

Wednesday, March 9, 2022

Candidate Questionnaire - 2022 Primary

Dear LAYLA LAW-GISIKO,

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public on our website, printed voters directory, and other appropriate venues (your contact information will not be published).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

LAYLA LAW-GISIKO

Office Sought (New York State)

Assembly

District Number

75

In which primary

Democratic

What party line/s are you running under?

Democrat

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

Democrat

Age

50

Education

Master in French Literature from La Sorbonne Université, Master in journalism from Paris Assas Université

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement

I have been a member of Manhattan Community Board Five for 17 years. I am currently the Chair of the Land Use, Housing & Zoning Committee, as well as the Chair of the Landmarks Committee. I have served as the Chair of the Education Committee, as well as the Chair of the Central Park Sunshine Task Force appointed to respond to overdevelopment along Central Park (Billionaires' Row).

Website

www.LaylaForNY.com

Twitter [laylaLawGisiko](#)

Facebook [LaylaLawGisiko](#)

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

LAYLA LAW-GISIKO

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.

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.

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.

I support no excuse absentee vote, Election Day voter registration, as well as re-enfranchisement of felons, including individuals on parole.

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)

Drawing new district lines every decade is essential to give each district adequate representation. At the same time, gerrymandering has been used to eliminate opposition, to divide communities (esp of color), to secure extreme power. New district maps should be drawn by a REALLY independent commission, rather than a bi-partisan commission as we currently have. Bi-partisan and independent are two totally different concepts. Only the later can work towards balanced and fair new districts. Such independent commission should adopt strong principles to help them make their determination.

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.

I would also repeal the higher contribution limit for candidates family members. It is especially hurtful to immigrants whose families are not naturalized and are prevented from contributing to their children's campaign.

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: Lower class size (properly fund public NYC schools as per cfe)

Second: Deliver new legislation to promote truly affordable housing

Third: Repeal MSG Tax Exemption

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?

If elected, I would reform and limit private corporate interests access to elected officials, especially the executive chamber. For example, Vornado's CEO should not be permitted to be the largest donor to an elected governor, then sit on a governor appointed Penn Station Task Force, only to have said Governor issue a GPP permitting the construction of 10 mega-towers by Vornado, while also receiving a tax break.

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

My district's constituents need assistance with housing and unemployment. They also need an assembly member who will assist them in their fights against land use issues such as the FAR cap lift, up zonings through GPPs or casino licenses. My constituents services office will be the most robust in the history of this district, with evening and weekend hours, and true commitment to serving our districts Neds.

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.

Fro the past 2 years, I've worked closely with Common Cause and ReInvent Albany to fight the corrupt and mortally flawed GPP to redevelop the Penn District into a Vornado Campus designed to favor and profit to a single publicly traded company, in an opaque scheme that would leave the state vulnerable to billions in debt and would cost the city millions in lost tax revenue.

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

I have lived in the district for 21 years.

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?

The win number is 7,200 but our vote goal is 9,000. Our plan is to run a field campaign with lots of face time. We have a strong mailing campaign strategy accompanied by a large number of building captains in the large housing complexes in our district.

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

We have raised \$65,000 and are on target to raise \$150,000 to \$200,000

How many individual donors do you have?

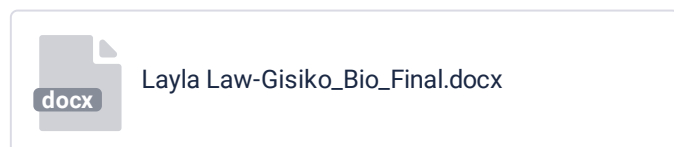
Approx 400

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

Our campaign has been endorsed by CRDC, Female and male district leaders in AD75, Sylvia DiPietro and Charles Bayor, a number of community activists. Here's a link to my endorsement page. <https://www.laylaforny.com/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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