers who lie under oath during the course of their investigations?	<u>Support</u> / Oppose

### BUDGET REFORM

23. What is your position on establishing independent budgeting for: a. the borough presidents?	<u>Support</u> / Oppose
b. Conflicts of Interest Board?	<u>Support</u> / Oppose
c. the public advocate?	<u>Support</u> / Oppose
d. community boards?	<u>Support</u> / Oppose
24. What is your position on making the budget process more transparent by clearly defining and limiting units of appropriation?	<u>Support</u> / Oppose
25. What is your position on release of revenue projections (other than property taxes) prior to Council hearings on the Executive budget?	<u>Support</u> / Oppose

### LAND USE AND COMMUNITY BOARD REFORM

26. What is your position on designating urban planners for use by community boards and requiring borough president's report to the Council the manner in which they advertise and make community board appointments?	<u>Support</u> / Oppose
27. 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> / Oppose

### CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

28. In November, voters in New York will be asked whether they wish to hold a constitutional convention to amend the New York State Constitution. What is your position on holding such a convention?	Support / <u>Oppose</u>
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29. 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?

While a constitutional convention can codify some issues that I support, such as a woman's right to choose and more transparency in the electoral process, I have serious concerns about a constitutional convention putting protections currently in place for labor and others at risk. Until we have assurances that these crucial protections will be kept in place, I fear that a Con Con could be manipulated by lobbyists and other special interest groups looking to roll back progressive gains.

30. Last year, Citizens Union helped craft and push for the enactment of a law that placed political contribution limits and disclosure requirements on nonprofits that are formed by, or affiliated with, elected officials, which helped prevent some significant features of an emerging "pay-to-play" culture in New York City. Do you have any other ideas to further limit such a culture and create a better environment where contributions, either personal or political do not unduly influence the actions of elected officials?

Right now, the City Council requires that City Council Members to disclose any affiliations that members have with an organization that receives funding from the City. I support expanding this rule to include a disclosure for any organizations that the Council Member founded or are closely affiliated at the beginning of each year. I believe this will shed light on how organizations receive funds and advocate for legislation.

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.

A series of 25 horizontal lines for writing.

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

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

As an elected official who is seeking re-election,

- 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, 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. Preserve Affordable Housing. In the last 4 years, I worked with LES a Two Bridges community to extend affordability for residents living in Lands End 1 & Lands End 2. Additionally, I passed legislation to expand eligibility seniors and people with disabilities for the NYC Rent Freeze programs so that they can stay in the neighborhoods they helped build.
2. Building more Affordable Housing. When I was elected to the City Council in 2009, there was no plan to bring former site tenants who were displaced by the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area back to their homes. However, I knew that promise had to be kept - even though it took decades. Many of the former site tenants were getting old and needed accessible, safe, and affordable senior housing. By bringing the community together, I helped reach an agreement to create more than 500 units of affordable housing to the LES, 100 of those set aside just for seniors.
3. Empower Women to Lead. Coming into the City Council, I was one of 16 women Council Members. Today, there are only 13 women Council Members. That is why I helped spearhead an effort to encourage more women to play larger roles in their community. As the prime sponsor of one of the first bills to pass the City Council - legislation to expand paid sick leave - I have taken the lead on legislation of importance to working women. Additionally, as Chair of the Committee on Aging, I passed legislation to survey unpaid caregivers (majority of whom are women) to find out what kind of support they will need in the coming years.
4. Fighting for Senior Funding. Under the Bloomberg Administration, the Department for the Aging was devastated by funding cuts. I saw

What this did to seniors in my district, who had to rely on underfunded senior centers that were bursting at the seams. As Chair of the Committee on Aging, I vowed to fight to increase fund for all senior services, particularly senior centers. This fiscal year, which I touted as the "Year of the Senior," I worked with aging advocates to win back \$23 million in additional, baseline funding.

5. Support a Transparent Speaker. I was an early supporter of our current Speaker, Melissa Mark-Viverito. I supported her because she had a pathway forward to do away with the former speaker's opaque tactics to control district and citywide funding. Speaker Mark-Viverito provided discretionary funding based on the needs of the district, with a baseline for all Council Members. Furthermore, as a member of the Committee on Rules, Privileges, and Elections, I was proud to vote for new rules for a more transparent bill drafting process for every Council Member.



## TOP FIVE 2017 CAMPAIGN PROMISES OR GOALS

1. Create affordable housing that is truly affordable for seniors and working families
2. Preserve the affordable housing that we have by empowering tenants to fight back against eviction and harassment. This includes rent-regulated housing, Section 8 units, and public housing - all of which make up the last bastion of affordability in a rapidly gentrifying city.
3. ~~Increase~~ Fight for a greater share of city funding for our seniors. Though we made big gains this fiscal year, with a \$22.9 million increase in funding, the budget for seniors remains less than half a percent of the entire city budget.
4. ~~Increase~~ Community notification & transparency in the land use and legislative process. Last year, I passed legislation in the wake of the Rivington House Scandal in my Council district that requires the city to notify community boards and elected officials of deed restriction transactions before they happen. I would like to take that advance notification model and use it as a template for increased transparency in a range of land use and legislative decision making.
5. Create mechanisms to increase transparency and ensure the timely completion of capital projects that receive city funding.

### III. 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 public trust. With the corruption conviction of recent state 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 will 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 restore the public trust in your district.

Given the recent parade of elected officials convicted of corruption, I understand the erosion of trust and respect in government that felt among many different communities, including my own. For those who live, work, and serve by a different code, we have a responsibility to build back that trust and respect in government—not just with words, but with actions. That is why I pledge to continue my work to increase transparency, which for me is symbolized by my weekly open office hours, which I have held every Friday since being elected in 2009.

Furthermore I do not believe that the City Council should be or is a part-time job. Since my first day as Council Member, I surrendered any opportunities for an outside income and left the boards of organizations that could have been seen as having undue influence on my work serving the people of City Council District 1. Being a Council Member is my full time job and it will continue to be for the next four years.

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.