



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: SARA M. GONZALEZ
Party Affiliation(s): DEMOCRAT Age: 67
Education: FORT HAMILTON H.S.; STATEN ISLAND COLLEGE; COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF BUS. MGT.
Office Sought (including district): CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 38
Occupation/Employer: CONSULTANT
Additional handwritten notes: STATE OF NY. / DASA8 Credentials / Public Profession

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: NEW YORK CITY COUNCILWOMAN; CHAIRWOMAN, COMMUNITY BOARD #7 BROOKLYN; EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LOCAL NON-PROFIT SERVING YOUTH AND SENIORS IN SOUTHWEST BROOKLYN; CO-FOUNDER, NON-PROFIT HIV SERVICES PROGRAM
(Please feel free to affix any additional information such as a résumé, campaign brochure, or issue statements.)

Campaign Contact Information

Campaign Manager Name: LOIS MARBACH Additional Staff Contact:
Address: 478 58th ST, BROOKLYN, NY 11220
Telephone: 917-909-0672 Fax:
Website: saramgonzalez2017.com Email: saramgonzalez2017@gmail.com
Twitter: @saramgonzalez38 Facebook: srgmgonzalez2017

Affirmations

Have you completed required campaign finance filings? YES / NO
Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? YES / NO

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

Signature of Candidate:

*Alicia M. Gray*

Date:

*7-6-17*

**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?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
2. What is your position on instituting Instant Runoff Voting for all citywide offices and for all special elections for city offices?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
3. What is your position on creating a voluntary municipal poll worker program to supplement poll worker recruitment by district leaders?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
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?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
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?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose

**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?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> Oppose
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)?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Support / <input type="radio"/> 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?

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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 / 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. 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 / Oppose
10. What is your position on greater disclosure of councilmembers' outside income?	Support / Oppose
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 / Oppose
12. What is your position on ensuring a more equitable and needs-based distribution of discretionary funding?	Support / Oppose
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?	Support / Oppose
14. What is your position on extending term limits from two four-year terms to three four-year terms?	Support / 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 / Oppose

**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 receipt of a formal complaint?	Support / Oppose
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?	Support / Oppose
19. What is your position on reinstating the zero tolerance penalty for false official statements by public officers?	Support / Oppose
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 / Oppose
21. What is your position on requiring the NYPD to publish a regular report of use of force incidents with data disaggregated by race?	Support / 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? Support / Oppose

**BUDGET REFORM**

23. 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

24. What is your position on making the budget process more transparent by clearly defining and limiting units of appropriation? Support / Oppose

25. What is your position on release of revenue projections (other than property taxes) prior to Council hearings on the Executive budget? Support / Oppose

**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? Support / Oppose

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 / Oppose

**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 / Oppose

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?

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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?

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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.

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## 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

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### 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.

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

8. While I feel substantial progress has been made due to reforms enacted in 2014 and prior, I would welcome a more independent process similar to that in Albany. A more independent process would increase transparency and ensure bills are not shelved for merely political reasons.

29. I support a constitutional convention to amend the New York State Constitution. In addition to discussing the matter with my colleagues at the City and State level in order to move the process forward, I would work with community based organizations, stakeholders and other interested parties in order to educate my constituents on what the process entails and what if any changes in the Constitution they would like to see.

30. I applaud the Citizens Union's leadership on these matters. I would continue to work with them and other parties in order to ensure that the role of pay-to-play culture becomes a non-factor in local politics. I think ensuring the Conflicts of Interest Board has the resources necessary to enforce existing laws and regulations are also vital to this effort.

When previously in office, I worked hard at the Council to support important reforms that made the City Council and public officials more accountable and transparent. I also worked on a number of measures to strengthen our democratic process and protect our citizens. Among these include sponsoring legislation to: calling on the New York State Legislature to pass and the New York State Governor to sign into law legislation that would require that paper ballots be designed in a more user-friendly manner; investigating, reviewing, studying, and auditing of and making of recommendations relating to the operations, policies, programs and practices of the New York City Police Department by the commissioner of the department of investigation; including additional information about candidates for federal, state, and county offices in the New York City voters guide; providing email notifications to prospective New York City voters; amending the administrative code of the city of New York to identify, eliminate and prevent discrimination, and promoting human rights in governmental operations; authorizing the Civilian Complaint Review Board to prosecute cases of police misconduct the board has substantiated; and much more. I will continue to work with advocates, officials, colleagues and constituents in order to continue the progress we've made together on these many fronts so important to New Yorkers.

II.

Create and preserve affordable housing in District 38

Defend and support local immigrant communities and baseline funding for Adult Literacy funding City-wide

Fund and construct more public school seats

Expand senior services in District 38 and increase funding to local senior centers

Expand participatory budgeting in District 38 by designating more capital funds and including expense funding in the process

III.

Throughout my decades of public service, I have maintained an exemplary record of honesty and dignity that I am very proud of. If I am honored to be once again elected by the residents of District 38 to represent them, I would continue to work in the same manner as I have always done. I will remain transparent and follow all the laws and rules bestowed upon my office to the best of my abilities. I will continually confer with City Council attorneys and analysts to ensure that any decision I make in office meets the standards set forth by the Conflicts of Interest Board and internal ethical standards.



Sara is the daughter of Puerto Rican immigrants (mother worked as a garment worker, father was a military veteran and merchant marine)

Raised, educated and life-long resident of Sunset Park - attended community public schools including P.S. 1, P.S. 314, Fort Hamilton High School and a CUNY College

González was a civic activist and community leader for over three decades before being elected by her community to the New York City Council

She was Executive Director of a non-profit community-based organization serving youth and seniors throughout Southwest Brooklyn

Spearheaded the movement for HIV/AIDS education and prevention and was Co-Founder of Discipleship's HIV Program in 1988.

First Latina chairperson of Community Board 7 in Brooklyn serving Sunset Park and Greenwood Heights.

Sara has been married to her high school sweetheart for 43 years, raised her two children in this community and continues to help raise her grandchildren here.

A close-up portrait of Sara M. Gonzalez, a woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a dark top, a pearl necklace with a cross pendant, and diamond earrings. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera.

*Sara M.*  
**Gonzalez**  
NYC Council Dist. 38

# Sara M. Gonzalez

NYC Council Dist. 38

## As Your Council Member:

- \* Sara served on the Committees on Juvenile Justice (Chairwoman); Youth Services; Land Use; Planning, Concessions & Dispositions. Co-Vice Chair of the Black, Latino and Asian Caucus and the Women's Caucus
- \* Sara was Budget Negotiator for Brooklyn
- \* Sara has been a fighter for affordable housing, environmental justice, job creation and immigrant rights
- \* Sara secured nearly half a billion dollars for educational resources in the District and tens of millions of for local Parks
- \* Sara fought for decades to bring Sunset Park its first High School, fought to save Charles Dewey from closing, brought hundreds of early childhood seats to the community, secured funds for vital programs and improvements in Red Hook and Borough Park schools. Sara has brought computer labs and arts and cultural programs to PS 1, PS 10, PS 24, PS 94, PS 105, PS 172, PS 503, PS 506 and many others
- \* Sara worked to improve quality of life by reducing alternate side parking days, installing tree guards, improving parks by planting trees, worked to bring landmark status that would protect the character of the Sunset Park side streets
- \* Sara sponsored many new pieces of legislation, including laws to continue rent stabilization and protect affordable housing for working families
- \* Sara worked to make school buses safer and healthier by using cleaner fuel
- \* Sara worked to protect young people in secure detention centers
- \* Sara has provided vital funding to groups throughout our District and the City. She championed the Adult Literacy Initiative - securing millions of dollars in funding for free ESL, GED, and Adult Basic Education classes

Bay Ridge Towers  
Borough Park  
Dyker Heights  
Greenwood Heights  
Red Hook  
South Slope  
Sunset Park  
Windsor Terrace

for thousands of City residents seeking to improve their English language skills

- \* Sara secured millions of dollars for local hospitals and libraries
- \* Sara allocated funding for Park Projects which included: the complete renovation of the Sunset Park Ball Fields and Playground, reconstruction of Slope Park, major improvements to Valentino Pier and Red Hook Park, and work on the new Sunset Park Waterfront Park

## Sara Continues to Work for Our Community:

As the administrator of an adult day care facility

Hosting Three Kings Day celebrations

Distributing free turkeys to those less fortunate alongside Emmanuel Pentecostal Church in Sunset Park

Assisting parents to resolve admissions issues at local schools

Being recognized and honored by BoysTown New York for her continuing efforts on behalf of at-risk youth throughout the City

Assisting three community based organizations focused on youth to navigate the non-profit system in order to get programs funded, including Children of the City, WallBall USA and a new organization focusing on serving our Dominican-American population

Working with local business owners resolving problems and issues hurting their businesses

Organizing a yearly Christmas toy drive for children and the list goes on and on...

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