



Page 1 of 9

**CITIZENS UNION CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE NEW YORK CITY
COUNCIL
ELECTION 2009**

Citizens Union would appreciate your responses 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: **Daniel Dromm** Age: **53**

Office to Which You Seek (Re) Election: Council District #: **City Council 25th District**

Campaign Address: **77-15 37th Avenue Jackson Heights, NY 11372**

Campaign Telephone Number: **(718) 205-1385** Fax: **(530) 325-4795**

Party Affiliation(s): **Democrat & Working Families**
Campaign Manager Name: **Melody Lopez**

Website & Email: **www.DanielDromm.com ; melody@danielDromm.com**

Education: **Marist College, BA in Spanish & Journalism**
CUNY City College, MA in Education

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

New York City Dept of Education, Public School Teacher, 1984-1990, 1984-present

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: **Democratic District**

Leader (2002-present) 39th Assembly District Part A; co-Founder Queens Pride

Parade & Festival; co-Founder New Visions Democratic Club; co-Founder

Generation Q Community Youth Services; co-Founder Sage Queens Senior Services

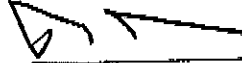
Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? **YES**
NO

Have you completed requisite campaign finance filings? **YES**
NO

Page 2 of 9

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

Signature of Candidate:



Date:

7/17/09



**CITIZENS UNION CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE NEW YORK CITY
COUNCIL
ELECTION 2009**

Citizens Union would appreciate your responses 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: **Daniel Dromm** Age: **53**

Office to Which You Seek (Re) Election: Council District #: **City Council 25th District**

Campaign Address: **77-15 37th Avenue Jackson Heights, NY 11372**

Campaign Telephone Number: **(718) 205-1385** Fax: **(530) 325-3795**

Party Affiliation(s): **Democrat & Working Families**

Campaign Manager Name: **Melody Lopez**

Website & Email: **www.DanielDromm.com ; melody@danieldromm.com**

Education: **Marist College, BA in Spanish & Journalism;
CUNY City College, MA in Education**

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

New York City Dept of Education, Public School Teacher, PS199Q, 1984-present

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: **Democratic District**

Leader (2002-present) 39th Assembly District Part A; co-Founder Queens Pride

Parade & Festival; co-Founder New Visions Democratic Club; co-Founder

Generation Q Community Youth Services; co-Founder Sage Queens Senior Services

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

Have you completed requisite campaign finance filings? **YES**
NO

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

Signature of Candidate: _____ Date: _____

I. CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

Please state your position on the following issues by indicating whether you support or oppose each. You may elaborate in the space provided at the end or on additional paper.

VOTING AND ELECTIONS REFORM

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. What is your position with respect to allowing voters who are registered as independents to vote in party primaries? | Support | <u>Oppose</u> |
| 2. What is your position on passage of state legislation that would allow referenda initiated by the City Council and/or the public to appear on the ballot at the same time as a referendum initiated by a charter commission appointed by the Mayor? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| 3. What is your position on increasing the pay of Election Day poll workers above the current \$200 they are allotted per election event? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| 4. What is your position on restructuring New York's current board of elections model to eliminate political party responsibility for overall election administration and replace it with a system that narrows political party involvement to certification of candidate petitions and the actual counting of votes?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I support in principle but require additional information. | <u>*Support</u> | Oppose |
| 5. What is your position on having an election administration system where there is a local elections executive director appointed by the mayor upon recommendation by a new board that is chosen by the mayor and the city council? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

- | | | |
|---|----------------|--------|
| 6. What is your position on implementing "war chest" restrictions that would prohibit a candidate from transferring funds raised in a previous election cycle into a current campaign committee for a different office? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
|---|----------------|--------|

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------|--------|
| 7. What is your position on allowing campaign financing for ballot proposals? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
|---|-----------------------|--------|

CITY COUNCIL REFORM

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--------|
| 8. What is your position on allowing Council committees to function more independently of the speaker than is presently the case? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| a. Should committee staff be hired by and report to committee chairs? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| b. Should committee hearings and votes be scheduled at the direction of the chairs? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| c. Should committees be able to issue subpoenas by a vote of their members? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| 9. What is your position on: | | |
| a. limiting councilmembers' ability to earn outside income? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| b. making the job of councilmember a full-time position? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| c. eliminating or limiting stipends for committee chairs and leadership positions? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| 10. What is your position on requiring that any future increase in councilmember compensation not affect those serving in the current term of the council and only be applied prospectively to the following term? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| 11. What is your position on consolidating the current City Council committee structure and reducing the number of overall committees? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| 12. What is your position on term limits for elected officials? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| 13. What is your position on modifying the City Charter to require that changes to term limits may only be approved by the voters? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |

14. 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

The voters of New York City twice voted in favor of term limits. I strongly believe that the recent overturning of the will of the voters by legislative maneuvering undermines our democracy. Term limits have helped bring a new generation of leaders into city government. New voices and progressive ideas are the tangible benefits from the increased opportunity for citizens to serve. Term limits can help keep elected officials accountable to the public and defend against the abuses of unlimited tenure. The people of New York City benefit when our elections are more competitive and the nearly insurmountable advantage of incumbency is leveled.

POLICY ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE

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.

15. Knowing that the police department and commissioner retain ultimate authority for determining whether an officer is guilty and penalty, what is your position on transferring power to the Civilian Complaint Review Board to prosecute cases of police misconduct, such as force, abuse of authority, discourtesy, and offensive language? Support* Oppose
***The CCRB needs to be truly independent before any additional authority or responsibility is transferred.**
16. What is your position on changing the current land use process under ULURP to increase the role of community-based planning? Support Oppose
17. What is your position regarding the creation of a Charter Revision Commission to review specifically the roles of the various offices of government and how well government has functioned since the 1988 and 1989 charter review commissions? Support Oppose
18. What is your position on reforming the current pension funding structure to create multiple tiers for future city government employees? Support Oppose

- a. In FY 2008-09, New York City spent \$12 billion on pensions and fringe benefits for City employees out of a total budget of \$62 billion. What would you do to address the growing pension costs borne by the city and New York City tax payers?

I would increase revenue by creating a more progressive income tax code, reinstate the commuter tax, and demand our City’s fair share of state and federal funding.

19. What is your position with respect to the City Council passing a resolution calling upon the State Legislature to establish a State Constitutional Convention? Support Oppose

- a. If support, what are the three most important areas that need improvement?

- b. Do you believe that greater home rule should be granted to the City of New York? If so, in what areas should further sovereignty be given?

I believe that greater home rule should be granted to the City of New York. The City should be granted more sovereignty over rent regulations, taxes (property, sales, income, and corporate) , transportation initiatives, and school governance.

20. 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 would you propose to address the MTA’s fiscal solvency issues and ensure that the burden for funding the MTA is equitably distributed among all stakeholders?

Mass transit is critical to our City. We must do everything in our power as elected officials to provide for long-term funding for the MTA. I support congestion pricing in principle. However, I have concerns about the fairness of other proposals that appear to inequitably impact residents of Queens such as bridge tolls. I believe the burden

should be distributed in a fair manner. I support increasing parking fees for both street parking and indoor parking. I am a strong supporter of increasing the gas tax.

21. What would you propose in terms of creating a greater role for the city council in determining and deciding the city budget?

The City Council should have a greater role in determining and deciding the City budget. I believe that having a Speaker of the City Council with greater independence from the Mayor would have a significant impact on the Council's ability to shape and influence the budget. I also fully agree with the Citizens Union recommendations that "chairs and their committees should have greater responsibility in the council's review and approval of the City budget to ensure that the needs of New Yorkers are being addressed equitably and efficiently."

22. What is your position regarding the City's past practice of using surplus tax revenues to pay down future health cost and pension obligations, and the decision not to do so this year?

My position on using surplus tax revenues to pay down future health and pension obligations depends on the economic climate during the given year that such a surplus exists. I think that in the current economic downturn it is critical that we use the surplus monies for immediate needs such as funding social services and creating jobs. However, in periods when the local economy is expanding, I would support using surplus funds to pay down health and pension obligations.

23. What is your view of how the taxes paid by New Yorkers compare to the value that is received in City services? Do you believe that taxes should be raised or lowered? To the extent you believe taxes should be changed, please provide specific proposals about what taxes you would raise and what services you would cut, if you didn't raise taxes, listed in order of greatest magnitude.

The "comparative value" is a difficult question to answer because of the varied needs of individuals receiving City services. I believe that the tax burden on middle class and working class families and individuals is too high. I am a supporter of a more progressive income tax code that would increase revenues by increasing the marginal tax rates on individuals earning more than \$250,000 per year. I would support increasing revenues on the wealthiest New Yorkers before I could support any attempts to reduce essential City services.

24. Many policy advocates champion the creation of a more diversified economy, and one that is less reliant on Wall Street. What is your position on such a plan? If you support it, what would you do to diversify the city's economy? How would you adjust spending in New

York City to accommodate the anticipated reduction in tax revenue as the tax base shifts to lower paying jobs?

I am an advocate for a more diversified economy in New York City. We did become too reliant on Wall Street for tax revenues. I support investing more in higher education to train and prepare our citizens (and future workforce) for higher paying jobs in industries such as alternative energy, biotechnology, and computer technology. I think that areas such as Boston and the San Francisco Bay Area have benefitted tremendously from their emphasis on higher education and their ability to retain students in their workforce in high-paying jobs in the local economy.

25. 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?

As a NYC public school teacher for twenty-five years, reforming the Department of Education is a top priority. We must have parents and teachers playing a more meaningful role. I propose strengthening school leadership teams to give parents and teachers a greater voice in the process. I would also advocate that an evaluation system for principals and the chancellor be created for parents to have an easy, simple, and direct way to express their concerns regarding the effectiveness of school leadership.

26. What would you propose to increase the transparency of the Board of Elections in the City of New York's operations and accountability to the city and its voters?

I propose that the Board of Elections should eliminate patronage positions and create a more professional staff by making these civil service jobs. I also will advocate for more reliable and modern voting equipment. I also propose that the BOE create a more user-friendly website.

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

I will sponsor legislation that prohibits City Council Members from funding non-profits that employ family members in executive or policy-making positions. I will also advocate for greater transparency regarding the employment of family members.



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. **Education** – Reduce Class Size and Allievate School Overcrowding.
2. **Constituent Services** – More responsive and dynamic district office to help the community including expanded office hours and additional multi-language staff members.
3. **Health Care**—Improve primary and preventive care by opening community health clinic.
4. **Transportation**—Reduce traffic congestion by re-engineering traffic flow, improved parking management, and increase enforcement.
5. **Affordable Housing**—Strengthen and preserve affordable housing by combating abusive landlord practices, helping high-risk tenants stay in their homes, and expanding access to federal housing vouchers.