



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITIZENS UNION PREFERS BILL de BLASIO and JOHN LIU

Good Government Group Makes its Choices Known in Public Advocate and Comptroller Contests

Breadth of Experience and View of Respective Offices are Behind CU's Decision

Chair Peter Sherwin, Local Candidates Committee Chair John Horan, and Executive Director Dick Dadey today announce that Citizens Union prefers John Liu for City Comptroller and Bill de Blasio for Public Advocate in Tuesday's Democratic Party primary election.

The good government organization supports John Liu over the three other qualified candidates to be the city's chief fiscal officer due to his relevant experience and proven approach to successfully address issues. Liu is the organization's preferred candidate because he brings to the table direct professional experience in the field of finance; a proven ability to analyze government finances effectively -- including his work to hold the MTA more fiscally accountable; principled leadership to take politically unpopular positions that nevertheless serve a broader public interest -- like his support for congestion pricing; and his clear articulation of, and consistent adherence to, his position on extending term limits only through voter referendum.

Liu also has a strong grasp of the comptroller's responsibilities and clearly articulates how he would fulfill them, such as paying closer attention to the sometimes expensive mid-year city budget modifications, focusing on procurement reform as another means to control costs, and reevaluating the appropriate risk-reward balance in the allocation of the city's pension funds. His thoughtfulness in answering questions about the use of placement agents further demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of how opportunities exist for influence throughout the entire decision making process and not just with third party placement agents.

Citizens Union was also compelled by his commitment to opening up the procurement process to minority and women owned enterprises which have been historically underrepresented in the city, and more broadly ensuring diverse voices are represented in important citywide policy discussions. These traits coupled with the desirable combination of his financial experience and vision for the office make him CU's preferred candidate for city comptroller.

In the race for public advocate, Citizens Union prefers Bill de Blasio because of his combination of skills, experience, knowledge, and principled positions on issues. While the public advocate's office has a large platform but little statutory power, de Blasio presents a convincing case for how to use the existing powers to bolster the office's effectiveness and visibility that would serve as an active citywide engine for action on important issues. He specifically said he would use the advocate's office to introduce council legislation, place Freedom of Information requests online to track their

progress, work to engage parents in the education of their children, and use the Voters Assistance Commission as a place to address and promote election reform.

In extending its support to de Blasio, whose campaign has come under scrutiny for its use of the Working Families Party's affiliated entity, Data and Field Services, Citizens Union acknowledges that questions are being raised about all candidates who use this service. Citizens Union is relying on the de Blasio campaign's assurance that it is complying with the city's campaign finance law and the CFB's advisory opinions made thus far on this matter. Based upon what we know and have been told, CU is not in a position to pass further judgment on the matters at hand and defers to the city's Campaign Finance Board for continued guidance. CU will continue to monitor these relationships.

The city needs an advocate who can serve as an effective counter to a strong mayor and active council, as well as work collaboratively within government to bring about needed reform. De Blasio's strong principled stances on issues of local and citywide importance, like his leadership on the term limits battle, his willingness to fight for causes that need a champion, as well as his collaborative, inclusive, consensus-building approach in the Council reflect his ability to play such a role. Though each of the other three candidates have compelling attributes that would serve the office well, it is de Blasio's fresh perspective, thoughtful positions, varied set of skills and broad experience that make him CU's preferred candidate.