



Friday, May 14, 2021

Citizens Union 2021 Candidate Questionnaire - Manhattan District Attorney

Dear Candidate,

Congratulations on your decision to run for Manhattan District Attorney! 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. The form includes the following sections: (1) the functions of the district attorney's office; (2) ethics, corruption, police misconduct; (3) prisons and incarcerated individuals; (4) miscellaneous.

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 no later than 48 before your interview.

If you seek our support, we will also need to schedule an interview with you as part of the evaluation process.

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

Once you submit the questionnaire, you will receive a confirmation email with a PDF file containing 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public on our website, printed voters directory, and other appropriate venues (your contact information will not be published).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

Your Info

Name

Tali Farhadian Weinstein

Seeking office:

Manhattan District Attorney

In which primary

Democratic

Age

45

Education

Yale University, Oxford University (Rhodes Scholarship), Yale Law School

Occupation/Employer

Candidate for Manhattan District Attorney; Adjunct Professor of Law and Criminal Law, New York University School of Law

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement

Work:

U.S. Court Of Appeals for D.C. Circuit, Judge Merrick B. Garland, Clerk (2003-2004)

U.S. Supreme Court, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Clerk (2004-2006)

U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Counsel (2009-2010)

U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of N.Y., Assistant U.S. Attorney (2011-2017)

Kings County District Attorney, Eric Gonzalez, General Counsel (2018-2020)

Community Involvement:

New York Public Library, Trustee (2018-Present)

Yale University Council, Member (2018-Present)

Vera Institute of Justice, Leadership Council (2017-Present)

Rhodes Scholarship Selection Committee, District III, Executive Secretary (2016-Present)

United Jewish Appeal Federation Of N.Y., Board of Directors (2014-2020)

Website

taliforda.com

Twitter

talifarhadian

Facebook

Tali Farhadian Weinstein

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's endorsements)

Signature



THE OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

1. As a district attorney, you will be managing hundreds of attorneys and other staff members. Is there anything in the structure and function of the office of district attorney that you would like to see improved in order to be better positioned to prosecute criminal offenses and promote justice in your borough?

My vision for safety and justice in Manhattan starts with restructuring the DA's office – the organization of its bureaus, how they are resourced, who works in them, and how those people are trained. I know from my experience as Counsel to Attorney General Eric Holder and at the Brooklyn DA's Office that the structure of the institutions of prosecution must align with our priorities and values.

I have four major restructuring plans: in gender-based violence, gun crimes, economic crimes, and post-conviction justice. Taken together, they represent a new office – an office that pulls further back from prosecutions that do not advance safety and that have perpetuated racial and income disparity, and is rebalanced to do more to protect the most vulnerable from harm. The office, of course, has some current capacity in each of these

four areas – of varying efficacy – but my reorganization represents new commitments and priorities.

Three of these – gender-based violence, gun violence, and economic crimes – have increased during the pandemic and thus require more sustained attention. The fourth, post-conviction justice, is critical to increasing fairness and trust in the criminal justice system. These four areas also often involve the highest stakes litigation that happens under great pressure and against experienced and well-resourced defense counsel – particularly in economic crimes. They call for a leader who has demonstrated independence and expertise to take on the hardest questions and issues with confidence.

First, I am committed to transforming the office's response to gender-based violence and to doing better. This starts with establishing a new bureau reporting directly and regularly to me: The Bureau of Gender-Based Violence (BGBV). The bureau will house the Sex Crimes and Domestic Violence units, as well as the units handling human trafficking, elder abuse, stalking, and gender-based hate crimes. (Currently, despite the high volume of domestic violence cases, they are assigned to trial assistants without expertise in this area.) The BGBV units will share a mission: a sustained, focused, and expert commitment to investigation, prosecution, and reduction of this violence.

The different crimes falling under the umbrella of gender-based violence have important differences, requiring their own expertise and specific responses, including: specialized investigative and prosecutorial strategies; an understanding of the critical evidence that presents in different crimes and its handling; a familiarity with the governing legal rules and recent case law regarding different offenses; the appropriate community engagement; and more. But I firmly believe there is a crisis – and failure of adequate response – in all gender-based violence, which must be recognized and taken on as a whole.

You can read the entire plan for gender-based violence here: <https://www.taliforda.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/BGBV-Policy.pdf>

Second, I will appoint a Gun Violence Coordinator in my front office to work across divisions and bureaus directing and monitoring firearms-related cases and initiatives. This coordinator will manage

multiple strategies: investigating and prosecuting gun trafficking, enforcing laws prohibiting ghost guns, getting guns out of the hands of domestic abusers, and more. My office will also work to open a new gun court – a dedicated courtroom for gun prosecution in Manhattan – with the goal of meaningfully accelerating case resolution, and develop a gun diversion program modeled on the successful program in Brooklyn.

You can read my entire gun violence plan here: [https://www.taliforda.com/wp-content/plugins/pdf-poster/pdfjs/web/viewer.php?file=https://www.taliforda.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/TFW-Gun-Policy-Updated-9.20.20_TFW.pdf&download=true&print=false&openfile=false\]](https://www.taliforda.com/wp-content/plugins/pdf-poster/pdfjs/web/viewer.php?file=https://www.taliforda.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/TFW-Gun-Policy-Updated-9.20.20_TFW.pdf&download=true&print=false&openfile=false)

Third, I will prioritize investigation of and accountability for white collar and economic crimes with robust and proactive prosecution that holds both individuals and corporations accountable, no matter power, wealth, social status, or office held. I will dedicate significant resources to cybercrime investigations, where the COVID pandemic has sparked multiple internet schemes preying on vulnerable New Yorkers. My office will hire in-house investigators, certified public accountants, computer security analysts, and other financial sector specialists. The administration will be evidence-based and result-driven, with regular audits and analyses critical to evaluating prosecution policy effectively.

The office also will elevate wage theft prosecutions, which often target low-income earners and immigrants, through a new Bureau of Worker Protection (BWP). The BWP will focus on prevailing wage and overtime violations, labor trafficking, health and safety violations, and other critical violations, and will engage community members, unions, and advocacy groups as “eyes and ears” on the ground.

You can read my entire economic crimes plan here: <https://www.taliforda.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/TFW-ECONOMIC-CRIME-POLICY-4.4.21.pdf>

Fourth, I will build on my experience creating the nation’s first Post-Conviction Justice Bureau in Brooklyn to establish in Manhattan the country’s most robust Post-Conviction Justice Bureau, with dedicated lawyers and investigators who have the resources and independence they need to succeed. It will include four components: conviction review, parole and clemency proceedings, conviction sealing, and excessive sentencing review. While

much of the focus of criminal justice reform has been at the “front-end” – to prevent sending people into the system unnecessarily or unfairly – I believe that prosecutors also have an ongoing responsibility to ensure justice at the “back-end,” for people who have already been convicted, through their safe return home from prison.

The Manhattan DA’s current Conviction Integrity Program rarely exonerates anyone, in part, I believe, because it is staffed by the district attorney’s top assistants who continue to be responsible for prosecutions and who supervise people who may have been involved in the cases being re-examined. I will change the program to be fully autonomous from the rest of the office, and include in it defense and exoneration experts.

The Post-Conviction Justice Bureau will include a Parole and Clemency Unit that will require prosecutors presumptively to support parole at the first opportunity (in guilty plea cases), a Sealing Unit to solicit, facilitate, and support applications under the sealing law, and a Sentencing Review Unit to handle applications for resentencing and to advocate for the creation of a second look mechanism for revisiting and correcting excessive sentences.

2. Are there any statewide legislative reforms that would be necessary for you to accomplish your goals as district attorney? How would you work with the legislature in Albany, especially in cases of potential disagreements?

The District Attorney must be a vigorous advocate for safety and fairness in the legislative process. As a member of the leadership team of the Brooklyn DA’s Office, I was actively involved in the office’s legislative agenda, and continue to see this as an important function of the job. Disagreements and debate are a part of the process.

I support various pending legislation involving gender-based violence and its prosecution. I will support New York State Senator Hoylman’s bill S.66, which “creates a one-year window, beginning six months after the bill is signed into law, for the revival of time-barred civil lawsuits for claims arising from conduct that constitutes certain sex offenses that were committed against a person who was 18 or older at the time.” I also support State Senator Hoylman’s bill S.8279, which would seek to “remove the penetration requirement from the rape statutes as well as to define rape as sexual intercourse, oral sexual conduct, or anal

sexual conduct.” Lastly, I support State Senator Biaggi’s bill S.7125, to classify domestic violence as a Class A misdemeanor, “to ensure that convicted domestic violence abusers are entered into the FBI’s National Instant Criminal Background Check System and thus prevented from accessing firearms in the future.”

To combat gun violence, I support legislation similar to that which was introduced in 2019 by U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, S.730, which would establish gun trafficking as a federal crime, as well as other measures aimed at gun trafficking. I oppose passage of the federal Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act H.R.38, which would require all states to recognize concealed carry permits granted by other states.

With regard to excessive sentencing, I strongly support the creation of a second look mechanism to allow courts to address and modify excessive sentences. Over the past several years, numerous scholars, think tanks, legislators, prosecutors, bar organizations, activists, and a congressional task force have all called for the creation of new second look provisions; California and the District of Columbia have enacted them. Locally, Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez supports legislation that would essentially adopt California’s model by allowing district attorneys to move a court to have a sentence reduced after the defendant has served a lengthy period in prison. I prefer in the first instance legislation that tracks the Model Penal Code proposed legislation, to allow incarcerated people to bring claims of excessive sentencing after a certain period of time.

With regard to bail, while I will continue to advocate for the elimination of cash bail as a matter of fundamental fairness and equity, I believe prosecutors and judges must be able to consider public safety risk, not just risk of flight, in deciding pretrial detention or terms of release – a system like that existing in Illinois, New Jersey, and federal courts. New York is the only jurisdiction that does not permit consideration of public safety risk in some form for pretrial detention, making this important issue subtext. Recognizing that judgments about public safety have been and can allow racial bias to seep into the criminal justice system, I am committed to developing and enforcing strict controls on public safety assessment tools.

Similarly, while I was and remain an advocate of

discovery reform, I believe some refinements to the governing legislation still need to be made to protect victims and witnesses from having their personal information disclosed to defendants early in a case. The new law was recently amended to shield victim information in sexual offenses, trafficking, and gang cases, but I believe other victims must also have this protection, otherwise, people will be afraid and hesitant to report crimes.

For economic crime prosecution at the state level, I support S.4405. Currently in committee, the legislation would add wage theft to the types of activities included in the crime of larceny. I also support Carlos' Law, S.4373B. Named for 22-year-old construction worker Carlos Moncayo, who was killed in a worksite trench collapse, the bill would establish the crime of endangering the welfare of a worker, and increase fines on negligent developers, as related to construction.

3. Do you think there should be term limits for district attorneys?

Yes. In general, I support term limits for elected office.

ETHICS, CORRUPTION, AND POLICE MISCONDUCT

4. What role do you think the district attorney plays in anti-corruption efforts? If have any concrete plans, we would love to hear them.

The district attorney has a critical role to play in anti-corruption efforts through vigorous investigation and prosecution of public corruption. Indeed, after the Supreme Court's 2016 decision in *McDonnell v. United States*, the commitment from local prosecutors to anti-corruption work became even more important.

As district attorney, I will draw on my experience working as a federal prosecutor in the Public Integrity Section of the U.S. Attorney's Office to ensure that no one, regardless of title or political power, is above the law. Historically, most public corruption investigations are initiated from whistleblower tips or spot-checks, but my office will take a proactive approach, using data analysis to identify irregularities in government reporting databases and finance records to unveil systemic corruption, as well as working with sources and analyzing other publicly available materials to monitor corruption at every level of government. This work is particularly worth doing because, while

general deterrence is largely discredited in criminal law, research shows that for white collar crimes – including public corruption – prosecutions put other would-be bad actors on notice and shape their behavior.

I also note that I plan to build an Environmental Crimes Unit that may include public corruption matters.

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?

Public officials must be held accountable for criminal conduct, and I am committed to prosecuting those that abuse their power and undermine the public trust through bribery, fraud, theft, bid-rigging, misuse of charity and public funds, conflicts of interest and other acts of corruption. My office will dedicate the necessary resources for investigating these crimes, and will work proactively across its various bureaus, including Economic Crimes, as well as with state and federal law enforcement partners, to identify and weed out criminal acts.

I will use the district attorney’s existing statutory tools, such as offering a false instrument for filing and attempted grand larceny, to investigate and prosecute campaign finance and related violations, which effectively led to the recent conviction of a City Council candidate filing false records in an effort to steal public matching funds.

I will also support the New York State Attorney General’s ongoing efforts to crack down on campaign finance filing, contribution, and expenditure violations campaign finance violations and improper use of government resources.

While I will work within my existing authority, I support additional legislation to strengthen New York laws governing public corruption and campaign finance, many of which are outdated and do not address modern crimes. Previous proposals, including Gov. Cuomo’s Public Trust Act, which would have expanded the public corruption toolbox, as well as recommendations by the Manhattan

District Attorney's White Collar Crime Task Force and the Moreland Commission (specifically related to campaign donations from LLCs) have unfortunately stalled, depriving prosecutors and the public of potentially significant opportunities to further combat these crimes. The recommendations, coupled with new legislative reform efforts, would close loopholes and better serve the public interest.

Finally, being a political candidate has only strengthened my view that the country needs comprehensive campaign finance reform.

6. We recognize that district attorneys are in a difficult position regarding overseeing police misconduct, as district attorneys' offices work closely with, and rely upon, the police. How do you see the role of the district attorney in the city's response to instances and patterns of police misconduct? What is your vision for oversight of police misconduct, and what data do you have to support your point of view?

I know how to balance a partnership with the police on the one hand, and holding police officers accountable when they offend, on the other; in fact, I have demonstrated this balance in my career. I have worked closely with countless law enforcement agents, including police officers, and understand that we must be partners in our core mission to deliver on public safety. I am concerned about the demoralization of the police just as I am concerned about the demoralization of prosecutors.

That does not conflict with prosecutors' responsibility to hold everyone accountable for their crimes. As General Counsel to Brooklyn DA Eric Gonzalez, I helped create and supervised a new stand-alone Law Enforcement Accountability Bureau. We investigated and prosecuted the police for an array of crimes, including testifying falsely and tampering with evidence. I also supervised the team responsible for gathering, managing, and disclosing information related to officers' credibility, and led an internal process for identifying officers that the district attorney's office (not courts or outside institutions) considered unreliable, to ensure prosecutors do not work with those officers in any capacity – a first in New York City.

In Manhattan, I will follow the model of the Law Enforcement Accountability Bureau we built in Brooklyn. I will thoroughly investigate claims of police misconduct and hold law enforcement officers accountable when they offend – from false statements to serious acts of violence and excessive use of force. I will also work with police every day, as I have throughout my career, to ensure we are keeping Manhattan safe.

The district attorney can also influence policing through her power to decline prosecutions and to encourage and advocate for arrests in different areas. For instance, when District Attorney Gonzalez decided to stop charging minor marijuana possession – largely because these charges had immense racial disparities – the police eventually stopped making arrests for those crimes. Conversely, while the district attorney can influence the police to pull back in some areas, she must push the police to commit more to others. Not that long ago, a report found that the NYPD only delegates about 1% of its staffing to its Special Victims Division which deals with sex crimes (inclusive of crimes against children). This is unacceptable to me and as district attorney I will do everything I can to bring more focus to this area.

Finally, I support Citizen Union’s proposal for a Deputy Mayor for Public Safety, to monitor and supervise the police. This will give the district attorney a civilian, direct point of contact that has actual authority over the police. Among other benefits, I believe this change will facilitate the district attorney’s ability to contribute to reforming and modernizing the police.

7. During the summer of 2020, BLM protests against police brutality were repeatedly faced with a harsh response, particularly in the form of mass arrests of protesters. What is your approach in responding to mass protests and prosecuting those arrested while attending protests?

My family and I came to the U.S. to escape a country in which we were not free to speak our minds, read what we wanted, or protest injustice. So I never take basic American rights for granted. I will not prosecute people who exercise their First Amendment right to express their political views.

Criminal charges related to protests are sensitive, controversial, and must be brought with great care. I believe the most junior prosecutors should not be responsible for making the consequential decisions of whether to bring such charges. Stepping back, I plan to staff the office's Early Case Assessment Bureau with senior-level assistant district attorneys who bring the necessary judgment and experience to be gatekeepers to the criminal justice system. And they will carefully monitor, and must give supervisory approval for, charges that arise in the context of protests – obstructing government administration and resisting arrest.

PRISONS AND INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

8. As the city prepares to close Rikers Island and replace the complex with smaller neighborhood jails, what do you see as the potential benefits and pitfalls of the plan? Do you believe that the city should consider incarceration alternatives such as community jails?

I support closing Rikers Island for several reasons. Rikers is a very violent place. The size and transient nature of the incarcerated population make it difficult for correction officers to manage thousands of people, and the stress exacerbates violence. Further, the island is remote and inaccessible: defense lawyers struggle to meet with and prepare with clients, and families struggle to visit. It takes hours for incarcerated people to travel from Rikers to courthouses, which often requires them to leave before dawn and return very late at night, without opportunity to eat or sleep. On top of this, it costs New Yorkers billions of dollars annually to maintain the degrading conditions.

I am pleased that the city's pretrial detention population is now small enough that replacing Rikers with neighborhood jails is possible. (In fact, in the Brooklyn DA's office, even before bail reform, the office reduced our jail population by nearly 50% in one year by requiring ADAs to report all misdemeanor bail requests to the office's leadership. Our office sent the smallest percentage of cases to Rikers, compared with all of the other

DA's offices, and saw no negative impact on public safety.)

I support the development of small community jails in consultations with communities. The small size of these facilities will ease management concerns that currently exist on Rikers, and their proximity to the courthouses and communities will allow defendants to have more time with their lawyers and families, while reducing time spent traveling. Of course, the viability of small community jails depends on managing the size of the pretrial population through alternatives to incarceration, which I fully support.

9. What would you take consideration when recommending sentencing of a person with a felony conviction? (e.g. past history, availability of alternatives)

In my view, the purpose of a prison sentence is simple: to advance public safety. The American legal system imposes longer prison and jail sentences than any other western country. The reasons for these lengthy sentences have been discredited. I view sentencing reform as the next frontier of criminal justice and am committed to leading change. As district attorney, my sentencing policy will be guided by the following: first, I will instruct prosecutors to seek the minimum sentence as a default rule and will require supervisory approval for seeking higher sentences. Second, I will use incarceration only as a last resort and only after considering all other alternatives or diversions. I will instruct prosecutors to advocate for sentences only upon full consideration of collateral consequences, including collateral consequences. And lastly, I will work to treat like cases alike. I will require the office to track all sentencing to analyze whether there are disparities by race, gender, age, or any other demographic and will course correct.

10. What is your opinion on pretrial detention?

I have been and remain an advocate for bail reform. Incarceration should always be a last resort, and especially for the presumed innocent. For too long, too many people – disproportionately people of color and the poor – were held across New York State because they could not put together a few hundred dollars, and without any public safety or other justification. In fact, I am proud to have been a part of the leadership team of the Brooklyn DA's

Office which, even before legislative bail reform, drastically reduced pretrial detention through a management device, requiring prosecutors to justify misdemeanor bail requests to the office's leadership – including me. On the eve of bail reform, Brooklyn sent the smallest percentage of people to Rikers of all city district attorneys.

The New York legislature made important changes to the bail system in the past few years, significantly reducing pretrial detention populations. I will continue to advocate for the reduction of pretrial detention and the elimination of cash bail, and also to introduce a limited means for prosecutors and judges to consider public safety risk in deciding pretrial detention or terms of release – a system like that existing in Illinois, New Jersey, and federal courts. Recognizing that judgments about public safety have been and can allow racial bias to seep into the criminal justice system, I am committed to developing and enforcing strict controls on public safety assessment tools.

Finally, an important aspect of the new New York bail law has been overlooked and underused, and I am committed to supporting and – where possible – funding it. The new law provides an array of conditions of release that judges may impose to avoid detention: passport surrender, mandated counseling, drug treatment, electronic monitoring. But these are unfunded mandates. As district attorney, I will advocate for, fund to the extent possible, and train ADAs on the use of these options.

11. How do you see the work of the Conviction Integrity Program under the current DA? What would be your approach and plan for this unit?

See question #1. I am proud to have supervised the premier Conviction Review Unit (CRU) in the country in Brooklyn and will draw from that experience as well as my study of best practices. Under my leadership, CRU will be open about the process and its outcomes, explaining its decisions and publishing findings, memorandum, and recommendations. We will publicly explain the reasoning behind vacated convictions and publish resulting changes or reviews of office policies or practices

During my time supervising the CRU in Brooklyn, I worked with the Innocence Project and WilmerHale to undertake and publish 426 Years, a year-long study of the first 25 wrongful convictions identified by the Brooklyn CRU. We found many mistakes by many actors in various institutions, and above all concluded that the 25 cases represented “failures of prosecution as an institution – whether through the acts of individual prosecutors, collective decisions, or failure to train or guide prosecutors adequately.” This report will inform my and my office’s practices moving forward.

MISCELLANEOUS

12. How would you handle the various investigations related to former President Trump, currently conducted by the Manhattan DA office?

It would be unethical for me to comment on or make promises regarding a specific and pending investigation. In this matter as in all others, I will follow the facts wherever they might lead.

But I can say that I believe it is absolutely the district attorney’s responsibility to enforce the rules of fair play, and to hold everyone to account for harm done to New Yorkers, regardless of what power he may have gone on to acquire. I believe I have the experience, judgment, and temperament to handle a matter as complex as this one appears to be. As an Assistant U.S. Attorney, I prosecuted complex tax fraud and evasion cases as well as other white collar matters, and thoroughly understand the challenges involved. In the Brooklyn DA’s Office, I led the team that successfully sued the Trump Administration over the I.C.E. courthouse arrest policy.

I also believe that this investigation and potential prosecution will require more than experience prosecuting tax crimes or suing Trump. The district attorney must be someone who has worked across American legal institutions, who understands both federal and state law and jurisdiction and the overlaps and differences between them, who has serious management and leadership experience, and, most importantly, has a record of tackling new and challenging questions in the law – as I did from the Supreme Court to the front office of the U.S. Department of Justice to the front office of the

Brooklyn DA's office.

13. In light of everything we have discussed above, why do you want to be a district attorney?

My journey as an immigrant – coming to the U.S., at four years old, to flee antisemitism and violence in Iran – informs everything I do. When my mother, brother, and I arrived at J.F.K. airport, the first American we met was an Immigration and Naturalization Service officer. We had what were likely fake tourist visas in our hands, and he could have turned us away – setting me on an entirely different course in life. But that law enforcement officer made a different decision, and used discretion and compassion to allow us to enter the country.

I have thought a lot about that night in the years since, and I share that experience with you because it has shaped my understanding of the power and responsibility of law enforcement. As a child, I attributed my freedom in this country to a small miracle – the accident of having arrived on December 24th, Christmas Eve. Maybe, I used to think, that was why the officer exercised the law with mercy and compassion. Of course now as an adult and as a lawyer I understand more, that in a democracy, anyone who has the power to enforce the law also has the power – and the duty – to enforce it with discretion. Not every crime should lead to punishment. Not every punishment should be meted out at the maximum. Law enforcement requires us to exercise our humanity and sense of justice, always mindful of the demands of safety, in individual cases. I have spent most of my career in public service, trying to live and work by these principles. I intend to approach the awesome power and responsibility of the district attorney in the same way.

14. Have you ever been disciplined or had a complaint against you by an agency charged with lawyer discipline?

No

If so, please describe the situation and the punishment meted out.

15. What experience have you had, if any, with good government and reform issues? (e.g.

voting and elections, campaign finance, ethics, police accountability, government transparency and oversight). If you've worked to advance these goals, we'd love to hear about it.

As a federal prosecutor in the Eastern District, I worked in the Public Integrity Section to prosecute public corruption.

As General Counsel to Brooklyn DA Eric Gonzalez, I helped create and supervised a new stand-alone Law Enforcement Accountability Bureau. We investigated and prosecuted the police for an array of crimes and I led the team that created an internal process for identifying officers that the district attorney's office (not courts or outside institutions) considered unreliable, to ensure prosecutors do not work with those officers in any capacity – a first in New York City. I supervised a new team in charge of gathering, managing, and disclosing information related to officers' credibility.

I also served as the Chief Ethics and Professional Responsibility Officer in Brooklyn. In addition to reviewing and handling allegations of misconduct by our prosecutors, I provided guidance to prosecutors on questions of ethics and practice – a function that I believe is key to preventing mistakes and misconduct and fostering a culture of learning and improvement.

16. 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: Gender-Based Violence – see question #1

Second: Gun Violence – see question #1

Third: Post-Conviction Justice – see question #1

What else would you like us to know about yourself?

The depth and breadth of my prosecutorial and management experience differentiates me from the rest of the field. I have experience creating significant institutional reforms and resolving the most difficult legal questions across American legal institutions, from the Supreme Court to President Obama's Justice Department to the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office.

In President Obama’s Justice Department, I supported the Attorney General in managing numerous components of the Department and with specific projects, such as developing guidance for thousands of federal prosecutors nationwide about how to use their discretion in charging decisions. As an Assistant U.S. Attorney for six years, I investigated and prosecuted over 150 cases, some of which took many years each and involved working with numerous law enforcement agents and task forces. I understand the challenges of investigation and prosecution and have the experience to carry out complex cases because I have done them – from violent crime to tax evasion. Lastly, I am the only candidate in this race with experience managing and leading in a progressive DA’s office. As the General Counsel of the Brooklyn District Attorney’s Office, under the leadership of Eric Gonzalez – the fourth largest district attorney’s office in the country – I also served as a close advisor to the District Attorney and was an important part of the leadership team charged with implementing the office’s criminal justice reform agenda. I understand how to create institutional change from within a local prosecutor’s office because I have done it. I supervised the Appeals Bureau and our entire appellate practice – all appeals and collateral motions – as well as legal positions taken throughout the trial bureaus; I also supervised the Conviction Review Unit, the Post-Conviction Justice Bureau, the Law Enforcement Accountability Bureau, and the Civil Litigation Bureau.

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



Tali Campaign Literature.pdf

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.