

I. POLICY QUESTIONS

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

CITIZEN UNION ISSUES	
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?	Support / Oppose
3. What is your position on requiring city agencies to report the number of applicants that they register to vote as required by current law?	Support / Oppose
4. 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
5. What is your position on establishing independent budgeting for: a. the borough presidents? b. Conflicts of Interest Board? c. the public advocate? d. community boards?	Support / Oppose Support / Oppose Support / Oppose Support / Oppose
6. What is your position on granting the office of the Public Advocate the ability to appoint one member to the following boards: a. the Board of Standards and Appeals? b. the Franchise and Concessions Review Commission? c. the Conflicts of Interest Board?	Support / Oppose Support / Oppose Support / Oppose
7. What is your position on dissolving the Commission on Public Information and Communication and transferring its major duties to the office of the Public Advocate, giving greater responsibility for expanding public access to government data, information and reports?	Support / Oppose

8. In November, voters in New York will be asked whether they wish to hold a constitutional convention to amend the New York State Constitution. What is your position on holding such a convention?	Support / Oppose
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ISSUES OF CITYWIDE IMPORTANCE

9. If you support the constitutional convention, what actions, if any, will you take to ensure that it takes place? If you oppose the convention, what will you do to defeat it?

I am opposed to holding a State Constitutional Convention.

I understand the appeal of a Constitutional Convention, particularly as relates to creating meaningful, lasting ethics reform and fixing our backward electoral system, but I have deep concerns about the risks entailed and about how a convention would work in practice.

For one thing, our state constitution already enshrines critical labor and environmental rights, well beyond what is enjoyed by the federal constitution and those of other states. If the Constitution is reopened, we could see cherished protections such as pension rights for public employees and the “Bill of Rights for Labor,” which safeguards worker’s compensation and collective bargaining, tampered with or even eliminated entirely. Additionally, environmental protections, including the “Forever Wild” provisions, could be in jeopardy under a constitutional convention. The right to education and protections for the needy would be, perhaps, less at risk, but those too are fundamental rights that would be under potential threat.

While the possibility for the creation of additional positive rights, such as the enshrining of *Roe v. Wade* protections for reproductive rights, are possible, the opposition to a convention from groups dedicated to reproductive health shows that the risk may simply not be worth it. The same is true of LGBT rights organizations and immigrant advocacy groups, despite the possibility for substantive gains. All told, there is a great deal to lose, and numerous organizations supporting issues I care about who could see positive gains do not see the risk as worth it.

I agree that legislative ethics reform is absolutely necessary, but many delegates would be from the same ranks of legislators who have resisted reforms through the regular legislative process. I therefore have significant concerns about whether this process would achieve the intended results.

Although voting reform is desperately needed, it does not need to be done through a Constitutional Convention. Many voting reforms do not require changing the Constitution, and, when it comes to gerrymandering, bills on this subject have been passed by successive legislatures in recent years. The problem is not with the process, but with the results. We need district lines to be drawn independently, but we will have another opportunity to do the job right ahead of 2020, with or without a Convention.

Advocates for judicial reform make a compelling argument that those reforms can only be made through a Convention. Additionally, streamlining the Constitution and making it more accessible to the general public is an important goal that may require a Convention. However I do not believe these issues outweigh the risks entailed.

Beyond the potential substantive risks and gains at issue, there are serious questions surrounding the process. I have heard credible concerns that a Convention would pose an even greater risk for financial influence than the regular legislative process, which has itself been rife with corruption. Individuals who already hold elected office will have significant advantages over potential outside delegates. Those outsiders who may break through may, unfortunately, be over-reliant on corporate funding to overcome issues of name recognition. There are also serious questions around “double-dipping,” by seated legislators and judges.

I take this question seriously, and I understand that fair-minded progressives I respect deeply will come down on both sides. However, ultimately, I believe that the risks of a convention outweigh the potential rewards.

10. How would you use the office of the Public Advocate to impact public policy to serve the broad public interest?

Four years ago, I set out to distinguish the Public Advocate’s Office as a vehicle for economic and social justice for all New Yorkers. In my time in office, we have accomplished a great amount and impacted public policy to serve the broad public interest. From my groundbreaking legislation to ban questions about salary history in job interviews, bringing us one step closer to closing the wage gap; securing universal school lunch for every child in middle school, bringing a nutritious meal to over 10,000 children every day; to expanding the Worst Landlords List as a tool and resource for tenants and advocates. If given the opportunity to serve for another four years, I will continue working to ensure that every child has the opportunity for a better future, that every family has the chance to not just survive but thrive, and that every New Yorker has access to the possibilities our City has to offer.

11. What would be your most important legislative and non-legislative priorities as public advocate?

My legislative priorities include, creating a mission-based preservation trust to leverage the City’s annual tax lien sale to create and preserve more affordable housing, creating a database of vacant lots so we can build more affordable housing rather than letting landlords warehouse properties for decades, curbing mandatory arbitration through disclosure requirements and procurement power, creating a framework for a citywide plan that lays out the initiative areas and guidelines for local neighborhoods to follow in developing their local plans and determining the scope of specific projects, ensuring the smart expansion of childcare for our changing city, continuing to fight against the race and gender wage gaps, reforming the land use process by holding developers to their promises through tracking and strengthened community benefits agreements, among other goals.

My non-legislative priorities include promoting economic equality for all, reforming child and family welfare, and preserving and expanding affordable housing through litigation, oversight and policy reports. I also intend to make abundantly clear the Office's standing to bring suit on behalf of constituents. I will continue to serve as a voice for those New Yorkers who need it most, from disabled children on hot busses to families being forced out of their homes by unscrupulous landlords to kids in foster care being lost in the system. I will continue to fight to use the power of the purse to combat gun violence and anti-immigrant policies. I will also advance policies to create a shared economy that lifts up every New Yorker. Most of all, I will continue listening to the voices of my constituents and working to solve problems systemic and individual.

12. What do you consider to be the three most important oversight functions of the Public Advocate?

Ability to conduct performance audits and draw attention to overlooked issues through policy reports and use of the bully pulpit

Ability to introduce affirmative legislation

Ability to litigate

13. How best do you believe the office of the Public Advocate should be utilized? Do you believe the Public Advocate should address broad citywide issues or should be limited to oversight of specific issues?

As Public Advocate, I serve as a direct link between New Yorkers and their government, acting as a watchdog over City agencies, and ensuring that New Yorkers have access to quality services that they need. Vital issues impacting the public can range from specific issues to broad citywide issues. The office of the Public Advocate needs to advocate on broad and specific issues to be an effective watchdog and advocate for our city's residents. .

14. How would you publicize the Public Advocate's office and its role?

I believe that, during my time in office, I have done a great deal to publicize the office's work and unique role. My office creates substantive work product from, policy reports to law suits and amicus briefs to legislation, based on real problems, and make sure that the public is aware through our communications work and use of the bully pulpit. We are a nimble office that can react quickly to fast-moving developments. We have also affirmatively fought to clarify and codify the role of Public Advocate through litigation that has affirmed our standing and capacity to bring lawsuits. In countless speeches and testimonies I have explained the role of the public advocate as a watchdog and ombudsman. The role does not have many analogues, so the work will continue, but I will continue building public awareness of my office's work and its role.

15. 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?

The Public Advocate's report on Mayoral Control was created with input from hundreds of parents, community members, educators, and other stakeholders who attended a series of public forums in all five boroughs. The report makes sweeping recommendations on reforming mayoral control of New York City public schools. The reforms call for enhancing parental and community engagement, strengthening accountability, and improving the Department of Education's (DOE) finances.

My report recommends:

- Restructuring the PEP to eliminate the Mayor's deciding majority and increase parent and community engagement;
- Requiring all Chancellors to have education backgrounds by eliminating the educational waiver;
- Expanding the Division of Family and Community Engagement to address busing, Individual Education Plans, and safety issues;
- Improving the contracting process by requiring DOE procurement contracts to be approved by the City Comptroller;
- Requiring the DOE to be subject to Procurement Policy Board rules, allowing for greater transparency and accountability, and ultimately contributing to a more long-term cost saving strategy;
- Giving Community Education Councils (CEC) the approval power over co-locations, school closings, and siting of schools within their district;
- Establishing one additional school district in Staten Island to promote parent representation in the borough;
- Ensuring School Leadership Teams are able to address school-based budgets and ensure those budgets are aligned with a school's comprehensive educational plan, in accordance with state law;
- Enacting DOE policy changes to address the gap in existing capacity to support and oversee schools on language access, including providing superintendents and schools with necessary resources and funding for translation and interpretation services;
- Instructing the City to perform an audit to determine the rate of related service delivery for students with disabilities, segmented by district, disability, and Title I status.

16. What discrepancies, if any, do you see between services promised to New Yorkers and services rendered? For those listed please indicate your proposals for bringing policy closer to practice.

Helping the most vulnerable individuals and families in need is the foundation of our Constituent Services operations. Each month, thousands of New Yorkers call or visit the Public Advocate's Office where they receive help by cutting through red tape, identifying resources, getting

questions answered, and obtaining general support. The Public Advocate's Constituent Services team has helped families with heat and hot water complaints, stopped unfair evictions, and investigated and reported wrong-doing that results in sub-par public services. With strong outreach efforts and intake, the office now opens an average of 668 cases per month.

My annual Progress Report is available on the Public Advocate's home page and details my work to ensure that policies are followed so that New Yorkers get the services they need. Some examples of my proposals include improving ACCESS NYC so that residents can apply online for the 30+ benefits that are in the system, rather than only the three that are currently available for online application.

17. What would you propose to further enhance transparency of city government? How would you utilize the responsibilities of the Public Advocate with regard to access to public information in monitoring implementation of the city's Open Data Law?

The city's Open Data law is an important tool for the public to gain information on the work of government and to be able to hold it accountable. My office regularly accesses the Open Data information as a part of our government monitoring work. While the data available is rich in content and breadth, New York City should provide more trainings and webinars to the public on the available data, how to filter the data, etc.

In addition, as Chair of the Commission on Public Information and Communication, we are working with the Mayor to make government more accessible by helping agencies comport with City's webcasting law. We also seek to create a central webcasting repository of City proceedings.

18. How would you leverage the office of Public Advocate to address any of the following issues, if not discussed in answering previous questions:

a. Affordable Housing

Millions of New Yorkers live in rent regulated apartments, and too many are at risk of losing their homes as the stock of affordable homes continues to dwindle. I have championed the cause of preserving affordable units, which starts by ensuring landlords are abiding by the law by issuing the annual Worst Landlords list. I also ensure that affordable housing is done right by investigating and issuing policy reports on the City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development's (HPD) Neighborhood Homes Program and HPD's Tenant Selection Criteria.

I support Mayor de Blasio's program to build and preserve 200,000 units of affordable housing. I also co-sponsored legislation to provide free legal assistance for tenants being threatened with eviction in order to help save their housing.

I am concerned about the thousands of affordable housing units that will be coming out of low-income status over the next several years and am identifying these units so that community housing groups can reach out to tenants to inform them of their units' status and to educate them on the housing laws and their tenant rights.

New York State's rent control and rent stabilization laws must be maintained and improved so that lower-income and working families can stay in their homes and also keep rent affordable so that they are able to pay bills and have a quality standard of living.

I also favor options for permanent affordable housing such as through Community Land Trusts like the Cooper Square Mutual Housing Association. The City should explore this option for its disposition of city-owned lands and properties, as well as for programs such as the Tenant Interim Lease (TIL) buildings and Housing Development Fund Corporation buildings.

b. Public Safety

I will continue to use every power at my disposal to fight against gun violence, by working to divest from gun dealers, advocating the use the City's procurement power to push gun manufacturers to only sell to reputable sellers, using litigation to stop the feeders of the iron pipeline, bring attention to hospital-intervention and public health prevention models, and by pushing for state legislation on microstamping, a bullet tax, safe storage, and gun violence research.

I will continue to advocate for expanded use of body-worn cameras by police and better rules for implementation.

I will also fight for safer housing conditions, which is a public safety crisis that is treated as a different category.

c. Public Transportation

I will continue to fight for equal access to public transportation for the disabled. I will continue to pressure the MTA to improve Access-A-Ride services, and to increase accessibility in subway stations by maintaining elevators and escalators and creating ADA accessible stations. I am also a supporter of the Fair Fares campaign, which proposes to create a program for reduced-fare Metrocards for low-income New Yorkers, and I pushed to have a program included in this year's budget.

d. Health and Environment

Health: I am very concerned about the potential impact of the repeal and replacement of the Affordable Care Act which has the potential to affect millions of Americans and cause 23 million fewer people to be insured. The proposed changes could have devastating consequences on the lives of New York City residents and on the city's budget. Over a million New Yorkers could lose significant parts of their health coverage. New York State's Essential Plan, which provides affordable, comprehensive coverage to particularly vulnerable New Yorkers, would be cut along with funding for Medicaid. I am using the power of my office to bring forth the voices of patients, consumers, providers and advocates by holding an official hearing on the proposals and submitting the testimony to Congressional leaders and the New York City delegation.

My office has also investigated and issued policy reports with recommendations on important health issues such as Zika and access to 3D breast cancer mammograms.

A number of recent reports Manatt Report, the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Commission, and the Northwell Report reveal information that is not inconsistent with national data. Inpatient admission durations declined from 179,043,949 days in 2008 to 169,860,722 in 2012. Meanwhile, outpatient visits grew from 624 million in 2008 to 675 million in 2012. New York City has experienced similar trends. In the last fourteen years, eighteen hospitals in New York City have closed. New York H + H will a deficit of nearly \$1.6 billion this year. The risk of closure is growing for a number of reasons including the culmination of new technologies, better prescription medications, improved case management, and reforms to inpatient reimbursement.

Rather than abandoning communities by drastically closing hospitals, firing hundreds if not thousands of employees, we must build the necessary outpatient care and train the doctors, nurses, and staff to coordinate care in an outpatient setting. This will take time and we must commit the resources necessary to create this bridge period, which allows for the training for staff to transition and physically build the facilities necessary.

Consequently, the City and State must provide robust funding to ensure New Yorkers, especially our most vulnerable communities served by H + H receive the care they need. Oftentimes, these are individuals with the least means. We must also identify other un/under-utilized revenue streams. There are promising proposals that include the construction of outpatient/ambulatory care in properties that also include housing for seniors, retail and other uses. Elder-care will become one of the largest costs in the coming decade, in particular dual-eligibles. In addition, we have the opportunity to maximize utility through renewable energy generation on larger real estate assets and even reducing water costs.

Environment:

I intend to use Office of the Public Advocate to protect the public from environmental hazards, to fight for clean water and air, and to address climate change. I have patrolled the waters of Flushing Bay and Creek with Riverkeeper and support their efforts to push the city and state to more aggressively mitigate against the effects of combined sewer overflows. I want to ensure that the city moves quickly to clean up Superfund sites at the Gowanus canal and Newtown Creek. I support measures that would grow the city's green economy, training workers for energy retrofits and renewable energy.

e. Economic Development

I believe the City's economic development funds, resources and tax credits should support equitable economic development where jobs with family-sustaining wages are created and disadvantaged and neighborhood residents can access the jobs, and get the job readiness and vocational training needed to be successful.

f. Education

I will continue to use the office of the public advocate to fight for an equitable and diverse school system. As Public Advocate I have and will continue to ensure that students with disabilities are provided with their legally mandated services. The office will pursue an active role to ensure that parents are part of the decision making process in which schools include families as partners in school organizations, advisory panels, and similar committees. This includes community collaboration, to build strong working relationships among parents, teachers and schools, in support of students.

Public education is a pillar of democracy and my office continues to be in the forefront to ensure that students and families are heard and their needs are met. In August 2015, I filed a lawsuit against the City's Department of Education (DOE) for failing to adequately provide air conditioning on school buses transporting children with disabilities. The complaint, filed jointly with two children who attend schools for children with special needs, cites dangerous temperatures as high as 91 degrees recorded on City school buses, which were uncovered during an investigation by the Public Advocate's Office. I took decisive action when parents of children with disabilities came to my office alleging that their children were being abused at a for-profit school called Achievement First. I met with these parents and their children and heard harrowing stories of maltreatment of students as young as five. Children were being forced to wear weighted lead vests for hours at a time, were being locked in dark, windowless rooms during timeout, and were sent to lower grade classrooms as a form of punishment.

My office also called for the DOE to create a Chief Diversity Officer whose role will help define diversity for our public schools; presently the definition is narrow and defined by race. This definition must be expanded to include: economic status, homelessness, children with disabilities, English language learners, and LGBTQ youth. This position would be charged with evaluating present policies and practices such as enrollment, class size, co-locations and how these policies and practices have contributed to school segregation. The Chief Diversity Officer would provide a corrective action plan to address the systemic issues of segregation and would be the point person responsible for implementing such plan.

II. 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, and
- what are the top five promises you are making to 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

Fighting for children and Families (Barbara)

The Public Advocate's office released a comprehensive policy report revealing that, on average, a family in New York City pays \$16,250 annually for childcare, and this amount is increasing by almost \$1,612 each year. Without access to subsidized care, a family of three living at the poverty line in New York City would have to spend 58% of their total yearly income on infant care. I called for expanding the New York City Child Care Tax Credit to include families making up to \$65,000 annually. Currently, the income cap is \$30,000. This will increase eligibility for 34,500 more children and ease the financial burden for nearly 50,000 working families.

Additionally, I pushed to consolidate how childcare services are administered to expand accountability and improve results. 2015 was also the year that my office focused attention on improving childcare at CUNY campuses. The Public Advocate's Office released a policy report recommending that the City increase its contribution to the CUNY budget for childcare from \$500,000 to \$1.53 million to ensure that no CUNY student is forced to choose between caring for their child and receiving the education they need to improve their life. With rising rents citywide and the City's focus on implementing Universal Pre-Kindergarten, I worked to restore attention to challenges confronting day care centers, particularly with respect to the threat posed by rising rents for day care providers. Many childcare centers located in gentrifying areas that serve low income children face greater challenges because of rising rents in their neighborhoods. The City has failed to properly plan for this problem at sites that it leases on behalf of day care providers. One such site was in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, where a center providing care for hundreds of families was set to shut down after serving the community for over 40 years.

After months of standing with members of the community and negotiating with the administration, I was able to renegotiate the terms of the lease and save the day care center. Later in the year, my office's child care policy report recommended that New York City directly negotiate long-term leases with landlords to ensure that providers have a stable space from which to operate. This direct negotiation is especially crucial in neighborhoods where gentrification can make it difficult for small centers to prevail in negotiations with landlord

Bringing parents voices back into our school system

Since taking office in 2014, New York City Public Advocate Letitia James has championed issues that face the City's public schools, families, and students. Public Advocate James, has committed to ensuring that the City provides an equal and quality education for all public school students. The Public Advocate's Office is charged with appointing seven representatives to the Citywide Education Councils (CECs). The CECs are education policy advisory bodies charged with promoting student achievement, reviewing and evaluating districts' educational programs,

and providing input to the New York City Schools Chancellor and the Panel for Education Policy (PEP).

The Public Advocate has been a strong presence in supporting and strengthening our public school system. Through numerous actions, by the Public Advocate, the voices of parents are being heard in our school's system. Since the establishment of mayoral control, School Leadership Team (SLT) meetings have been closed to the public, robbing parents and community members of an opportunity to engage with school governance. The SLT's play an essential role in the decision-making process for each of the 1,800 NYC public schools. In January 2015, PA, along with parent advocacy group Class Size Matters, joined a lawsuit against DOE to open School Leadership Team (SLT) meetings to the public. The PA agreed that DOE was breaking the Open Meetings Law, which states that SLT meetings must be open to the public. In April 2015 a Manhattan Supreme Court judge ruled in favor of PA James and her petitioners. The Public Advocate also held a five borough forum on Mayoral Control hearing from the parents, the community and CEC members hearing feedback on how our present system can be more responsive to students and their families. A report was issued sharing recommendations from that forum.

Taking on gun violence

I will continue using every tool at the offices disposal to fight the scourge of gun violence. I have pushed NYCERS to divest from gun retailers and manufacturers, filed a brief in a lawsuit against WalMart for selling semi-automatic weapons, called on the SEC to investigate gun manufacturers for failing to disclose risks to shareholders, and taken on the banks that fund these merchants of death.

Additionally, the New York City Council passed my resolution calling on the federal government to close the gun show loophole, and I have pushed for the repeal of the Tiahart Amendments (which prevent the sharing of gun trace data and cut off funding for gun violence research) and the Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (which shields gun makers and dealers from legal consequences). On the state level, I have fought for microstamping, a bullet tax, safe storage laws, and state-based gun violence research. I have also pushed the NYPD to release gun trace data, so we will have a better idea where the guns being used on our streets come from.

I also believe that it is imperative that the City address the root causes of gun violence (physical and emotional trauma experienced at an early age; unemployment, lack of parental support, self-esteem, barrier to culturally appropriate mental health supports) which is why I have fought for more funding for hospital-based intervention and CURE Violence organizations, which treat gun violence as a public health issue and utilize credible messenger interventions.

Economic fairness

Since I have been in public office, I have been a strong voice for economic fairness in this City. I have stood on the side of workers against corporations and tenants against landlords and pushed a vision of shared prosperity. One of my proudest achievements of my time as Public Advocate is passing legislation to ban employers from asking prospective employees about salary history. This measure is so important because when employers rely on past salaries they

perpetuate the vicious cycle of pay inequality. By forcing companies to rely on an individual's qualifications, rather than past pay stubs, when setting salary, we can help disrupt that vicious cycle.

I have also taken on wage theft, pushed for employee owned businesses, passed legislation to make it easier for MWBEs to access City Contracts, empowered communities to hold the City to their promises during rezonings and stood up for workers whose employers refused to bargain in good faith. I have taken on the privatization of government services and taken action against unfair mandatory arbitration clauses.

I will continue to fight to make our City a place where the ladder of opportunity is extended to all.

Standing up for tenants

I have championed the rights of tenants across the city. I identified landlord abuses and have published the annual Worst Landlords list to shine a spotlight on the one hundred worst landlords ranked according to the number of violations issued to their buildings.

I have investigated and published policy reports with recommendations to help tenants access and maintain their housing, such as my work in advocating for tenants in the Tenant Interim Lease program and the Housing Development Finance Corporation buildings, and to make the HPD housing lottery process fairer

. I co-sponsored legislation to provide housing attorneys to tenants in Housing Court.

III. 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 public trust. With the corruption conviction of recent state 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 will 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 restore the public trust in your district.

I have always put the public's interest above any other. If you look at my track record, I believe you will see that I take literally the role of the Public Advocate: being a voice for the voiceless. When I take on a challenge, or step into a fight, I always take the side of the disenfranchised against the powerful. I also take seriously all ethics rules and laws and have rigorous legal and ethics checks in place in my office. I believe my record in this regard speaks for itself.