



Candidate Questionnaire  
Local Candidates Committee  
NYS Legislative Elections 2018

Citizens Union appreciates your response to the following questionnaire related to policy issues facing New York State, and our interest in reforming state government. **Please return the questionnaire to us as soon as possible, and no later than July 1<sup>st</sup>.** Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union uses to evaluate candidates running for the New York State Legislature, and to issue our preference for the Primary and endorsement for the General Election. Please feel free to affix any additional information such as a résumé, campaign brochure, or issue statements.

If you seek our support, we will also need to schedule an interview with you as part of the evaluation process. **Please contact us if you wish to be interviewed.**

We plan to make responses to this questionnaire public on our website, printed voters directory, and other appropriate venues.

We thank you very much for your response.

---

**Biographical Information**

Candidate Name: Ari Espinal

Party Affiliation(s): Democratic Party

Age: 30

Education:

Office Sought/District: State Assembly District 39

Occupation/Employer: New York State Assembly

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: St. Francis College (2010)

*(Please feel free to affix any additional information such as a résumé, campaign brochure, or issue statements.)*

**Campaign Contact Information**

Campaign Manager Name: Meghan Tadio

Additional Staff Contact: Aaron Hecht

Address: 818 Woodward Ave Apt. 3L, Ridgewood NY 11385

Telephone: 585-734-6218

Website: www.ariespinal.com


Email: ariforassembly@gmail.com

Twitter: @aridia\_espinal

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ariforassembly/

If elected, which legislative conference will you join (e.g., Republican, Democrat, other)? Democrat

## I. AFFIRMATIONS

Have you completed required campaign finance filings?	YES / NO
Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee?	YES / NO
<i>(Please note: interviews are prerequisites for Citizens Union endorsements.)</i>	
Signature of Candidate: 	Date: 7/11/18

## II. CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

Please state whether you support or oppose the following reform measures, and feel free to may elaborate in the space provided at the end or on additional paper.

### 2018 PRIORITY ISSUES:

#### ETHICS

1. Limit outside compensation earned by state legislators and statewide officials to 25% of their salaries, while enacting a salary increase and eliminating stipends.	Support / Oppose
2. Reform the Joint Commission on Public Ethics to eliminate the ability of one party to veto an investigation and to increase disclosure of its decision-making.	Support / Oppose

#### ELECTIONS AND VOTING

3. Do you support or oppose the following changes to the state's current registration and voting system?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Early voting</li> <li>b. No-excuse absentee voting</li> <li>c. Election Day voter registration</li> <li>d. Re-enfranchisement of people on parole automatically <u>through legislation</u>, without requiring a Certificate of Good Conduct or Relief</li> <li>e. Automatic voter registration, unless the potential voter opts out</li> <li>f. Consolidated state and federal primaries</li> <li>g. Electronic poll books</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Support/Oppose</li> <li>b. Support/Oppose</li> <li>c. Support/Oppose</li> <li>d. Support/Oppose</li> <li>e. Support/Oppose</li> <li>f. Support/Oppose</li> <li>g. Support/Oppose</li> </ul>
4. Reform the special election process, utilizing a nonpartisan special election for state legislative seats and eliminate delays in filling vacancies.	Support / Oppose

#### CAMPAIGN FINANCE

5. Establish public financing of campaigns for state legislative and statewide offices using a method similar to New York City's Campaign Finance Law.	Support / Oppose
6. Close the LLC loophole to ensure that limited liability companies have the same contribution limits as corporations, rather than the higher limit for individuals.	Support / Oppose

7. Drastically reduce campaign contribution limits and reduce them even further from registered lobbyists and those who do business with the state.	Support / Oppose
---	------------------

**BUDGET PROCESS**

8. Require full disclosure of grants and contracts issued by the state, including the budget lines from which the spending is made and reporting on the results of each grant or contract over a certain amount.	Support / Oppose
--	------------------

9. Provide for adequate online disclosure and itemization of spending from elected officials' lump sum appropriations, including reporting on potential conflicts of interest and how the funds are spent.	Support / Oppose
--	------------------

**POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY**

10. Repeal Civil Rights Law, Sec. 50-a, which shields from public view the disciplinary records of police officers, correction officers, and firefighters.	Support / Oppose
--	------------------

**ELECTION ADMINISTRATION**

11. Restructure the state Board of Elections to abolish the strict two-party division of governance and operation and putting in place professional, nonpartisan administration. Restructure the state Board of Elections to abolish the strict two-party division of governance and operation and putting in place professional, nonpartisan administration.	Support / Oppose
---	------------------

12. Empower the attorney general to investigate and prosecute election law malfeasance and cases of public corruption.	Support / Oppose
--	------------------

**HOME RULE**

13. Make mayoral control of city schools permanent, with a governance system that provides for accountability, transparency, parent engagement, and democratic participation.	Support / Oppose
---	------------------

Please use the space provided or a separate sheet of paper to elaborate on your positions on the issues contained in the previous pages. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.



### III. CAMPAIGN PROMISES MADE TO VOTERS (PAST AND CURRENT)

In addition to evaluating stances on the issues above, Citizens Union also assesses incumbents on how well they kept the promises made to voters during the previous election.

As an elected official who is seeking re-election,

- what were the top five promises you made to your constituents when you ran for your current seat and what progress has been made in keeping those promises?
- what are the top five promises you are making to the voters during this campaign?

Please feel free to use additional paper if the space provided is not sufficient, and to affix additional information such as a résumé, campaign brochure, or issue statements. We thank you very much for your response.

#### THESE FIVE PROMISES/GOALS ARE THE SAME AS THE ONES IN MY SPECIAL ELECTION IN APRIL

#### TOP FIVE 2018 CAMPAIGN PROMISES OR GOALS

1. Reducing school overcrowding: Our schools in New York City are some of the most overcrowded in the entire nation, and here in Corona, Elmhurst and Jackson Heights we have some of the worst in the city. We cannot cram our children into these learning environments where they don't get the attention they deserve and require and where teachers have too many students to keep track of. I would support an increased funding of our public-school system to hire more high-quality educators and build extensions to our schools, so that we can replace trailers with classrooms.

2. Standing up for tenants and co-op owners: Here in New York City our rents keep on rising but hard working New Yorkers wages seem to be stagnant. I believe that by promoting MCI reform and property tax relief we can help tenants and co-op owners afford living in this city. The hard-working new Yorkers are what make this city run so smoothly and it's why we're the greatest city in the world. But, if people must be pushed out due to rents the city will suffer, we need to come up with realistic solutions to these issues and MCI reform and property tax relief is a perfect place to start.

3. Long-term MTA Solution: Our subway system is crumbling right before our eyes, we see it everyday a simple commute to work from Corona takes 2 hours due to signal malfunctions on multiple lines bringing the whole system to a standstill. Workers see wages taken from them and no one at the MTA is held accountable. I believe the only way to fix our transit system is by approving a robust MTA spending package that will focus on improving the signal system which seems to keep on breaking down. I believe installing congestion pricing on cars driving in certain areas in downtown Manhattan will help pay for this very much needed improvement while also help reducing congestion in the city.

4. Protecting Immigrant Rights: It's no secret that right now in America immigrant rights are under siege. We have a president who has described immigrants as animals, who separates immigrant families, and keeps hard working New Yorkers in fear of deportation and raids from ICE agents. As the daughter of immigrants, I cannot watch my community which is comprised of mainly first or second-generation immigrants be attacked by this administration. I will fight to keep New York City's status as a sanctuary city where law-abiding undocumented immigrants don't need to live in fear.

5. Protecting workers: My community is comprised of many hard working class families. A lot of these families and individuals work hard jobs, and many of them work in conditions and environments that can at times be dangerous but in a lot of cases and scenarios the employers aren't held accountable for these actions. I want to help change that by enacting protections for workers in the workplace, and creating penalties for those employers who skert these worker protections. I also believe that the state legislature should work on and pass better worker wage protections so that workers also can come home with a wage that they can live on.

#### IV. ETHICAL REPRESENTATION OF CONSTITUENTS

Citizens Union believes that all New Yorkers deserve to be represented by officials who work for the public interest and honor the public trust. With the corruption conviction of recent legislative leaders, we seek to endorse a candidate who will demonstrate that she/he will honor the full commitment of the oath of office, and always represent the public interest above all else.

Please tell us how you have and would continue to conduct the political affairs of this office in an upright manner, and maintain the public trust.

I am born and raised in this district, I've lived here my whole life and I've always wanted to improve my community in any way that I could. After graduating college I immediately started working for my community and my area. I've served soup kitchens, painted senior center homes, and worked as a staffer in the area. I love this community, I've served it my whole adult life and I would never do anything to betray the trust my constituents have in me. While in Albany I've served my community to the best of my ability, sponsoring legislation and passing resolutions that have real lasting effects on the people I serve. I only serve those people in my community, my decisions are only based on what they want from me, and I'm proud to have served them so far and can't wait to continue to serve them in the future. My office will be as transparent as possible, I will be available to help anyone in my district that needs it. If anyone in the area has a problem I want to be there to help them solve it, from simple things like potholes to the more intricate problems like MTA delays. I work for the people, and I can't wait to continue my work.