

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: Janine Materna Age: 26

Office to Which You Seek (Re) Election: Council District #: 51

Campaign Address: 155 Johanna Lane, Staten Island, NY 10309

Campaign Telephone Number: (718) 408-1420 Fax: (718) 317-7440

Party Affiliation(s): D Campaign Manager Name: Jodi Materna

Website & Email: Janine.Materna.ForCityCouncil.com

Education: Columbia College of Columbia University

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

Consultant / Deloitte Consulting LLP

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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: Janine Materna Date: 9/28/09

## 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                          | <input type="checkbox"/> 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?  | <input type="checkbox"/> 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?   | <input type="checkbox"/> 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> 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                          | <input type="checkbox"/> 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> Support | Oppose |
|---|----------------------------------|--------|

7. What is your position on allowing campaign financing for ballot proposals?

Support

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?

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

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

*Please see attached.*

---

**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

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?

Please see attached.

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?

Please see attached.

- 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?

Please see attached.

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?

Please see attached.

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

Please see attached.

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?

Please see attached.

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.

Please see attached.

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?

Please see attached.

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?

Please see attached.

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?

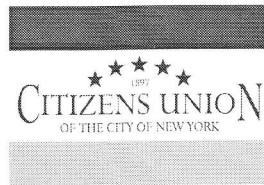
Please see attached.

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?

Please see attached.







## 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. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. *Please see attached.*
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Citizens Union – Candidate Accountability Questionnaire**  
**Janine Materna**  
**Candidate, City Council – 51<sup>st</sup> District**

---

14. When Mayor Michael Bloomberg and the City Council extended the term limits to three consecutive terms I was disgusted and disappointed in our elected officials. The proud voters of New York voted not once, but twice for term limits and their voices should have reigned supreme. Instead, our elected officials violated the trust of the people. Such a gross violation cannot be allowed to occur again, and if the council brings any measure to the floor to overturn the will of the people I will speak out loudly and clearly on the side of the people.
18. Clearly, we must address our budget crisis so that we do not enter into a situation where the city must default on their obligations and take drastic cuts across the board. That would be a tragic situation with tremendous repercussions for all New Yorkers. However, we cannot put this burden solely on the backs of our public employees, who are some of the lowest paid, and hardest working members of our workforce. We must look at wasteful spending across the board, including private contractors, among other options to find ways to eliminate waste and bring about a more balanced, and responsible budget. Options like a multi-tiered system should be considered but, only as a last resort.
19. A.
- Budgetary Process – a Sunlight clause should ensure that every citizen can access and understand the budget process and should clearly lay out where money gets allocated.
- Legislative Committee System – should more closely mimic that of the U.S. Congress so that individual members can have more autonomy and more legislation has a chance to reach the floor for a full vote.
- Ethics – there should be an independent panel that more closely reviews the campaign finance filings and ethical complaints about members in a way that is fair and open and assures that people of New York Stat that their government is being held accountable.
- B. Yes, New York City has certain issues which are unique to the municipality and they should be allowed to govern independently on them. These include housing, transportation and taxation.
20. I would demand that funding should be sought from a wider pool of sources, including people who live outside of New York City yet use our transportation system. We must assure that the revenue and resources are spread fairly and evenly through the City, and not just in Manhattan. Staten Island, especially the South shore is in desperate need of greater public transportation options, and instead we have only been subjected to increasingly higher bridge tolls. This must stop and it will be one of the most important fights I will wage as a councilmember.

**Citizens Union – Candidate Accountability Questionnaire**

**Janine Materna**

**Candidate, City Council – 51<sup>st</sup> District**

---

21. City Council members were elected by their constituents to represent their neighborhoods and therefore have a much greater understanding of what their constituents need, much more so than the Mayor. It is therefore common sense that the City Council should have a greater say in the budget process, and it is inexcusable that they do not already.
22. I believe the decision to not use the surplus tax revenue as it has been used in the past was made due to the current financial crisis sweeping the globe. Normally, I would support this practice so long as it continues to contribute to cost savings and the fiscal health of our city.
23. Taxes are out of control, and Staten Island is hit even harder by an absurd amount of tolls. While we cannot afford to cut any vital services to our residents, we continue to pay more in taxes and get poorer and poorer quality in government services. Someone needs to line by line and cut government waste, increase accountability and audit our city agencies to find out where our tax dollars are going. I'll be that person. We also must bring a greater level of transparency to how our tax dollars are being spent, and make sure that city resources are allocate equally to all parts of the city, through a variety of means including sunlight laws.
24. If we have learned anything from the financial crisis is that we cannot rely on Wall Street. I endorse any attempts to diversify our local economy. We have been handed a once in a lifetime opportunity with the federal stimulus money to transform our economy from one reliant solely on Wall Street to one that has numerous sources of revue to guarantee us a safe, viable economic future. I would personally encourage tax credits, subsidies, and rebates to be put into effect so we can draw a variety of businesses that have been in self-imposed exile due to the high costs of operating in the city, namely the movie industry. Small businesses are becoming relics of the past, and that will not happen on my watch. We'll cut the red tape, encourage entrepreneurship put a greater emphasis on solid jobs, like "green jobs," and with all these initiatives we will have a solid tax base.
25. I am the proud product of the public school system. Public schools provided me with the opportunities I needed to excel in my academic career and prepared me for the rigorous life of a financial consultant for Fortune 500 companies. My campaign has taken me across the district and I have learned of the trials and tribulations parents and students must endure to go have a successful academic, personal and business career. Most of all I have learned of the plight of special needs children. Their struggle has become my struggle and I intend to carry their voices to City Hall.

As councilwoman I will advocate for greater parental involvement, as well as a push for a more comprehensive well rounded education; including fully funded music and arts programs. We cannot focus solely on tests, we must realize that there is life beyond high school and our children need to be prepared to face the increasingly smaller and more competitive work place.

**Citizens Union – Candidate Accountability Questionnaire**

**Janine Materna**

**Candidate, City Council – 51<sup>st</sup> District**

---

26. The Board of Elections should be subject to the same oversight and review as any other city agency, including annual reporting in the mayor's management report as well as a greater level of transparency. No one should be denied the opportunity to vote or to run for office because they cannot navigate their way through the Board of Elections bureaucracy.
27. There is absolutely no reason why this information is not already available online so that the process is transparent to all citizens of New York. The process needs to be reviewed, and streamlined so that there is a clear system by which these requests are reviewed and evaluated for conflicts of interest before any money is allocated.

Top Five 2009 Campaign Promises

1. Increase the funding for special needs programs for children, and become a one-stop resource center for the parents who need additional support for their special needs children.
2. Improving the road conditions on Staten Island and lower the number of pothole related car repairs.
3. Increase the ease and use and provide additional options for public transportation on the South Shore.
4. Lower property taxes.
5. Conduct a study on the environmental and health effects of Brookfield landfill on the surrounding community, including potential solutions for clean-up and remediation.