



Candidate Questionnaire
 Local Candidates Committee
 New York City Council Elections 2017

Citizens Union appreciates your response to the following questionnaire related to policy issues facing New York City and our interest in reforming city and state government. **Please return the questionnaire to us as soon as possible, and no later than June 28th.** Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union uses to evaluate candidates running for the New York City Council, 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: Rebecca Harary

Party Affiliation(s): Republican

Age: 54

Education: Masters Degree from Columbia University in Nonprofit and Business Management

Office Sought (including district): New York City Council District 4

Occupation/Employer: N/A

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: Most recently: ran for NYS Assembly 73rd District in 2016, and am the Founder of 4 different nonprofit organizations, for which I am a Board Member of each one. NYPD Liaison since 2011.

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

Campaign Contact Information

Campaign Manager Name: Michael K. Zumbuskas

Additional Staff Contact: Daniel Slavin – 347-607-8596

Address: 265 East 66th Street, Apt. 17C

Telephone: 917-689-7889 (Mike Z.) or 917-364-2693 (Rebecca H)

Fax: N/A

Website: <https://www.teamharary.com/>

Email: RebeccaHarary@TeamHarary.com

Twitter: @TeamHarary

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/TeamHararyforNYCCouncil/

Affirmations

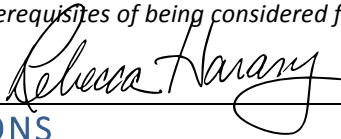
Have you completed required campaign finance filings?

YES

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? YES

(Please note: interviews are prerequisites of being considered for Citizens Union endorsements.)

Signature of Candidate:



Date: 6-28-17

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.

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
2. What is your position on instituting Instant Runoff Voting for all citywide offices and for all special elections for city offices?	Support
3. What is your position on creating a voluntary municipal poll worker program to supplement poll worker recruitment by district leaders?	Support
4. 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?	Support
5. 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 with exception

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

6. 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
7. What is your position on increasing the Campaign Finance Board's public matching grants from a partial match of 55% to a full match of funds raised (Int. 1130-A)?	Oppose

CITY COUNCIL REFORM

8. How do you feel the reformed bill drafting process is going under the enacted 2014 Council Rules Reforms and do you think we need a more independent process similar to New York State Legislature's bill drafting commission?

I believe that anything which makes our City Council members more independent is an important goal. Too often in our legislative bodies, the leadership has a stranglehold - not only on legislation, but also sometimes on how individuals must respond so as not to embarrass or cross their leadership. If they do not follow the Speaker's talking points, they take the risk of having their discretionary funding cut, and any other punitive measures the Speaker feels fit to enforce. An independent bill drafting committee will certainly help, but I fear it will not go far enough. With 51 City Council members all trying to write their own legislation, that committee could quickly be overwhelmed. Also, a strong and independent minded person must chair this committee. Otherwise, the Speaker and other leadership might still be able

to stall an individual Council Member’s legislation. There would need to be a safeguard in place so this will not happen. Additionally, Council Members should be encouraged to work together when they are writing similar legislation. Another issue would be the process of getting Council Members’ bills to the floor for a vote. I believe the proper method for City Council and the rules they enact would include a discharge process that is simple and easily attainable if the Speaker does not want particular legislation to see the light of day. This will encourage our Council Members to be more independent if they know the legislation they are writing will be given a fair chance.

9. 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
b. Should committee hearings and votes be scheduled at the direction of the chairs? (See below)	Support & Oppose
c. Should committees be able to issue subpoenas by a vote of their members?	Support
d. Now that committee chair stipends have been eliminated what is your position on reducing the overall number of committees so members can participate more meaningfully in fewer issues?	Support
10. What is your position on greater disclosure of councilmembers’ outside income?	Support
11. 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
12. What is your position on ensuring a more equitable and needs-based distribution of discretionary funding?	Support
13. 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? (Should be 2 weeks)	Support
14. What is your position on extending term limits from two four-year terms to three four-year terms?	Oppose
15. What is your position on making all actions designed to influence any City Council outcome, including the choice of Speaker, reportable as a lobbying expense?	Support with exceptions

PUBLIC SAFETY AND OVERSIGHT OF POLICE MISCONDUCT

16. 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
17. 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	Oppose

receipt of a formal complaint?	
18. 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?	Oppose
19. What is your position on reinstating the zero tolerance penalty for false official statements by public officers?	Support
20. What is your position on requiring the Police Commissioner to explain divergence from NYPD trial judge and CCRB disciplinary recommendations and to make the explanation public?	Support
21. What is your position on requiring the NYPD to publish a regular report of use of force incidents with data disaggregated by race?	Oppose
22. What is your position on requiring the NYPD to publish a regular report of use of force incidents with data disaggregated by race? (NOTE: THIS IS A DUPLICATE QUESTION TO #21)	Oppose

BUDGET REFORM

23. What is your position on establishing independent budgeting for:	
a. the borough presidents?	Support
b. Conflicts of Interest Board?	Support
c. the public advocate?	Support
d. community boards?	Support
24. What is your position on making the budget process more transparent by clearly defining and limiting units of appropriation?	Support
25. What is your position on release of revenue projections (other than property taxes) prior to Council hearings on the Executive budget?	Support

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY BOARD REFORM

26. What is your position on designating urban planners for use by community boards and requiring borough president's report to the Council the manner in which they advertise and make community board appointments?	Oppose with exception
27. What is your position on establishing a formal standardized and transparent process for community board appointments including written applications, interviews of candidates, and filling vacancies within 30 days?	Support

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

28. 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
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29. 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?

As a supporter of the constitutional convention, I will ensure that in my campaign materials and in my speeches I will mention the state constitutional convention and how important it is that voters vote yes on this issue. New York State government at all levels is dysfunctional. Our Forefathers understood that there was a danger of government growing too large and too powerful. That is why they wrote into the New York State Constitution that every 20 years we, the People, have the ability to call a state constitutional convention to right some of the wrongs and reduce some of the power that has been co-opted by our elected officials. I will explain in my speeches that this is the only way we can realize many initiatives and adopt a referendum in term limits for state officials. I will work to quell any fear of the unknown. We can, and we will elect smart citizens to go to Albany and enact the proper changes to our government.

30. Last year, Citizens Union helped craft and push for the enactment of a law that placed political contribution limits and disclosure requirements on nonprofits that are formed by, or affiliated with, elected officials, which helped prevent some significant features of an emerging “pay-to-play” culture in New York City. Do you have any other ideas to further limit such a culture and create a better environment where contributions, either personal or political do not unduly influence the actions of elected officials?

Yes. I would require all nonprofits that receive government money to spend at least 70% of all funds to satisfy their mission. I would also eliminate the ability of any elected official to have a paid position in any nonprofit. If the spouse or any other family member is an executive at a nonprofit, he or she will have to submit a conflict of interest notification, just as elected officials do now.

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.

5. There may be instances when an emergency referendum needs to be enacted. This might include acts of terrorism, a sudden financial crash, etc. In these cases, there may not be enough time to wait for a vote by the citizens of NYC.

9. (B) Yes the chair must have that power for day-to-day operations, however there should be a process in which the committee members can override the chair and call a vote or schedule a hearing on any current issue.

17. The reason why I oppose CCRB being able to initiate investigations on their own is because there is already a schism between our police force and our citizens, which needs to be repaired. However, if the CCRB finds an incident that is egregious, it should bring it to the attention of the locally elected official, the police force, or the district attorneys and allow it to take the regular, legal course of action.

18. The CCRB is not a prosecutorial arm of our government. Therefore, our District Attorneys, the State Attorney General and other federal/local prosecutors are the proper authorities to handle these situations. However, lying to the CCRB should be treated as falsifying government information, and should be reported to the proper authorities.

26. I would oppose urban planners that are employed by NYC. The community boards must be independent bodies and should not be advised by an urban planner that was hired NYC. They must find their own, independent experts.

However, some funding should be added in order for community boards to hire their own, independent urban planners.

II. CAMPAIGN PROMISES MADE TO VOTERS

As a candidate who presently does not hold elected office, what are 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.

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 2017 CAMPAIGN PROMISES OR GOALS

1. Often referred to as “Quality of Life” issues, I prefer to refer to these issues as a consideration of our “Level of Health and Well-Being.” Urinating on the streets, the Marine Transfer Station, lead in the water at many public schools and affordable housing buildings, more garbage than ever on our streets and sidewalks, traffic congestion caused by double parked trucks and bike and turning lanes – these are all situations that release contaminants into the air and cause life endangerment. I promise to fight for New Yorkers and make positive changes in these areas.
2. Homelessness – Over 60,000 homeless people are flooding our streets and shelters. The answer is NOT to add more shelters. Rather, let’s subsidize vocational schools and help our able-bodied homeless help themselves. We should help as many New Yorkers as possible to contribute to our society, which will help to stop the billions of dollars needed now to continue supporting our homeless. A large portion of homeless people can and should be working. With proper vocational training, we CAN get our homeless off the streets, out of shelters, and into real jobs.
3. Education – I am a strong advocate for freedom of choice for education. I believe the cap should be lifted on the number of charter schools allowed in NYC. I come from a family teachers, and I know the compassion they feel for their students. Yet, they are frustrated because they need more money for programming and supplies. Oftentimes it comes from their own pockets in order for their students to receive the best education. I believe a better look at how the budget is allocated is in order. I also do not believe in Mayoral control of schools. There should be a NYC Chancellor of Education who will report to the Mayor, but not necessarily agree with him on every issue.
4. Small businesses closing all over NYC – I believe the Commercial Rent Tax should be repealed completely. There is simply no reason for it whatsoever. I am an advocate for the Small Business Job Survival Act. Our “Mom & Pop” businesses need our support by driving out the overabundance of formulary businesses on every block. Too many of our streets in the neighborhood are dark at night, because businesses cannot survive and are closing. This brings

crime, more homelessness, and a decrease in the value of property in the area. I will work to keep our neighborhood open, active, beautiful, and secure by ensuring our small businesses every opportunity to continue thriving, which will, in turn, keep more New Yorkers employed and living better lives.

5. While there are still a myriad of issues, including Affordable Housing (we need more!), Riker’s Island (I am against closing and in favor of improving its infrastructure and social services), there is an issue that I believe also needs to be addressed: the extreme dichotomy of our current political system in NYC. Many “solutions” to problems are not solutions. Rather, they are an answer to the Progressive Agenda in the areas of economic and social issues. I believe common sense solutions to our issues will win the day, and I will work to find the most fiscally responsible opportunities that will bring New York back to a moderate environment. I believe working together, on both sides of the aisle will afford ALL New Yorkers the best possible outcome. My message is one of inclusion, not exclusion.

III. REPRESENTATION OF CONSTITUENTS

ETHICAL

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 don’t lie. I don’t know how! A record of honesty and my good name are what I bring to the table in this election.

As the mother of 6, grandmother of 8, and married for 34 years, my entire life has revolved around putting other people’s needs ahead of my own. Over the past 20 years, I have founded four different nonprofit organizations: a school for children with autism, a high school for students with mild learning challenges, a new community center (presently being constructed on the UES), and an organization for women who are in need of marketable job skills in order to enter the workforce. In each instance, I saw an opportunity to help others, and for others to help themselves. My husband and I have raised our children to be honest, independent thinkers who could take care of themselves when they entered adulthood. I believe everyone deserves the opportunity to reach their fullest potential, and the role of government should include offering the right opportunities to do so. That said, I recognize the startling rate at which many of our elected officials are involved in corruption scandals and convictions. It is shameful. As a City Council Woman, I would work to combat corruption by staying in constant touch with my constituents’ – and all New Yorkers’ - needs and interests, and bringing their wishes to reality through honesty and integrity. The ability to manage opposing points of view is one of my strengths, as well as knowing when to work as a team and when to make an important decision that will affect the lives of many people. It’s what I do best. I am a person with a great amount of focus – I see a problem, and I work hard until the problem is solved without sacrificing my integrity.

There is an expression: *“Live so that when your children think of fairness, caring, and integrity, they think of you.”*

I do live by those words, and it is my goal for all New Yorkers to think of our City Council (and hopefully all government!) as a reliable source for fairness, caring and integrity. I believe that is what our Forefathers intended for our

government and our nation, and it is my promise that I will uphold those values when elected.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca S. Harary

Please return to: Citizens Union, Local Candidates Committee, 299 Broadway, Suite 700 New York, NY 10007
Via email to candidates@citizensunion.org or fax to 212.227.0345 • Call us at 212-227-0342 with questions.