



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 1st. 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: Tony Avella

Party Affiliation(s): Democrat

Age: 66

Education: BA Hunter College Major Political Science

Office Sought/District: State Senate 11th District

Occupation/Employer: State Senator

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: Member of New York City Council

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

Campaign Contact Information

Campaign Manager Name: Daniel Levin

Additional Staff Contact:

Address:

Telephone: 917-375-9233

Fax:

Website:

Email:

Twitter:

Facebook:

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

I. AFFIRMATIONS

Have you completed required campaign finance filings?	YES
Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee?	YES
<i>(Please note: interviews are prerequisites for Citizens Union endorsements.)</i>	
Signature of Candidate: <i>Tony Avella</i>	Date: 6-16-18

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
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

ELECTIONS AND VOTING

3. Do you support or oppose the following changes to the state's current registration and voting system? a. Early voting b. No-excuse absentee voting c. Election Day voter registration d. Re-enfranchisement of people on parole automatically <u>through legislation</u> , without requiring a Certificate of Good Conduct or Relief e. Automatic voter registration, unless the potential voter opts out f. Consolidated state and federal primaries g. Electronic poll books	a. Support b. Support c. Not sure d. Support e. Need to amend f. Support g. Support
4. Reform the special election process, utilizing a nonpartisan special election for state legislative seats and eliminate delays in filling vacancies.	Support

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
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

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

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

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 with amendments
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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.

Have introduced legislation to accomplish many of the goals stated in the questionnaire.

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.

TOP FIVE CAMPAIGN PROMISES FROM LAST ELECTION AND ACTION ON THEM

1. **Ethics Reform.** Have introduced numerous bills in this regard. However, the Senate Majority has not allowed any of them to be put up for a vote.

2. **Improve the environment.** Again introduced numerous bills to address the environment and climate change; but the Majority has not allowed a single bill to come to the floor for a vote. Held hearing on Climate Change.

3. **Expand educational opportunities.** The two past State budgets have included additional monies for education, including provisions for free tuition at State colleges.

4. **Improve traffic safety.** Co-sponsor of Speed camera bill currently stalled in Albany. Continue to fight with the City to be more responsive to the need for additional traffic controls. Introduced legislation to allow for more community input in those decisions. Some limited success.

5. **Reform property tax.** My Legislation to reform tax code relating to co-ops and condos has passed the Senate for several years. Unfortunately, the Assembly has not brought the companion bill to the floor for a vote.

TOP FIVE 2018 CAMPAIGN PROMISES OR GOALS

1. Pass legislation to improve the environment, reform tax code, ethics and election reform.

2.

3.

4.

5.

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.

Have always supported good government reform both in the City Council and now in the Senate. Have always refused to accept

the lulu's, turning down tens of thousands of dollars because it is an anti-good government measure. I believe I have one of the best record and reputation in government.