

Candidate Questionnaire

Dear Candidate,

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](#).

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If you wish to be considered, please submit the questionnaire by June 27, 2022.

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public on our website, printed voters directory, and other appropriate venues (your contact information will not be published).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

Gustavo Rivera

Office Sought (New York State)

Senate

District Number

33

In which primary

Democratic

What party line/s are you running under?

Democrat/ WFP

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

Democrat

Age

46

Education

B.A. Political Science

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement

State Senate

Website <http://www.gustavoforthebronx.com/>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/Rivera4TheBronx>

Facebook <facebook.com/Gustav>

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



ETHICS

What is your opinion on the recently passed ethics reform, which replaced JCOPE with a new ethics oversight agency called Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government? Did you support this policy?

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

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 ethics issues.

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 am a co-sponsor of of S6226A which relates to the exercise of powers and duties of the BOE and it's executive management.

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?

Yes

Do you support re-passing the constitutional amendment to enact no-excuse absentee voting?

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)

I believe that this should be a process that makes it equitable for everyone. We need to involve the communities that this affects into the conversation.

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: Passing the NY health Act

Second: Keeping our streets safe

Third: Protecting Tenants and expanding affordable housing

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?

The first piece of legislation I would like to pass would be the NY Health Act. Healthcare is a human right and we must do everything possible to ensure that everyone regardless of income, where they live or immigration status has access to quality healthcare.

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

The major needs of my constituents are affordable housing, food security and safety. My office consistently works hard to keep thousands of people in their homes, find legal counsel and help find programs that offer food assistance. I have also brought in hundreds of thousands of dollars into the district for crime prevention programs.

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 always been a fighter for transparency in government and accountability across the board.

Do you currently live in this district? How long have you lived in it?

I have lived in what was the 33rd district for over 22 years, but currently reside 2 blocks east of where the district line was drawn and will have to move once I win reelection. However, I should mention that not only is 50% of my current district contained within the newly drawn 33rd, but when you consider that there are areas I briefly represented at the beginning of my tenure that are once again in the 33rd

(Norwood, Tracey Towers, Scott Towers, etc), I have represented over 70% of this district before.

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?

I am currently going around the new district learning the needs of those who live there. Their needs are not too different from the needs of the people I currently serve. The idea is that come January when I begin to serve this district I will be able to hit the ground running.

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?

Our win number is 10k. We expect low turnout in this election but have put together a rigorous campaign plan to activate voters by reminding them of the work that I have done and will continue to do.

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

We currently have over \$300k in the bank and are aiming to get about \$500k.

How many individual donors do you have?

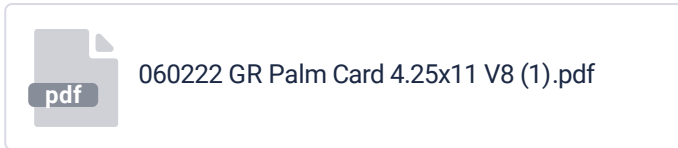
I do not know the exact number but I've had over 1000 contributors over my legislative career.

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

So far: NYS Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, NYS Senate Deputy Majority Leader Michael Gianaris, State Senators Jessica Ramos, Liz Krueger, John Liu, Leroy Comrie, Robert Jackson, SEIU 1199, CWA District 1, RWDSU, NYSUT, UFT, PSC, Doctors Council-SEIU, The New York State AFL-CIO, The NYC Central Labor Council, Make the Road Action Fund, WFP, The Jewish Vote, and the Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club. Many more endorsements are on the way.

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?

I have been honored to represent the 33rd State Senate District for over a decade and I would like to continue working for my neighbors. Since the Democratic Conference was able to get the majority in the Senate we have been able to accomplish so much for working New Yorkers, but there is still a lot to do. I am running because I strongly believe, government can have a positive impact on people's lives and I would like to continue directly playing a role in governance. Harold Lasswell said, "Politics is who gets what, when, and how." I

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

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