



2013 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CANDIDATES FOR CITY COUNCIL

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 residents 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.

If you seek our support, we would also need to schedule an interview with you as part of the evaluation process. We will not automatically schedule an interview with you if you return this questionnaire, as we prioritize competitive races and resources constrain us from evaluating all races. Please contact us if you wish to be interviewed. We thank you very much for your response.

Candidate Name: SAUNDRA THOMAS Age: 51

Campaign Address: 323 Sterling Place, Brooklyn, NY 11238

Campaign Telephone Number: (347-469-0059) Fax: ()

Party Affiliation(s): DEM Campaign Manager Name: PAULA WILSON

Website & Email: SaundraThomas2013.com / saundra@saundraThomas2013.com

Education: Rutgers University; MA - The New School

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

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement:

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? YES NO
(Please note: Citizens Union can only grant its support to candidates we have interviewed. If you would like to be interviewed, please follow up with Citizens Union staff, as resources constrain us from interviewing every candidate.)

Have you completed requisite campaign finance filings? YES NO

Signature of Candidate: Saundra Thomas Date: 7/17/13

COMMENTS FOR CITIZENS UNION QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1) I would support the elimination only under these conditions: if elections require that all candidates must participate in the campaign finance program or limit candidates' spending.
- 3) Creating transparency is essential as we determine the most effective ways to ensure accuracy on balloting.
- 5) I would need clarity about how the information would be transmitted. I do favor scanning of documents in part because it creates transparency.
- 8) I support all efforts in educating people on the voting process and providing them with as much information as possible to make educated, informed and democratic decisions in elections. Especially appreciate the efforts to receive them electronically because it is environmentally-friendly.
- 11) We must be vigilant in our oversight of the campaign finance law, but not all lobbyists are abusing their relationships and or taking advantage of the campaign finance laws
- 13b) I support in principal, but we need checks and balances and that often means making sure there are other voices participating in these decisions.
- 15) This takes away the freedom to vote in a fair and balanced way. If not the council members decisions are tied to the Speakers' preference.
- 20) If they are purely political...how will that benefit the people?
- 21) One question that must be taken into consideration is how will the newly created position of Inspector General work with the CCRB?
- 28) The community boards were established to receive input from the community. They should not be comprised of people who are making policy because of political interest. The public should know more about who is representing them. If elected I would establish a community process for making appointments. We need to make sure people are aware of the important role a community board plays in the community. I will bring this to light as a city council member.

FIVE CAMPAIGN PROMISES

1. As a city council member, my approach will be to have as much transparency as possible. For me it's about transparency and collaboration. I promise us that approach on all issues in my district.
2. I promise to have community councils with members who are knowledgeable about a particular issue and members who are impacted by the issue.
3. I promise to take a holistic approach to education. Forming an educational council, fighting for funding for out of school programs and training today's jobs for children and adults.
4. I promise to work with tenants and homeowners to assure that we can stay in our neighborhoods and not be pushed out. I will fight for people who want to live here to be able to stay here.
5. I will use my influence with state elected officials and develop strong partnerships with federal representatives to co-sponsor programs that ensure immigrants a path to citizenship. I will also provide strong constituency services for the immigrant members of my district.
6. Our district has fine healthcare institutions and we cannot afford to lose any of them. I will fight to keep and expand the services available for the people in our district. We must keep the same level of health services and that will not happen by reducing the number of people who work there.

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 eliminating party primaries and establishing a non-partisan election system in which all candidates and all voters participate in the first round and the top two candidates advance to the second round?	Support /Oppose
2. What is your position on instituting Instant Runoff Voting for all citywide offices and for all special elections for city offices? (Int. No. 1066)	Support/ Oppose
3. What is your position on creating a voluntary municipal poll worker program to supplement poll worker recruitment by district leaders? (Int. No. 721)	Support /Oppose
4. What is your position on requiring city agencies to report the number of applicants that they register to vote as required by current law (Int. No. 760)?	Support /Oppose
5. What is your position on transmitting electronically voter registration information collected by city agencies to the Board of Elections in the City of New York?	Support /Oppose
6. What is your position on requiring the Board of Elections to report performance metrics to the City Council that conform to the Mayor's Management Report? (Int. No. 778)	Support /Oppose
7. What is your position on modifying the City Charter to require that laws enacted by referendum only be changed through approval by the voters?	Support /Oppose
8. What is your position on expanding the Voter Guide published by the Campaign Finance Board to cover all races occurring in New York City, such as state and federal contests, and providing the opportunity for voters to receive the guide electronically rather than in print form? (Int. No. 769)	Support /Oppose

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

9. What is your position on eliminating matching funds for contributions bundled by lobbying organizations or lobbyists?	Support/Oppose
10. What is your position on banning placement agents from bundling contributions for any elected official who influences the selection of pension investors?	Support/Oppose
11. What is your position on prohibiting participants in the city's campaign finance program from using public matching funds to purchase strategic campaign consulting services from firms that also provide lobbying services?	Support/Oppose

CITY COUNCIL REFORM

12. What is your position on creating a bill drafting service independent of the Speaker's Office, similar to the New York State Legislature's bill drafting commission?	Support/Oppose
13. What is your position on the following proposals enabling Council committees to function more effectively and independently of the speaker :	
a. Should committee chairs have the ability to hire at least one committee staffer?	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
d. Should the number of overall committees be reduced so members can participate more meaningfully in fewer issues?	Support/Oppose
14. What is your position on greater disclosure of councilmembers' outside income?	Support/Oppose
15. What is your position on limiting stipends or "lulus" to only members holding majority or minority leadership positions?	Support/Oppose
16. When the Quadrennial Compensation Commission is reconvened, what is your position on requiring that any future increase in councilmember compensation only apply prospectively to the following term?	Support/Oppose

17. What is your position on ensuring a more equitable and needs-based distribution of discretionary funding?	Support/Oppose
18. What is your position on increasing transparency of discretionary funding by requiring the list of capital and expense funds and their sponsors be provided to councilmembers and the public three days in advance of any vote, and expanding the online searchable database of expense funds to include all capital fund recipients and applicants?	Support/Oppose

PUBLIC SAFETY AND OVERSIGHT OF POLICE MISCONDUCT

19. What is your position on reducing the frequency of stop, question and frisks by conducting stops more judiciously?	Support/Oppose
20. What is your position on establishing the Commission to Combat Police Corruption (CCPC) as a permanent commission in the City Charter while empowering the CCPC to issue subpoenas?	Support/Oppose
21. What is your position on enhancing the Civilian Complaint Review Board's (CCRB) authority to initiate an investigation into reported or known incidents of police misconduct without receipt of a formal complaint?	Support/Oppose
22. What is your position on granting the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) with the authority to prosecute officers found guilty of lying during CCRB investigations?	Support/Oppose
23. What is your position on reinstating the zero tolerance penalty for false official statements by public officers?	Support/Oppose

BUDGET REFORM

24. What is your position on establishing independent budgeting for: a. the borough presidents?	Support/Oppose
b. Conflicts of Interest Board?	Support/Oppose
c. the public advocate ?	Support/Oppose
d. community boards?	Support/Oppose
25. What is your position on making the budget process more transparent by clearly defining units of appropriation and limiting their size?	Support/Oppose

II. 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 2013 CAMPAIGN PROMISES

1. SEE SEPARATE FILE
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Please return to: Citizens Union, Local Candidates Committee
via fax to 212.227.0345 or via email to candidates@citizensunion.org
Call us at 212-227-0342 with any questions.

