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Citizens Union Endorses Michael Blake for Public Advocate

Visit Citizens Union's Online Voters Directory for the Special Election [Here](#)

(New York, NY)— After undertaking a rigorous evaluation of 11 candidates running in the upcoming special election for Public Advocate, Citizens Union, one of New York State’s preeminent nonpartisan good government groups today announced its endorsement of Michael Blake.

“Throughout our evaluation process, Michael Blake demonstrated a strong understanding of the important role the Public Advocate plays in New York City’s government,” said **Citizens Union Executive Director Betsy Gotbaum**, who served as New York City’s Public Advocate from 2002-2009. “As a former Public Advocate, I know firsthand how serious the work of being a voice for the people is and know that Michael Blake is the one ready to undertake it. He will be able to hit the ground running and serve as an effective ombudsman for New Yorkers from Day One, ensuring that city agencies are operating effectively and delivering city services fairly.”

As a nonpartisan government watchdog organization dedicated to improving democratic institutions in New York City and State, Citizens Union evaluates candidates based on their commitment to a reform agenda and their potential to advance these issues, as well as their ability to effectively carry out the responsibilities of the office they seek. Citizens Union’s nonpartisan candidate evaluations are among the most extensive and methodical in the state. Each candidate is given a comprehensive questionnaire asking their positions on key issues, and is interviewed by a nonpartisan team of the organization’s members. In addition to information gathered through the questionnaires and interviews, hundreds of hours of research contribute to the final endorsement decision.

“Led by the Godmother of good government Betsy Gotbaum, Citizens Union has always had an exemplary track record in advocating for the people and holding government accountable to the people. Betsy, who is the epitome of a public advocate, is the leading voice in ensuring that government works for all New Yorkers. I am beyond honored to receive the endorsement of

Citizens Union, which always puts the people first and that is exactly what I will do as your next public advocate. As Public Advocate, I will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that all New Yorkers can have faith that their government is working for their benefit,” said **Assembly Member Michael Blake**.

Blake’s campaign for Public Advocate focuses on using the office’s ombudsman role to hold NYCHA more accountable and preserve and expand affordable housing opportunities in New York City; demand a seat for the Public Advocate on the MTA board; create a Chief Diversity Officer across city agencies to support inclusive business practices; promote criminal justice reform; and uphold the ideals of good governance and transparency in the Public Advocate’s office. Citizens Union believes Blake’s thoughtful approach to the root causes of issues and his extensive knowledge of the matters he is focused on will be a valuable asset in the Public Advocate’s Office and to the people of New York.

The special election for Public Advocate will take place on Tuesday, February 26. You can learn more about the candidates running in this race and access information about voting in New York City by reading the Voters Directory on Citizens Union’s website.

About Citizens Union

Citizens Union (CU) is committed to reforming New York City and State government to foster accountability, accessibility, transparency, honesty, and the highest ethical standards. For the past 120 years, we at Citizens Union have devoted ourselves to holding our local governments accountable to do better in all of these areas, and we remain committed to enfranchising all New Yorkers. The many initiatives that we are currently advancing include ethics reform, increased voter participation and civic engagement, greater policy accountability, and a truly accurate 2020 census. In all of these efforts, we have been—and will remain—nonpartisan. Learn more at www.citizensunion.org.