



Candidate Questionnaire
 Local Candidates Committee
 District Attorney Elections 2019

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 May 1st.** Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union uses to evaluate candidates running for District Attorney, 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: Greg Lasak

Candidate Cell Phone: 917-968-1567

Party Affiliation(s): Democrat

Age: 66

Education: Queens College, B.A., New York Law School, J.D.

Office Sought (including district): District Attorney, Queens County

Occupation/Employer: Recently Resigned from the New York State Supreme Court

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement:

Supreme Court Justice - Deputy Administrative Judge, Assistant District Attorney, Executive Assistant Major Crimes, Queens Bar Association, Catholic Lawyers Guild Queens County

(Please feel free to affix any additional information such as a résumé, campaign brochure, or issue statements.)

Campaign Contact Information

Campaign Manager Name: Rasheida Smith

Additional Staff Contact:

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 www.facebook.
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Affirmations

Have you completed required campaign finance filings? YES

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? YES

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

Signature of Candidate:

Date:

I. CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

Please state your position on the following issues by using the space provided below each question or a separate sheet of paper. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.

1. What trends do you see in criminal activity that the district attorney's office should address?

When I was an Assistant District Attorney, I reinvestigated cases which led to almost two-dozen wrongful conviction exonerations. As the next Queens District Attorney, I will create a Conviction Integrity Unit to make sure any conviction can withstand scrutiny, as it should. The Unit will serve to provide a fresh look at cases and ensure justice is being administered fairly.

2. What would your priorities be as district attorney? What would you change in the incumbent's approach to fulfilling the responsibilities of the district attorney?

In addition to creating the Conviction Integrity Unit, I will end cash bail on low-level, non-violent offenses and stop prosecuting some low-level, non-violent offenses, while diverting cases to programs where people can receive the support and treatment they need. This will not only speed up the justice system but also maintain its integrity.

3. What about your background and approach to the position differentiates you from the others running for district attorney?

One word: Experience. I have worked in the criminal justice system my entire career - as an Assistant District Attorney who prosecuted some of the most horrific crimes in Queens County, making sure the right people were convicted, to ensuring criminal trials were conducted fairly when I was on the bench - I know how to run this office to ensure everyone going through the system is treated fairly while maintaining the safety our resident deserve.

4. What role do you think the district attorney plays in anti-corruption efforts and building public trust, and how would you fulfill that role once in office?

The District Attorney plays a critical role when it comes to public corruption. Any claim of corruption will be investigated and any founded claims will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

5. To what extent would your office use the district attorney's existing authority to investigate and monitor elected officials' conduct in relation to issues like campaign finance compliance and proper use of government resources and influence?

My office will work with the NYC Campaign Finance Board and the state Board of Elections to ensure the integrity of our elections.

Whenever a possible complaint of government resources being misused is made, my office will investigate the matter, and based on the facts, will take the appropriate course of action.

6. Do you believe more needs to be done to ease the re-entry of formerly incarcerated persons into society and, if so, what would you propose?

More help can be provided, which is why I want to provide more treatment so those taken into custody receive the attention they need. Those being released from prison should be given every opportunity to succeed, which could be done by giving them information about employment opportunities, housing, and medical care, so they do not feel they need to repeat their past offenses.

7. Do you think that the number of incidents of police misconduct is a problem? If so, what would you propose to facilitate more effective oversight of police misconduct? What data do you have to support your point of view?

With the City having reportedly spent [\\$108 million dollars](#) last Fiscal Year on settling police misconduct cases, something clearly needs to be done. Building better relationships with the community, and enacting policies that ensures the justice system is working for everyone will help to reduce cases of misconduct and will be a top priority of my office.

8. What are your views on the state legislation recently enacted with regard to discovery and use of bail?

I am in favor of the legislation.

9. Do you support requiring police interrogations to be videotaped?

Yes.

10. How do you feel about the city's plan to close the Rikers Island complex? What concerns do you have and what are the potential benefits and pitfalls of the plan?

We need to ensure inmates on Rikers Island have every opportunity to see their families and defense lawyers, and that the facilities meet their needs.

But instead of building jails in residential neighborhoods, I believe building a new, state-of-the-art complex on the Island, with better transportation options, is the best way to address the needs of the inmates and the concerns of residents who don't want jails in their backyards.

Additional Comments:

II. CAMPAIGN PROMISES MADE TO VOTERS

What are the top five campaign promises you are making to the voters during this campaign?

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 2019 CAMPAIGN PROMISES OR GOALS

1. Create a Conviction Integrity Unit to continue the work I did as Executive in charge of the Major Crimes Division to exonerate nearly two dozen innocent men.

2. Expand treatment courts and programs to provide alternatives to incarceration. I helped launch those programs when I was in the office and presided over the Drug Treatment Part as a Judge.

3. Refocus efforts on domestic violence cases to protect women and children. I helped start the Domestic Violence Bureau when I was in the office.

4. Diversify the office to make sure it looks like the communities it serves.

5. Protect our immigrant communities by accounting for collateral consequences when negotiating plea deals.
