



**CITIZENS UNION CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE
STATEN ISLAND BOROUGH PRESIDENT
ELECTION 2009**

Citizens Union would appreciate your response to the following questions related to policy issues facing the City of New York that are of concern to Citizens Union and the citizens of the city. We plan to make public your responses to this questionnaire in our Voters Directory, on our website, and in other appropriate venues. 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 primary election and "Endorsed Candidates" for the general election. In order to receive Citizens Union's "preferred" or "endorsed" status, in addition to completing the questionnaire, candidates must participate in an interview with Citizens Union's Local Candidates Committee.

We thank you very much for your response.

Candidate Name: _____John Luisi_____ Age: _50__

Campaign Address: ___110 Belmont Place, Staten Island, NY 10301-1711
(zip)

Campaign Telephone Number: (718)442-3377 (Candidate's cell) Fax: (718) 442-4366

Party Affiliation(s):Dem, also on WFP Campaign Manager Name: _Michael Arvanites

Website&Email: www.LuisiForBP.com johnvluisi@gmail (candidate's personal) or john@luisiforbp.com

Education: NYC Public Schools (PS 48; JHS49; New Dorp HS), Columbia College, Fordham Law

Occupation/Employer (or years in currently held elected office):_Attorney in private practice

Previous Offices and Campaigns: Luisi for BP 2005, garnered 42% of the vote; previously worked on numerous campaigns (Ed Koch, other judge and City Council); no prior elected office held, but much City experience (former Assistant to the Commissioner of HPD; Mayor's Arson Strike Force, an inter-agency effort)_

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? YES_x__ NO___

Have you completed requisite campaign finance filings? YES_x__ NO___

(Please note: Citizens Union can grant its "Preferred Candidate" or "Endorsed Candidate" rating only to candidates we have interviewed. We will make every effort to interview candidates in this race.)

Signature of Candidate:_____ Date:_____

Please state your position on the following issues by indicating whether you support or oppose each, where applicable. Please also use the space provided below each question or on a separate sheet of paper to elaborate on your positions on the questions which require a detailed answer. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.

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| 1. What is your position on changing the current land use process under ULURP to limit the role of community-based planning? | Support | Oppose |
| 2. What is your position regarding the creation of a Charter Revision Commission to review the roles of the various offices of government to evaluate how best to effectively deliver government services? | Support | Oppose |
| 3. What is your position with respect to allowing voters who are registered as an independent to vote in party primaries? Unsure | Support | Oppose |
| 4. What is your position on term limits for elected officials? | Support | Oppose |
| 5. What is your position on modifying the City Charter to require that changes to term limits may only be approved by the voters? | Support | Oppose |
| 6. What is your position on the recent extension of term limits for the city’s elected officials to three consecutive four-year terms? Please explain your answer | Support | Oppose |

I vehemently oppose the illegal extension of term limits, although they were not struck down by the courts. I have made the term limits issue a cornerstone of my campaign. I have publicly stated on the record that I would not serve more than two terms in office once elected.

7. How would you use the office of the Borough President to have an impact on the city policies affecting the Staten Island?

I would use the office as a “bully pulpit” and not hesitate to go to court to get our fair share of service should I deem it necessary. I have no issue in dealing with the City-wide press and would enjoy using the press to improve our image and services.

8. What would you propose the Department of Education do to increase the ability for parents and teachers to become more meaningfully involved in the education system? What other positives changes can be made to the New York City public school system?

It is imperative that parents learn how to become better involved in their children’s education. Stopping before we arrive at the so-called “helicopter parents”, most parents need to be dramatically

more involved in teaching their children basic values and skills. Teaching to the test is a mistake. Social studies/civics, the arts and phys ed are also important components of educating our children.

9. What characteristics would you search for in an appointment to the Parent Education Panel (PEP)? How would you work with the PEP or support their activities and responsibilities?

I would search for someone with experience and a genuine commitment to the children and their parents, and preferably not someone with purely political aspirations. He or she would also need to have excellent communication and conflict mediation skills, and preferably would also be bi- or multi-lingual.

10. How would you leverage the office of Borough President to address:
- Affordable Housing,
 - Education,
 - Budget and Fiscal Responsibility,
 - Health and the Environment, and
 - Economic Development?

I would encourage the development of affordable housing along the transportation corridors I would be developing. I would work closely with the education experts in my borough and beyond to enhance education opportunities. As Borough President, I will not only spend the discretionary budget more effectively, but I will post online how my fellow taxpayers' money is being spent. I want to have urgent care facilities paid for by HHC placed throughout the borough to lessen the burden on our two remaining hospitals. I wish to establish a Museum of the Environment near the ferry terminal to draw visitors off the ferries and enlighten our own schoolchildren on responsible living. I will demand that the "green roof" be re-incorporated into the plans for the parking garage now under construction in St. George. I will fully develop the retail space in the ferry terminal, and work to preserve the many small businesses currently run by and employing many of Staten Island's residents.

11. What criteria, if any, do/will you have for appointments to the City Planning Commission?

I am dismayed and disgusted that our current appointee is a relative of the BP, lacking a college degree and any city planning experience whatsoever. I would appoint an experienced and educated

professional, preferably someone with a strong environmental background to round out the experience of the other commissioners.

12. What would you propose to ensure that charter-mandated elected offices receive equitable budget allocations?

Equitable budget allocations are necessary to prevent the charter-mandated public offices from becoming mere pawns of the Mayor. After watching the Public Advocate's budget cut by got 40%, I cringe to think what would happen if the BP's budget was similarly summarily cut. With an equitable disbursement, Borough Hall would get it's fair share of the budget to enhance the lives of its residents.

13. What would you propose to further enhance transparency regarding the relationships between elected officials, their families, and nonprofits that receive funding from New York City?

I find it shameful that many members of the incumbent's family are on the NYC payroll in one form or another, most embarrassingly the appointment of his daughter-in-law's sister as a City Planning Commissioner. I am also disgusted that the elected officials get around the nepotism regulations by employing each others' relatives instead of their own. All elected should disclose all family employment with the City. If I had to lobby to make it a law, I would gladly join CU in that effort. In any event, it is clear the serious reform is needed now that officials have figured how to circumvent existing regulations.

14. Taking into consideration the lessons learned from the debates surrounding congestion pricing and the Ravitch Commission's recommendations to provide the MTA with long-term funding, what do you think should be done to address the MTA's fiscal solvency issues and ensure that the burden for funding the MTA is equitably distributed among all stakeholders?

It's tempting to say "fire them all and start over". Only our current national financial headaches overshadow the total mismanagement of the MTA. Mass transit is desirable, and infrastructure is sorely lacking, particularly on Staten Island. The only solution is to change this "car culture" currently being promulgated on Staten island in particular.

15. How will you address the current zoning concerns unique to Staten Island?

The current system allows certain developers who are on the BP's planning advisory board to use insider information to purchase land in areas under consideration for re-zoning and put in foundations prior to the re-zonings taking effect. The ill-gotten profits are in the millions, and are made with the tacit approval of the current leadership. Clearly this must stop. The proposed re-zonings should include a moratorium limiting development while the re-zoning is under consideration.

16. Emergency personnel response times for Staten Island are above average in comparison to the response times in other boroughs. What do you think the city should do to reduce the response times in Staten Island?

For starters, the call command center should be brought back to Staten Island. Much of the Island's street layout idiosyncrasies are foreign to a non-Islander, and having local personnel directing emergency can make the difference between life and death. There are many similar street names, and with the rampant new construction and memorial street names, a non-Islander could easily and understandably become confused.

17. A new emergency room was recently opened on Staten Island at Staten Island University Hospital, which will hopefully address some of the borough's healthcare needs as it is the only borough without a public hospital. What other ways can the city help increase access to medical services to Staten Island residents, and if elected what would you do to help achieve this goal?

The number of Staten Island hospitals has shrunk to two as the population has boomed. This is a travesty. This new emergency room was filled to capacity as soon as it opened. This is not enough. We need HHC-funded Urgent Care Centers throughout the Island to begin to bring our health care capacity to acceptable levels.

Additional Comments:

Serious change is sorely needed on Staten Island. My opponent is the poster child for term limits. There is major frustration Islandwide. The office of Borough President must become more than merely that of a glorified Santa Claus or Robin Hood, redistributing our tax dollars to friends and contributors.

CANDIDATE ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Citizens Union is adding a new element to its evaluation of candidates running for office. As a candidate who presently does not hold elected office, CU is interested in knowing your top five campaign promises you are making to the voters during this campaign for this position.

If elected, Citizens Union will use these promises to evaluate your performance while in office, as well as, to evaluate your candidacy in the future.

We thank you very much for your response. Please feel free to use additional paper if the space provided is not sufficient.

TOP FIVE 2009 CAMPAIGN PROMISES

1. Post discretionary spending online.
2. Create walkable towns in our central business and shopping areas.
3. Hold frequent public fora to give residents a chance to be heard.
4. Increase productivity, by increasing the use of technology and working smarter.
5. Review and incorporate many of the ideas generated by the SI Visions project.