



**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: ___Toby Ann Stavisky_____ **Age:** __adult__

Campaign Address: __37-02 Main St. Flushing, NY 11354_____

Campaign Telephone Number: (718) __888-1541_____ **Fax:** () _____

Party Affiliation(s): _Dem_____ **Campaign Manager Name:** John Gallagher_____

Website & Email: ___www.stavisky.com; tobyannstavisky@gmail.com_____

Education: _A.B. Syracuse University; Graduate School Hunter & Queens College, CUNY_____

Occupation/Employer (or years in currently held elected office): _14 years in NYS Senate; High School Social Studies Teacher-7 years_____

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: _Flushing Business Improvement District, attend community board, civic and religious organizations throughout the district; work with local businesses.

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: Toby A Stavisky

Date: July 9, 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? The proposed constitutional amendment is another example of the incumbent protection plan. It would inhibit non-partisan redistricting prolong legislative gridlock and continue gerrymandering. The current process is flawed and I believe that a non partisan solution is preferable to appointments by legislative leaders. Legislators and their appointees should not be the map makers	Support/Oppose
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/Oppose
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/Oppose
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/Oppose
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. I don't think it should be automatic but on a case by case basis	Support/Oppose
6. What is your position on amending the constitution to allow for Election Day Voter Registration? Constitutional amendment is not needed	Support/Oppose
7. What is your position on amending the constitution to allow for no-excuse absentee voting? Constitutional amendment is not needed	Support/Oppose
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/Oppose
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/Oppose
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? There has been voter fraud in the past	Support/Oppose
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/Oppose
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/Oppose

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

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? Would support a form of it.	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? This has been successful in other states	Support/Oppose
30. What is your position on the use of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) rather than cash accounting for the state budget? Would need more details	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? With restrictions	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	Support/Oppose

governing the use of resources in appropriation bills by requiring that such bills be consistent with existing law or proposed changes in separate legislation? With restrictions	
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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/Oppose
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/Oppose
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 and New Jersey?	Support/Oppose

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 feel strongly about legislative reform. I know that Citizens Union supports the constitutional amendment and it is too late to remedy the current gerrymandered lines. There are many other areas where the legislature needs to act. Election and campaign finance reform are essential and I am a sponsor of most of the proposals. Legislative ethics should not be an oxymoronic phrase.

I am proud to be part of a conference that has a progressive agenda—gun control, women's equality, campaign finance and legislative ethics reform, and concern for new Americans.

Hearings should be held to explore budget and government reforms.

We should look at merit retention of judges but a major problem is the lack of judges and the long backlog in the courts.

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

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 seat and what progress has been made in keeping those promises, and
- b. what are the top five promises you are making to the voters during this campaign?

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 LAST ELECTION AND ACTION ON THEM

1. Need to increase minimum wage and index it.
2. Co-op property tax abatement resolved with abatement based on assessment
3. NY Dream Act—should be part of the budget
4. Job creation-Many new jobs have been created in Flushing
5. Government and Ethics reform—failure

TOP FIVE 2014 CAMPAIGN PROMISES OR GOALS

1. Dream Act
2. Campaign Finance, government, legislative ethics reform
3. Women's Equality Agenda
4. Continue to help new Americans become acclimated to the community
5. Continue to work with business community to improve economic climate

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.