



Thursday, March 17, 2022

Candidate Questionnaire - 2022 Primary

Dear May Malik,

Congratulations on your decision to run for a seat on the New York Legislature! Citizens Union appreciates your commitment to serve the public.

In the following pages, you will find questions regarding your positions on various reform issues and your plans for office.

Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union uses to evaluate candidates running for office, and to issue our preference for the June primary. Read more about the method, principles, and criteria of the candidate evaluation process [here](#).

**

If you wish to be considered, please submit the questionnaire by March 16.

If you seek our support, we will need to schedule an interview with you as part of the evaluation process. Given time constraints and the limited capacity of a member-based organization, we may not be able to evaluate all contests or candidates in this election cycle.

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If you cannot complete the questionnaire in one sitting, you can click Save at the bottom of every page.

Once you submit the questionnaire, you will receive a confirmation email with your responses. Citizens Union will not be able to see your answers unless you submit the form. We plan to make responses to this questionnaire public on our website, printed voters directory, and other appropriate venues (your contact information will not be published).

For any questions, please email candidates@citizensunion.org

We thank you very much for your response.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name

May Malik

Office Sought (New York State)

Assembly

District Number

73

In which primary

Democratic

What party line/s are you running under?

Democratic

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

Democratic

Age

36

Education

M.A.

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement

Until I announced my campaign in January, I was a member of Community Board 8, appointed by former Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer. I served on the Zoning and Development, Youth, Libraries, and Education, and Small Business committees, where we discussed, resolved, and reviewed proposals for addressing issues impacting community members and actively worked to engage the community in special learning and advocacy opportunities with elected officials and community leaders.

As a mom, advocate, and immigrant who's dedicated my career to public and

nonprofit service, I'm ready to use my voice to represent Assembly District 73 in Albany. As Director of Public-Private Partnerships at NYC Service, I raised millions in private and federal dollars in support of youth and adult workforce development opportunities that provided pathways to economic self-sufficiency. As Deputy Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA), I helped the City tackle COVID and advocate for crucial resources for immigrants and essential workers. And I helped take Trump to task on his racist and xenophobic policies - the Muslim ban, family separation, overreaching federal immigration enforcement, and the Citizenship question on the Census form.

And I stood alongside advocates and labor groups in the fights for funding for excluded workers, increased investment in immigration legal services, expanded language access, a \$15 minimum wage, paid and sick leave, drivers licenses for all, and so many more. I've advocated on behalf of New Yorkers in every corner of our city - from mosques to churches, from hospitals to public schools, from shelters to libraries.

I'm running now to ensure that working families like mine are represented in Albany. That our schools are well-funded. That our most vulnerable constituents receive the supportive services they need. That Assembly District 73 continues to move in a more inclusive direction so that all of us can thrive.

Website www.maymalik.com

Twitter [maymalik](https://twitter.com/maymalik)

Facebook [maymalik](https://www.facebook.com/maymalik)

AFFIRMATIONS

Have you completed the required campaign finance filings?

Yes

Are you willing to be interviewed by Citizens Union's Local Candidates Committee?

Yes

(Please note: interviews are prerequisites for Citizens Union preferences and endorsements)

Signature

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'M' followed by a horizontal line that ends in a small flourish.

ETHICS

Do you support replacing Joint Commission on Public Ethics with an effective and independent enforcement body, whose members are not appointed directly by elected officials?

Yes

Do you support the new independent ethics oversight agency to also replace the Legislative Ethics Commission (LEC)?

Yes

Do you support allowing the new ethics body to investigate misconduct more effectively by simplifying its voting rules, giving it the authority to subpoena testimony and documents, empowering it to suspend or terminate public officials (not elected officials), and increasing its transparency?

Yes

Do you support significantly limiting outside compensation earned by state legislators and eliminate stipends, while increasing their pay?

Yes

Do you hold financial interest or serve as an officer on an entity that receives funding from the state? If you do, how will you manage this conflict of interest?

No, I do not hold financial interest or serve as an officer on an entity that receives funding from the state, or any level of government.

If needed, you may elaborate below on your positions on the previous questions. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.

No, I do not hold financial interest or serve as an officer on an entity that receives funding from the state, or any level of government.

ELECTIONS AND VOTING

Election Administration

How would you use your power as a legislator to improve election administration in New York? Feel free to add any policy proposals you support in regards to reforming the BOE.

Election administration is woefully underfunded. New York elections are primarily funded by formula-based federal funding that's dispersed to counties and cities when available. Beyond funding the state BOE, New York state does not make any considerable investments in election administration. I will use the power of my office to strengthen the financial capacity of entities that support the delivery of free and fair elections.

We have come to expect poorly-run elections from the BOE, and that is just unacceptable. According to the Brennan Center, among large, diverse election jurisdictions, NYC is an extreme outlier in five critical areas: its decisional structure; how its leadership is appointed and staff are hired; its training requirements; who holds the ultimate accountability authority for the agency; and its standards for information sharing. In order to ensure we have a healthy and vital democracy, and to make that happen, we have to move away from the status quo. I'd like to see the BOE Commissioners replaced with non-partisan, subject-matter experts on voting rights, civic engagement, and public administration.

Do you support removing the constitutional requirement in election administration that empowers the two major political parties to nominate and effectively control election boards?

Yes

Do you support reducing the party-based hiring in boards of elections to the minimum currently required by the constitution?

Yes

Do you support implementing an open, competitive, merit-based hiring process for all election administration staff and certain functions at polls?

Yes

If needed, you may elaborate below on your positions on the previous questions.

Voting Rights

Do you support re-passing the constitutional amendment to enact same-day voter registration, and putting it on the ballot in 2024?

Yes

Do you support re-passing the constitutional amendment to enact no-excuse absentee voting, and putting it on the ballot in 2024?

Yes

If needed, you may elaborate below on your positions on the previous questions. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.

Open and Competitive Elections

Do you support easing access to the ballot for parties and independent candidates, by returning to the pre-2020 voting and signature thresholds? That includes reducing the voting threshold to become a registered party back to 50,000 votes in a gubernatorial election, and the petition requirement for independent candidates back to 15,000 signatures.

Yes

Do you support reforming the process of filling vacancies in the state legislature by implementing nonpartisan special elections or holding a primary election at least thirty days in advance of the special election?

Yes

Who do you think should draw new district maps every decade in New York? (e.g., the current Independent Redistricting Commission, the Legislature/LATFOR, a new body)

The Redistricting Commission failed us massively this year. Not only was it unable to approve a single set of maps, the process lacked collaboration and input from the thousands of New Yorkers who submitted testimonies, comments, and proposed maps to develop even a single set of maps. The will of those who voted for reform in 2014 was ignored. We ended up with a set of maps that differed greatly from what was submitted by the Commission, which allowed for partisanship and incumbent interests to prevail.

I need to do more research and speak with more good governance and accountability experts, like Citizens Union, to determine if we need to make changes to the existing Commission or if an entirely new independent body is needed.

If needed, you may elaborate below on your positions on the previous questions. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Do you support further reducing campaign contribution limits?

Yes

Do you support setting even lower contribution limits for registered lobbyists and those who do business with the state?

Yes

Starting from the next election cycle, New York will have a public campaign finance program, offering matching funds on small donations for candidates who opt in. If you decide to run again in the next election, do you intend to participate in the program?

Yes

Do you support moving the campaign finance matching program to be administered by an independent, nonpartisan body outside of the State Board of Election?

Yes

If needed, you may elaborate below on your positions on the previous questions. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.

COURT REFORM

Do you support simplifying and consolidating New York State's court system - which includes 11 trial courts - by passing the Chief Judge's proposed constitutional amendment to modernize the courts?

Yes

If needed, you may elaborate below on your positions on the previous questions. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.

GOALS, PLANS, AND REPRESENTATION

What are the top three campaign promises or goals, and what action will you take to achieve them if elected? Feel free to reference an answer above rather than restate it.

First: Excellent Constituent Services: I will create the most responsive government office to constituent services in the city. As Deputy Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, I oversaw our constituent services and outreach portfolios, led by a talented staff. I know what it means to deliver timely, responsive communication to constituents, and I intend to use the wealth of professional experience, connections, and knowledge gained to be a source of information, support, and advocacy for the residents of Assembly District 73.

Second: Education: I have years of experience in education, youth development, and family engagement - from developing curricula to training teachers on psychosocially supportive practices for students in crisis to developing and implementing citywide youth mentoring programs. As a mother to a 7-year-old, I know that school is more than just a place to learn; it's a place to develop relationships, expand social-emotional learning, build curiosity, and develop confidence. What our educators and school personnel have accomplished in the face of an unprecedented pandemic is nothing short of miraculous. As someone who cut her teeth working in the emergency education sector, I know that continuing education - whether formal or informal - is crucial for our children's recovery and renewal. I also know that families need support now more than ever. Which is why I will: Fight to ensure that the second year of funding committed in the 2021 State budget to Foundation Aid is actualized. There is still \$3 billion to be delivered to our students; Fight for more transparency on how state and federal funds are spent appropriately and effectively district-wide, and for ensuring meaningful public process for parents, families, and community members; Fight for universal access to childcare and Pre-K so that working parents like me don't have to unfairly choose between tending to their children and providing for them; I'm tired of being forced to make that choice; Fight for increased investments in special education; and At the higher education level, fight for a New Deal for CUNY and increased investments in SUNY.

Third: Health Justice: Health care is a human right. At a time when uninsured immigrants were foregoing access to care for as a result of xenophobic policies coming out of the Trump administration, as Deputy Commissioner of MOIA, the largest immigrant-serving city agency in the nation, I oversaw multi-million dollar citywide outreach and public information campaign efforts to connect immigrants, especially immigrant workers and working families, with access to health insurance, health care, and other crucial support. As we continue to deal with COVID, it's imperative for the resilience of our District and our City as a whole that we invest in legislative ideas that root out systemic inequities by ensuring access to quality health care regardless of your employment or immigration status, and that better prepare us to more fairly respond to another public health emergency. Which is why I fully support proposed legislation like: The New York Health Act - No New Yorker should have to worry about medical bills before they worry about their health and well-being. Every New Yorker should have access to comprehensive care. Coverage4All - No New Yorker should have to worry about accessing medical assistance due to a lack of health insurance, most especially those who were on the frontlines of the COVID pandemic, and End Medical Debt - Because unfair medical bills and hidden fees should never stop New Yorkers from getting the health care they deserve.

If elected, what is the first piece of legislation you would want to introduce? If you are an incumbent, what is the first piece of legislation you would want to pass?

I have 14+ years of experience supporting workers and working families. As a

working parent from a working immigrant family, I often wonder if some of the tumult my parents experienced while in the service, retail, and engineering operations industries would have occurred if they had the benefit of union support and protections. I will continue to be a vocal supporter of the rights of all workers to form unions, and to expand unionization locally and across the State. In fact, I would like to breathe new life into a bill first introduced in 2020 by current Assembly Member for District 73, Dan Quart. The bill would permit legislative staff to form a collective bargaining unit. In light of the fact that we continue to hear stories of widespread abuse in Albany - allegedly perpetrated by elected officials and staff members, alike - we have to do everything in our power to ensure a work environment for Assembly staff that is free from retaliation, physical and emotional harm, sexual harassment, and bullying.

In providing constituent service, what are the major needs of your district's constituents and how will you meet them?

Small businesses need further relief as they recover and bounce back from the pandemic. I will ensure my office is a one-stop-shop for local business for everything from training to relief services to advocacy.

Our schools will be receiving unprecedented funding from the state, based on the governor's executive proposal. My office will engage families and ensure transparency and accountability for the second year of funding to Foundation Aid that's committed in the 2021 State budget.

Middle income working families - especially single parent-headed households like mine - are increasingly being shut out of the district due to high cost of living and rising rents. My office will serve as a one-stop-shop for tenants rights and support for small landlords.

What experience have you had, if any, with good government and reform issues? (e.g. voting and elections, campaign finance, ethics, government transparency and oversight, police accountability). If you've worked to advance these goals, we'd love to hear about it.

I have a track record of promoting democracy and strengthening civic participation across the City and will fight to reduce any and all barriers that get in the way of New Yorker's right to vote.

During my tenure as Deputy Commissioner of MOIA, we expanded the number of available languages at poll sites in every borough, implemented an awareness-raising campaign promoting the right to bring an interpreter of their choice to the polls, worked with DemocracyNYC and the Civic Engagement Commission to deliver high-quality marketing collateral to harder to reach, inactive immigrant voters, worked on citywide youth voter registration drives, and fought alongside labor unions and advocate groups in the successful fight for municipal voting rights for legal permanent residents of NYC.

How long have you lived in the district in which you are running?

4 years in district, 11+ years in NYC

Have you lived in the district before this year's redistricting?

Yes

For incumbents: If your district has changed significantly following this year's redistricting, how do you intend to run your office to serve the needs of the new constituents you now represent?

PATH TO VICTORY

What is your win number (the number of votes needed to win this race), and what is your plan to achieve that number?

This seat hasn't been open in a decade, so it's hard to predict what turnout will look like, but based on previous years and the fact that there are several candidates in contention, we feel that 6,000 votes would be a comfortable win. We plan to create a competitive field program that meets voters where they are both digitally and in-person, and hope to build a coalition that is not limited to any one group or segment of the district. Specifically, especially given that knocking is historically challenging in this district and even more challenging with Covid, we are going to create texting and calling programs aimed at having real, substantive conversations with voters to both get our message across and better understand the issues they actually care about.

What are your current fundraising numbers, if different than the last campaign finance filing?

We have raised nearly 40,000 so far, and are planning several grassroots fundraisers for April.

How many individual donors do you have?

Over 200 and growing!

Please indicate any endorsements that your campaign has received, if applicable (you can also share a link to a list of endorsements)

ADDITIONAL INFO

Please feel free to attach any additional information such as resume, campaign brochures, or issues statements.

What else would you like us to know about yourself?

Please review your answers by clicking PREVIEW ANSWERS below. You can submit the questionnaire at the bottom of the preview page by clicking SUBMIT. Once you click SUBMIT, you will receive a confirmation email with a PDF file containing your responses. *If you don't see the email, please check your spam box.*

If you have any further questions, you may contact us at candidates@citizensunion.org

Responses to the questionnaire 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.

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