



2026 Primary Candidate Questionnaire - New York State Legislature

Citizens Union - Local Candidates Committee

**THIS IS A BLANK QUESTIONNAIRE – YOU CAN SEND IT WITH YOUR RESPONSES
TO [CANDIDATES@CITIZENSUNION.ORG](mailto:candidates@citizensunion.org) OR SUBMIT IT ONLINE [HERE](#)**

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

For over 125 years, Citizens Union (CU) has been devoted to holding our local government accountable with the highest ethical standards and fighting for political reforms that improve New York democracy (<https://citizensunion.org/issues/>). To promote a competitive and diverse political culture, a fair and open political process, and accountable and responsible government, we evaluate candidates running for office and back those who strongly support reform. Our evaluations are done through questionnaires, independent research, and interviews conducted by our Local Candidates Committee. (<https://citizensunion.org/portfolio-item/citizens-union-2025-candidate-evaluation-info-for-candidates/>).

As a prerequisite for receiving the support of Citizens Union, please complete the following questionnaire and submit your response by Friday, March 27, 2026. As you complete the form, you can click “Save” and return to the form later. All short answers have a 250-word limit. Once you have completed the questionnaire and submitted your response to us, you will receive a copy of your submission. Your submission will be posted on our website (with the exception of contact info).

Upon receipt of your submission, we will reach out to you or your staff to schedule a virtual interview with members of our Local Candidate Committee. The interview will be recorded. Shortly thereafter, we will announce our support in key priority races to our members and on our website and other channels. 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.

Please feel free to reach out to Citizens Union with any questions or comments at candidates@citizensunion.org.

Thank you very much. We look forward to your response.

| GENERAL INFORMATION | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Name | Stefani Zinerman |
| District | 56 |
| In which primary | June 23 rd , 2026 |
| Age | 61 |
| Education | Rochester Institute of Technology |
| Current job, position, or occupation | Incumbent Assembly Member |
| Other positions or roles | N/A |
| Previous jobs or positions | NY State Senate, NYC Council, RF CUNY |
| Contact information | |
| Email | team@zinermanfor56ad.com |
| Campaign Manager Name | Giannica Cortes |
| Campaign Manager Email | manager@zinermanfor56ad.com |
| Phone Number | 917-828-5016 |
| Website | https://www.zinermanfor56ad.com/ |
| X | https://x.com/zinermanfor56ad |
| Facebook | https://www.facebook.com/zinermanfor56AD/ |
| Instagram | https://www.instagram.com/zinermanfor56ad |
| Bluesky | zinermanfor56ad.com |
| Other social media platforms | |

General

1. What are your top three campaign promises or goals, and what actions will you take to achieve them if elected?

My campaign is grounded in a clear principle: **Affordability = Housing + Income + Services**. In the Vibrant 56, affordability must reflect real lives—not regional averages that ignore our reality.

First, I will protect and stabilize housing. That means strengthening tenant protections, funding rental arrears programs, enforcing against negligent landlords, and making sustained investments in NYCHA and supportive housing. Housing stability is the foundation of community stability.

Second, I will raise incomes and expand economic opportunity. I treat workforce development as housing policy. I will grow union career pathways, align state investments with neighborhood-based hiring, and ensure that residents of the Vibrant 56 can access living-wage jobs tied to infrastructure, green economy, and public service sectors.

Third, I will build a holistic affordability ecosystem—connecting housing, income, and public services. That includes protecting homeowners from deed theft, investing in youth development and public health, and strengthening community-based institutions that deliver results on the ground.

Raise incomes and close wage gaps by treating equal pay and living-wage jobs as housing policy, expanding union career pathways, and aligning state investments with neighborhood needs.

- 2. How long have you lived in the district in which you are running, and do you have any achievements or involvement in your district you are particularly proud of?

I am a third-generation Bed Stuy resident, raised in Gowanus Houses, and spent weekends in Bed Stuy with my grandparents. This upbringing continues to shape my values, leadership, and commitment to public service.

I am most proud of delivering results that protect and uplift our community. That includes funding the Cultural Museum of African Art, Redevelopment of the Marcus Garvey Armory, and advancing legislation to combat deed theft and protect generational wealth, expanding workforce opportunities that connect residents to living-wage careers, and securing investments in community-based organizations that serve as anchors in Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights.

Equally important is how I lead. I have built a model of governance rooted in accessibility, transparency, and partnership. Through town halls, resource events, and direct engagement, I ensure that residents are informed, heard, and connected to opportunity.

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

My work is rooted in strengthening democracy, transparency, and accountability—principles that guide how we serve the Vibrant 56 and how I've shown up as both a community leader and legislator.

As a member of the NAACP and now as an Assemblymember, I have consistently advanced reforms that make government more accessible and responsive. I introduced and passed the Plain Language bill, supported by organizations like Common Cause, to ensure that government materials—including ballots—are clear, understandable, and usable for everyday New Yorkers. That is a fundamental step toward an inclusive democracy.

I supported the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act of New York to protect against voter suppression and ensure equitable access to the ballot. In the Vibrant 56, I also prioritize civic engagement—leading voter education efforts and connecting residents to the democratic process.

As Vice Chair of the New York State Black Legislative Task Force, I helped lead a \$30 million statewide investment in community-based organizations. That work demonstrated how transparent, equity-driven budgeting can shift power and resources directly to communities.

For me, good government is not just about policy—it is about practice. It is about making systems work for people, building trust, and ensuring that those closest to the challenges are part of the solutions.

Elections and Voting

- Do you support opening up New York City's closed primary system, allowing over 1 million unaffiliated voters that are currently locked out of the election to participate in the primary election? **No**
- Will you oppose any attempt to permanently remove redistricting protections from the state constitution, including existing protections of minority voting rights, population equity, ban on political gerrymandering, and consideration of communities of interest? **Yes**
- Do you support reforming the process of filling vacancies in the state legislature by implementing nonpartisan special elections (like the system used in New York City) instead of giving party officials the power to decide who will run as the party nominee? **No**

- Do you support restructuring the New York City Board of Elections to make it more professionalized and transparent, and less dependent on political parties ([S699 Krueger/A1852 Rozic](#))? **Yes**
- Do you oppose requiring registered voters to show ID to vote in New York State? **Yes**
- Do you support providing time extenders for polling place voting hours in cases where an emergency leads to voting being disrupted or shut down ([S4602A Gounardes/A5846A Gibbs](#)) **Yes**
- Do you support the Democracy During Detention Act ([S440 Myrie/A2121 Walker](#)), which establishes the election infrastructure to make voting accessible for all those eligible to vote who are detained in jails? **Yes**

Campaign Finance

- Are you a public campaign finance participant? If not, please explain why.

Yes.

- Are you a supporter of the state's public campaign matching funds program, and do you commit to ensuring the program is fully funded?

Fully funding the program ensures its budget meets the program's needs and demand.

Yes, I have participated in the program since its inception

- Do you support requiring disclosure of a contributor's employer in campaign finance reports? ([S1910 Rivera/A3092 Carroll](#)) **Yes**
- Do you support requiring Independent Expenditure entities (Super PACs) to disclose their top three donors on ads, similar to the requirements under NYC law? ([S8445 Fahy/A10097 Solages](#)) **Yes**
- Do you support applying lower contribution limits to lobbyists and people doing business with the state or seeking contracts from the state? New York City imposes lower contribution limits for registered lobbyists and individuals doing business with the City. **Yes**

Ethics

- Do you support requiring lobbyists to report their campaign contributions and fundraising activity, as well as campaign consulting services they provide? **Yes**

- Do you support requiring the disclosure of lobbying in connection with a nomination or confirmation of a nominee that requires Senate confirmation in lobbying reports? ([S374 Gianaris/A7456 McDonald](#)) **Yes**
- Do you support codifying sexual harassment as conduct that violates the public officers and employees code of ethics? ([Gounardes S4197/Kelles A6201](#)) **Yes**

Police Accountability

- Do you support giving the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board access to certain sealed and confidential records in matters involving potential police discipline? ([S4966 Bailey/A292 Cruz](#)) **Yes**
- Do you support transferring disciplinary hearings involving police officers from the NYPD to the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH)? ([S3927 Myrie](#)) **Yes**

Revising City Charters

- Do you support banning the establishment of “lame duck” charter revision commissions, established by mayors right before the end of their term? ([S8934 Liu](#)) **Yes**
- Do you support mandating that charter commissions conduct their process over a mandatory minimum timeline of 180 days before issuing recommended ballot questions to a city’s charter? **Yes**