



**2012 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR
CANDIDATES FOR NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE**

Citizens Union would appreciate your response to the following questionnaire related to policy issues facing New York State and our interest in reforming state government. Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union will use to evaluate candidates who are running for office in order to determine our “Preferred Candidates” for the September 13th Primary Election, and our “Endorsed Candidates” for the November 6th General Election.

If you seek our support, we would 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.

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: Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. **Age:** 48

Campaign Address: 159-55 102nd St, Howard Beach, NY 11414

Campaign Telephone Number: (347) 829-8249 Fax: () _____

Party Affiliation(s): Democrat **Campaign Manager:** Peter Brown

Website & Email: jaddabbo@live.com, peter@brownmillergroup.com, www.addabboforsenate.com

Education: St. Johns University (BS – Accounting), Touro Law School (JD)

Occupation/Employer (or years in currently held elected office): NYS Senate, 3 years

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: NYC Council 2002 – 2008, Ozone Tudor Civic Association (President), Community Board 10 (Executive Board), Ozone Park Kiwanis

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU’s Local Candidates Committee? **YES** 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** NO

Signature of Candidate: _____ Date: _____

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 second passage of the constitutional amendment (S.6698/A.9526 of 2012) creating an independent redistricting commission with appointees split evenly between the majority and minority parties?	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 two-party system of governance and operation?	Support/Oppose
3. What is your position on making it easier for candidates to appear on the ballot by, for example, 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?	Support/Oppose
6. What is your position on amending the constitution to allow for Election Day Registration?	Support/Oppose
7. What is your position on amending the constitution to allow for no-excuse absentee voting?	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?	Support/Oppose
9. What is your position on redesigning the ballot to ensure that voters are able to clearly read candidates’ names, titles of offices, designations and ballot questions; that instructions are clear and accurate; that bilingual ballots are required; and that the ballot is able to split races between multiple pages?	Support/Oppose
10. What is your position on reforming the special election process, creating a nonpartisan special election for state legislative vacancies, as proposed by A.1369/S.26?	Support/Oppose
11. 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 automatically updated?	Support/Oppose

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

12. 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
13. What is your position on lowering campaign contribution limits for legislative and statewide candidates for public office?	Support/Oppose
14. What is your position on restricting campaign contributions from registered lobbyists, placement agents and those who do business with the state?	Support/Oppose
15. What is your position on limiting or banning campaign contributions from corporations, LLCs, and LLPs? (Note: such entities would be able to form separate political action committees due to constitutional issues regarding freedom of speech.)	Support/Oppose
16. 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
17. What is your position on requiring candidates to include full name, home address, and employer/business name for each contribution and bundler?	Support/Oppose

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM (CONTINUED)

18. 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
19. What is your position on stricter requirements on the use of campaign contributions for non-campaign related activity, such as personal use?	Support/Oppose
20. What is your position on improving disclosure of independent expenditures such as requiring disclosure of electioneering activities and linking expenditures to candidates targeted?	Support/Oppose
21. What is your position on limiting the ability of candidates to accumulate “war chests” and then transferring funds raised in one race to another?	Support/Oppose
22. What is your position on creating an enforcement entity independent of the State Board of Elections to oversee campaign finance laws?	Support/Oppose

JUDICIAL REFORM

23. 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?	Support/Oppose
24. 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

25. What is your position on empowering the Attorney General to investigate and prosecute cases involving public corruption, including serious election law malfeasance?	Support/Oppose
26. 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, building on the 2011 ethics reforms which only apply to future state employees?	Support/Oppose

BUDGET REFORM

27. 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
28. 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?	Support/Oppose
29. What is your position on the use of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) rather than cash accounting for the state budget?	Support/Oppose
30. What is your position on distributing member item allocations equally among all legislators and requiring for greater accountability as expressed in S. 7007/A10116?	Support/Oppose
31. What is your position on incorporating the use of performance budgeting and outcome measurement to promote the more rational appropriation of state funds?	Support/Oppose
32. What is your position on instituting a later start date for the state fiscal year?	Support/Oppose
33. What is your position on limiting the ability of the governor to enact policy changes governing the use of resources in appropriation bills by requiring that such bills be consistent with existing law or proposed changes in separate legislation?	Support/Oppose

ADDITIONAL REFORM

34. What is your position on increasing public access to information by reforming the Freedom of Information and Open Meetings Laws to enhance transparency, as well as the creation of tools such as open data portals to ease public access to information?	Support/Oppose
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

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 am honored to have received the Citizens Union endorsement in prior elections; as you know, I am deeply committed to election, ethics, and budget reform, and my actions in Albany prove it. When I was the head of the Elections Committee, I pushed for sweeping reforms in Albany and worked tirelessly to lessen the influence of money in elections. I continue that effort to this day, and will remain faithful to that in the cycles to come.

In the 2012 cycle, I was the prime sponsor of no less than 16 bills that deal directly with election law. Included in these are S1553B, which would amend provisions relating to the information which must be included on applications for absentee ballots for school district elections, S1556, which would enact the "early voting act", S1560, which provides that tenants of residential real property shall be provided with voter registration forms, and S1561, which would reduce the time for mailing and receipt of registration application to constitutional minimum. I was co-sponsor of 14 additional bills dealing with the issue, including S1009, which prohibits deceptive practices and the suppression of voters, and increases penalties for violations of the elective franchise, and S1974C, which enacts the "voter empowerment act of New York" to streamline the process for registering to vote.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss these bills, and any others you wish to discuss, and look forward to working with you in the years to come.

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.

Five promises from 2010 campaign and what I did for them

Increasing accessibility to state senator: I maintain a 24-hour telephone hotline for my constituents to call at any hour of the day to ensure they remain connected to their elected representative in Albany.

Protecting the Environment – I held my 5th Recycling Collection Day on April 17, 2012, fulfilling my promise to continue to guard and protect the environment. Tons of electronics, paper and books, clothing and textiles, carpeting and household goods were collected. I have also been a vocal advocate of protecting the NYC watershed by opposing fracking in upstate New York.

Job opportunities – I continue to hold job fairs for my constituents, helping in the most hands-on way I know how those seeking employment in our tough economy. The next one is currently scheduled for September, and we anticipate attendance by more than 1000 people. In addition, in April 2012 I held a Veterans (& Spouses) Job Readiness Workshop for veterans returning to the job market, and held a follow-up Veterans (& Spouses) Job Fair on June 8, 2012.

Seniors and budget process – While there was pain in the budget, I stayed true to the principle of shared sacrifice by winning key restorations for school aid, higher education and critical human services like Title 20 senior centers, homeless programs, summer youth employment and juvenile justice reforms

Good govt / ethics reform – I helped pass the comprehensive ethics reform legislation that built on last year's efforts to clean up Albany and give New Yorkers the more open, accountable, and responsible state government they deserve. It was not perfect, but the stronger disclosure requirements, creation of an independent oversight commission, greater transparency for lobbyists, and tougher deterrents for public corruption are a good start to building a state government as good as the people we serve.

Five promises I will make to voters this election cycle

Create jobs and protect small businesses - We are all cheated when we allow companies to reach into our pockets and spend our tax dollars on jobs that aren't available to workers here in New York State. Job outsourcing negatively affects our state and local economies, hurts local residents in need of jobs, and leads to a higher burden on our human services and unemployment systems. That is why I introduced S.1244 that would prevent businesses from reaping state tax breaks and other economic benefits when they outsource employment opportunities to other states and countries. I promise to work to pass that bill.

Funding and accessibility to education -- Early childhood education kick-starts a child's academic journey, and is proven to ensure greater success later on in school. We need to take a hard look at our current day care education programs, and seeing what we're doing right and what we could be doing even better, is an important investment in our future.

Seniors healthcare – I will continue to support title XX funding for our city's seniors, and do everything I can to ensure they have the funding they need to live healthy lives.

Campaign finance reform. We must do more to restore trust in government. We have to take big money out of our elections, ending pay-to-play, and give regular New Yorkers a stronger voice. In addition, I am deeply disappointed that we ended session voting for independent redistricting, and intend to work hard for it when elected to my third term.

Environment – Hydrofracking represents uncharted territory for residents of our state, but one thing is certain: we simply can't take chances with our water quality. I have written to the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to express my grave concerns about the safety of the process, and I will continue to be out in front of the issue. I will also continue my district-wide recycling days, taking in tons of electronic and other types of recyclable materials that would otherwise end up in our landfills.

**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 policy@citizensunion.org
Call us at 212-227-0342 with any questions.**