



CITIZENS UNION NEWS RELEASE

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CITIZENS UNION ANNOUNCES CANDIDATE PREFERENCES IN COMPETITIVE SEPTEMBER PRIMARY ELECTIONS

Supports Leslie Crocker Snyder for Manhattan District Attorney in a Field of Highly Qualified and Exceptional Candidates

*Issues Candidate Preference Decisions in City Council Races;
Decides Not to Support the Re-Election of Six Incumbents; and
Urges Voters to Elect Fourteen New Members to City Council*

Chair Peter Sherwin and Executive Director Dick Dadey today announced Citizens Union's preference for Leslie Crocker Snyder for Manhattan District Attorney in a race with three highly-qualified candidates who each have compelling, but different visions for the job. They also announced the organization's preferences in twenty-three city council races, where the good government organization chose to prefer challengers to six city council incumbents because the candidates presented new ideas and potential for better leadership in those seats. The historic civic group also supported candidates in each of the eight open city council seats.

Judge Snyder garnered the organization's support based on her strong qualifications, her judicial experience, and dedication to public service. Judge Snyder brings a focus on the principal prosecutorial responsibilities coupled with a commitment to improve the functioning of the criminal justice system. Her specific plan to implement innovative and much-needed alternative approaches to sentencing, such as creating additional, specialized community courts to address felony domestic violence and mental health issues, were appealing to CU. Her experience, including as a principal founder of the District Attorney's Sex Crimes Unit and drafter of the rape shield laws, reflects her dedication to fighting crime and protecting New Yorkers. Citizens Union has preferred Judge Snyder, but both Mr. Aborn and Mr. Vance are strong candidates with innovative

policy agendas that would seek to broaden the role of the District Attorney to focus more on the areas of enhancing reentry programs and prioritizing juvenile justice issues, both areas that are in great need of attention.

Dick Dadey, executive director of Citizens Union, said, "CU feels that Judge Snyder would do the best job in balancing the need to modernize the district attorney's approach to law enforcement and perform well the core duty of handling and prosecuting cases in the interest of public safety. "

In commenting on the Council races, Dadey said, "CU felt the need to make recommendations that encourage voters to retire a number of two-term incumbents and support new faces who will breathe fresh air into the city council. And where appropriate, we are encouraging the return of effective members who do a good job of serving their constituents and meeting the public interest of New Yorkers."

Citizens Union interviewed and evaluated the candidacy of over sixty individuals running for City Council in this September Primary Election. In its evaluation of a handful of races against incumbent councilmembers, Citizens Union was particularly impressed with the credentials and energy of many of the candidates, but would liked to have seen this mirrored in more districts throughout the city.

DeNora Getachew Legislative Counsel and Director of Public Policy for Citizens Union said, "Over the past month, Citizens Union had the opportunity to meet with a plethora of dedicated and knowledgeable candidates seeking to represent voters in the City Council and as Manhattan District Attorney. Our organization has long advocated for more competitive elections, and although the circumstances may have been different without the extension of term limits, New Yorkers will definitely be presented with a healthy dose of choice in the ballot booth on September 15th."

Citizens Union evaluated all eight open seats where the incumbents are not seeking reelection. The race in Flushing and the surrounding neighborhoods has a crowded field of candidates who have lined up to replace Councilmember John Liu. Citizens Union issues a preference for S.J. Jung - a community organizer who has worked on Korean-American immigrant and civic engagement issues - because of his clear and strong agenda for the district including development of the Flushing waterfront and alleviating traffic issues within the district.

In the race to succeed Councilmember Eric Gioia, Citizens Union prefers James (Jimmy) Van Bramer over Deidre Feerick and Brent O'Leary. While Ms. Feerick brings to the race experience and knowledge of the Council and Mr. O'Leary has interesting ideas for the district, Mr. Van Bramer distinguishes himself with his record on reform issues, his community activism, and his focus on improving the district's quality of life. Citizens Union met with five of the six candidates seeking to represent Council District 29 currently held by Councilmember Melinda Katz and prefers Lynn Schulman based on her

long history of community activism, support and understanding of the importance of government reform, and comprehensive plan to address the needs of the district such as improving constituent services and access to healthcare.

Evan Thies is Citizens Union's preferred candidate in the Council District 33 race to succeed Councilmember David Yassky. Citizens Union evaluated many passionate and knowledgeable candidates in this race, many of whom have longstanding and strong ties to the district, such as Isaac Abraham, Ken Diamondstone, and Jo Anne Simon. Mr. Thies' leadership on reform issues, clear vision for the district, and his ability to hit the ground running if elected made him the organization's choice in this race even though Simon brings a great deal of community experience and proven leadership to her campaign. This race also includes Ken Baer, Douglas Biviano, and Stephen Levin.

In the City Council 39th District race which includes Carroll Gardens, Kensington, Park Slope, and Windsor Terrace, Citizens Union prefers Brad Lander over the other candidates John Heyer, Gary Reilly, Josh Skaller, and Bob Zuckerman. While many of the candidates in this race share similar positions on the issues, Mr. Lander, is the most supportive and knowledgeable on Citizens Union's reform issues as he has a track record of advocating and working on such reform issues. Though Mr. Skaller is a very engaging and impressive candidate and Mr. Zuckerman presents a refreshing alternative in his no-nonsense approach to addressing the district's issues, Mr. Lander earned the nod of the good government group because of his articulate view of how he would serve in the Council.

There is a large field of candidates to replace former Councilmember Miguel Martinez in Council District 10 in Washington Heights. Citizens Union prefers Ydanis Rodriguez - a dynamic, charismatic, and passionate candidate - because of his experience as an organizer and his commitment to addressing the needs of the district, including improving education and parental involvement.

In races for the other open council seats in Queens, Citizens Union preferred Kevin Kim in Council District 19 and Mark Weprin in Council District 23.

In the race to challenge incumbent Councilmember Alan Gerson, Citizens Union prefers Jin (P.J.) Kim because of his energy, fresh ideas, knowledge of the evolving needs of the district and his broad base of support. Margaret Chin is also a strong candidate with experience and meaningful ties working on tenant organizing issues, especially in the Chinatown portion of Council District 1.

The other competitive races that Citizens Union evaluated in which it chose the challenger over the incumbent are: Anthony (Tony) Perez Cassino in Council District 11 currently held by G. Oliver Koppell of the Bronx; Andy King in Council District 12 currently held by Larry Seabrook of the Bronx; Daniel Dromm in Council District 25 currently held by Helen Sears of Queens; Tulani Kinard in Council District 41 currently

held by Darlene Mealy; and Jumaane Williams in Council District 45 currently held by Kendall Stewart.

Citizens Union prefers the return of incumbent Councilmember Christine Quinn, who serves as the body's Speaker, in Council District 3 over two spirited challengers. CU felt that Quinn, notwithstanding its strong disagreement with her over term limits, has been effective in bringing about needed reform in the areas of lobbying, campaign finance and member items, and as such is the candidate it prefers for election over challengers Yetta Kurland and Maria Passante-Derr.

Other incumbents which CU preferred and supports being returned to their seats are Robert Jackson in Council District 7, Inez Dickens in Council District 9, Leroy Comrie Jr. in Council District 27, Diana Reyna in Council District 34, Letitia James in Council District 35, and Al Vann in Council District 36.

Citizens Union also prefers Ashok Chandra in the Republican primary in Council District 4, where the winner will go on to face incumbent councilmember, Dan Garodnick. Mr. Chandra-a young and energetic candidate, and a strong proponent of ballot access reform-brings an interesting perspective to this race, and has the potential to begin an engaging dialogue about government reform and policies within the district during the General Election, including his priorities to create incentives for business to remain in the city and ideas to reduce congestion. Should he win the primary, he will be evaluated along with Mr. Gardonick for a general election decision.

Citizens Union will be announcing its choices for the Democratic nominees for Mayor, Public Advocate and Comptroller over the next two weeks.

In change from previous years, the bulk of Citizens Union's analysis and background information for the upcoming Primary Election will be available on Citizens Union's website at www.citizensunion.org. The website presently contains questionnaires for all of the candidates who have submitted their responses, including candidates that Citizens Union did not ultimately interview. A smaller, leaner version of the Citizens Union Voters Directory, with a list of all preferred candidates, will be available in the coming weeks.

A summary of the races and candidates Citizens Union prefers is as follows:

Citizens Union 2009 Candidate Primary Election Preferences

Office	Preferred Candidate
Manhattan District Attorney	Leslie Crocker Snyder running in an open seat
Council District 1	Jin (P.J.) Kim over incumbent Alan Gerson
Council District 3	Christine Quinn for reelection

Council District 4	Ashok Chandra in Republican primary
Council District 7	Robert Jackson for reelection
Council District 9	Inez Dickens for reelection
Council District 10	Ydanis Rodriguez in an open seat
Council District 11	Anthony Cassino over incumbent G. Oliver Koppell
Council District 12	Andy King over incumbent Larry Seabrook
Council District 14	No preference
Council District 19	Kevin Kim in an open seat
Council District 20	S.J. Jung in an open seat
Council District 23	Mark Weprin in an open seat
Council District 25	Daniel Dromm over incumbent Helen Sears
Council District 26	James Van Bramer in an open seat
Council District 27	Leroy Comrie for reelection
Council District 29	Lynn Schulman in an open seat
Council District 33	Evan Thies in an open seat
Council District 34	Diana Reyna for reelection
Council District 35	Letitia James for reelection
Council District 36	Al Vann for reelection
Council District 39	Brad Lander in open seat
Council District 41	Tulani Kinard over incumbent Darlene Mealy
Council District 45	Jumaane Williams over incumbent Kendall Stewart