



**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.

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Candidate Name: Eric A. Ulrich

Age: 24

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

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Campaign Address: P.O. Box 170347, Ozone Park, NY 11417

Campaign Telephone Number: ( 347 )233-3748 Fax: ( 347)233-3816

Party Affiliation(s): Republican Campaign Manager Name: Liam McCabe

Website & Email: [WWW.ERICULRICH.COM](http://WWW.ERICULRICH.COM)  
[LIAM@ERICULRICH.COM](mailto:LIAM@ERICULRICH.COM)

Education: MA—St. John's University (matriculated status), BA- St. Francis College

Occupation/Employer (or years in currently held elected office): City Council Member (2009)

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement:

President, Our Neighbors Civic Association of Ozone Park, Inc. / New York Republican State Committee Member, 23<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District / Former Queens Community Board #9 Member / Knights of Columbus Council #12675 / Kiwanis Club of Howard Beach / Jamaica Rotary.

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.

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### 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?   | <b>Support</b> | 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?  | <b>Support</b> | 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?   | <b>Support</b> | 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? | <b>Support</b> | 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?  | <b>Support</b> | Oppose |

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### 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? | <b>Support</b> | 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 | <b>Oppose</b> |
|---|---------|---------------|

New York City residents voted twice - in 1993 and 1996 - to restrict local elected officials to just two terms in office. Term limits are a guard against abuse of power by well-entrenched incumbents. The City Council's vote to overturn term limits was an abhorrent procedure. I fully support term limits for every elected official. I believe they make elected officials more responsive to the needs of the people they represent.

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

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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?

1. Reforming the re-districting process to determine legislative boundaries.
2. Reform and consolidate the State's judicial selection process.
3. Model the State Campaign Finance system after the NYC Campaign Finance Board

- 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?

Yes, but they would have to be decided on a case by case basis

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?

First, greater oversight over the MTA is needed to obtain a proper accounting of their finances.

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's Budget Negotiating Committee should be empowered to change the executive budget by way of line by line veto.

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?

Surplus revenue is also used to pay down previous debt and bond obligations. Stabilizing pension and healthcare costs is also important to maintain fiscal solvency.

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.

New Yorkers already suffer one of the highest tax burdens in the country. I am not in favor of raising taxes due to this fact, but also because of the disproportionate amount of tax revenue the city receives in return from the state.

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?

The need to diversify New York's ailing economy is apparent. By introducing more "Green" technologies and services, we will be able to better position ourselves for the job market of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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?

Empowering the Community Education Council's to help shape policy making decisions would greatly increase the role that parents play in the education system.

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 support the abolishment of the two-party system of governance and operation at the New York City Board of Elections. The Board of Elections is the last vestige of the patronage

system in New York City. New Yorkers deserve professional management of the BOE.

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 support laws that would mandate full disclosure of all budget related issues and their relation to council members and their families.





## CANDIDATE ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Citizens Union is adding a new element to its evaluation of incumbents running for re-election. 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 position and what progress have you made to keep those promises, and why and why not have you met them?
- b. What are your top five campaign promises you are making to the voters during this campaign for this position?

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

### **TOP FIVE CAMPAIGN PROMISES FROM 2005 AND ACTION ON THEM**

1. Bring integrity to the city council, by putting people first, not politics.
2. Serve as a full-time council member.
3. Make myself accessible to organizations in my community.
4. Ensure that basic city services are provided for my constituency.
5. Bring a breath of fresh air to City Hall.

### **TOP FIVE 2009 CAMPAIGN PROMISES**

1. Continue serving as a full-time council member.
2. Make myself accessible to organizations and civics in my district.
3. Enhancing and expanding basic city services for my constituents

4. Fight for more school funding to alleviate overcrowding in the classrooms.

5. Improve access to public transportation in my district.