



**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: Frank Gulluscio Age: 60

Office to Which You Seek (Re) Election: Council District #: 32

Campaign Address: 159-55 102 Street Howard beach, NY 11414

Campaign Telephone Number: (718) 848-3434 Fax: () _____

Party Affiliation(s): Democrat Campaign Manager Name: Nathan Smith

Website & Email: www.Gulluscio2009.com and Gulluscio09@gmail.com

Education: BS Public Administration from SUNY

Occupation/Employer (or years in currently held elected office): District Manager for CB 6

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: Former Chief of Staff for Councilmember Joseph Addabbo, Member of Community Board 10

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” 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

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| 1. What is your position with respect to allowing voters who are registered as independents to vote in party primaries? | Support | Oppose |
| 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? | Support | 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? | Support | 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? | Support | 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? | Support | Oppose |

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

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| 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? | Support | Oppose |
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| 7. What is your position on allowing campaign financing for ballot proposals? | Support | Oppose |
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CITY COUNCIL REFORM

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| 8. What is your position on allowing Council committees to function more independently of the speaker than is presently the case? | Support | Oppose |
| a. Should committee staff be hired by and report to committee chairs? | Support | Oppose |
| b. Should committee hearings and votes be scheduled at the direction of the chairs? | Support | Oppose |
| c. Should committees be able to issue subpoenas by a vote of their members? | Support | Oppose |
| 9. What is your position on: | | |
| a. limiting councilmembers' ability to earn outside income? | Support | Oppose |
| b. making the job of councilmember a full-time position? | Support | Oppose |
| c. eliminating or limiting stipends for committee chairs and leadership positions? | Support | 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? | Support | Oppose |
| 11. What is your position on consolidating the current City Council committee structure and reducing the number of overall committees? | Support | Oppose |
| 12. What is your position on term limits for elected officials? | Support | 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? | Support | Oppose |

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| 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 |
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I oppose the mayor’s recent actions where he asked the City Council to overturn term limits that were agreed to twice during referendums. The mayor should not have attempted to overturn the will of the people and if elected I would support work to ensure that the people’s will is respected, especially in relation to term limits.

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.

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| 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 |
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| 16. What is your position on changing the current land use process under ULURP to increase the role of community-based planning? | Support | Oppose |
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| 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 |
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| 18. What is your position on reforming the current pension funding structure to create multiple tiers for future city government employees? | Support | Oppose |
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- 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?

The City can change the nature of its tax structure in order to relieve some of the burden placed on working families and the vanishing middle class, while still raising additional revenues in order to fund vital city projects and costs, including the growing pension costs and obligations.

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

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

As seen by the recent events in Albany, there are some clear constitutional issues which need to be clarified. The succession to the Lieutenant Governor's office is the first priority, in addition to more stringent campaign finance regulations which will even the playing field for political expression, as well as other changes which would make the political level of discourse and campaigning more evenly matched.

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?

New York should have greater home rule. One issue in particular where this is important is in regard to our housing laws. It does not make sense that rent laws are decided by the state and not by the city. City residents are those most affected by these laws and their local representatives those can be held most accountable. It is important that local residents have a greater say in the rules and laws that govern New York City

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?

It is important to make sure that all stakeholders in the City's transportation system are responsible for providing funding to help the long-term MTA finance crisis. Raising the gas tax marginally is a last resort as long as gas prices are low in order to generate revenue from drivers to contribute to mass transit, but for now the balances that Albany has adopted will tide the MTA over in the short term.

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

Despite the Mayor having strong powers related to the City's budget and the budgetary process, The City Council needs to have a larger role (and a commensurate level of responsibility) in regards to the city's fiduciary health. Strengthening the Council through empowerment of Committee Chairs to deal with the budgetary implications in their area of expertise is an important first step in equalizing the power in budget matters between these two branches.

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?

The budgets in the past that have started to pay down future health and pension obligations are both fiscally responsible but also remnants of a healthy economic engine which fueled tax receipts in the City and is not the current economic situation. This practice of paying down future obligations must continue in the future, but not at the expense of city services and funding which go to the City's working families, which will be the current situation until the economic recovery starts to pick up speed.

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 value that is received in City services is not equal for everyone, but I tend to believe that the value can be improved (the bang for the buck) for the level of the tax burden. There is always room for improvement, and that has no bearing whatsoever on the many hard-working municipal employees. I am stridently opposed to any increase in taxes, and want to keep taxes at the lowest level possible, even potentially considering making the income tax more progressive in order to either generate additional revenue if the City is in dire fiscal straights or to be net neutral in order to slightly shift the burden off the City's working families.

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?

There should be absolutely no dissension on the fact that the City economy and its funding streams were not diversified enough and that we in the City Council should strive to incentivize the diversification of the economy in the future. Technology in various forms can help provide the avenue for the city's network of intellectual capitol, university system, and network of private and non-profit actors to strengthen industries in "green" technology, alternative energy, and other advances that science will help provide. The economy need not shift to lower paying jobs if these new industries are embraced—rather, the City's economy itself can expand and sub-industries that service high technology companies can also gain a foothold.

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?

With my background as a former teacher, I am fully aware that the DoE can do more to engage parents (as well as teachers) in the education system, and this involvement goes far beyond the current system and procedures that are in place. There needs to be a new, revamped structure for parents to have some small input and a stronger voice in all matters of their children's schools. One major change in the City' school system is the reduction of class size to more manageable levels, which would be a beneficial improvement for learning standards, as well as both the teachers and students.

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?

The Board of Elections has admittedly improved recently in regards to utilization of technology (with election results and its website for example), as well as with other procedures. The late delay of HAVA equipment needs to implemented and fully trained for now, and the elections reporting and management should be more open through making everything available through their website, to an even greater extent than it is currently.

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?

There is no reason why the disclosure regulations and reports need not be stringent enough to be both public (perhaps through the internet) and comprehensive enough to shine light on potential conflicts of interest through Councilmembers' relatives, and the special project funding. The resignation of Councilmember Miguel Martinez only highlights the importance of establishing a standard of reporting and vetting which is vital to ensuring that our taxpayer money is not misued.



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- Represent all people in the district, from Ozone Park to Ridgewood to the Rockaways

2 - Bring back resources and funding for my district to ensure adequate service

3 - Greater accountability and transparency in the City Council

4- Increase transportation opportunities across the district

5- Ensure that the budget is not balanced on the backs of the middle class