



Candidate Questionnaire

Local Candidates Committee - NYS Legislative
Election - 2020 General

Monday, September 14, 2020

Dear candidate,

Congratulations on your decision to run for office in the New York State Legislature!

In the following pages, you will find questions regarding your positions on various reform measures, campaign promises, and ethics in public office.

Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union uses to evaluate candidates running for the New York State Legislature, and to issue our endorsement for the General Election.

This is a document confirming your responses to the Citizens Union questionnaire.

We plan to make responses to this questionnaire public on our website, printed voters directory, and other appropriate venues. If you seek our support, we will also 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 in this election cycle.

★★

Citizens Union is a nonpartisan democratic reform and good government group dedicated to making democracy work for all New Yorkers. Citizens Union serves as a civic watchdog, combating corruption and fighting for political reform. We have been evaluating candidates for public office in New York City since 1911, and our comprehensive Voter Directory has been a source of reliable information for New Yorkers for over a century.

You can read Citizens Union's [principles and criteria for our candidate evaluation process here](#).

We thank you very much for your response.

Your Info

Name

Mark Szuszkiewicz

Office Sought (New York State)

☒ Assembly

District Number

46

Email

mark@mark4ny.com

Biographical Information

Party Affiliation(s)

Republican

Age

39

Education

High School with multiple professional licenses

Occupation/Employer

Self Employed, Financial Services, Entertainment,
and other professions

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement

I've never held public office previously. I have volunteered for numerous charity organizations. I've organized fundraising events for charities, i have been an

advisory board member for a charity, and other unpaid charity work. I've worked for several political campaigns getting petitions signed and other tasks since 2013. I've also been a poll site coordinator for several elections.

Campaign Contact Information

Campaign Manager Name

Liam McCabe

Campaign Manager Email

liam.a.mccabe@gmail.com

Additional Staff Contact

Contact me directly with phone number provided

Phone Number

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Address

P.O. Box 90692
Brooklyn, NY, 11209
United States

Website

mark4ny.com

Twitter

<https://twitter.com/mark4ny>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/Mark4NY/>

If elected, which legislative conference will

you join (e.g., Republican, Democrat, other)?

Republican

Affirmations

Have you completed the required campaign finance filings?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Are you willing to be interviewed by Citizens Union's Local Candidates Committee?

☒ Yes ☐ No

(Please note: interviews are prerequisites for Citizens Union's endorsements)

Signature



CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

Please state whether you support or oppose the following reform measures. If you wish to elaborate on your answers, you may do so in the provided space at the bottom of this page.

Ethics

1. Replace the Joint Commission on Public Ethics and the Legislative Ethics Commission with an effective and independent enforcement body (S594A/A1282A).

☒ Support ☐ Oppose

2. Limit outside compensation earned by state legislators and statewide officials to 25% of their salaries and eliminate stipends.

☒ Support ☐ Oppose

Elections and Voting

3. Do you support or oppose the following changes to the state's current registration and voting system?

	Support	Oppose
a. No-excuse absentee voting (second passage of constitutional amendment)	✓	-
b. Election Day voter registration (second passage of constitutional amendment)	-	✓
c. Re-enfranchisement of people on parole automatically through legislation, without requiring a Certificate of Good Conduct or Relief	✓	-
d. Mandating poll sites on college campuses	✓	-

4. Reform the special election process, utilizing a nonpartisan special election for state legislative seats and eliminate delays in filling vacancies.

☒ Support ☐ Oppose

5. Reduce the vote threshold to become a registered party back to 50,000 votes and keep the gubernatorial election as the qualifying election, and reduce the petition requirement for independent candidates back to 15,000 signatures.

☒ Support ☐ Oppose

Campaign Finance

6. Amend the state's public campaign financing system, approved in the 2021 budget, by

	Support	Oppose
a. Drastically reduce campaign contribution limits	✓	-
b. Set even lower contribution limits for registered lobbyists and those who do business with the state	✓	-
c. Move the campaign finance matching program to be administered by an independent, nonpartisan body outside of the NY Board of Election	✓	-
d. Simplify the matching system by making both in- and out-of-district donations eligible and by eliminating the three different tiers for matching	✓	-

Budget Process

7. Require full disclosure of grants and contracts issued by the state, including the budget lines from which the spending is made and reporting on the results of each grant or contract over a certain amount.

☒ Support ☐ Oppose

Election Administration

8. Provide for effective online disclosure and itemization of spending from elected officials' lump sum appropriations, including reporting on potential conflicts of interest and how the funds are spent.

☒ Support ☐ Oppose

9. Restructure the state Board of Elections to abolish the strict two-party division of governance and operation and put in place professional, nonpartisan administration.

☒ Support ☐ Oppose

Home Rule

10. Empower the attorney general to investigate and prosecute election law malfeasance and cases of public corruption.

☒ Support ☐ Oppose

11. Local Board of Elections are largely funded by their county. Given the many changes to election administration introduced in New York recently, the state should provide additional funding to county BOEs.

☒ Support ☐ Oppose

Court Reform

12. Make mayoral control of city schools permanent, with a governance system that provides for accountability, transparency, parent engagement, and democratic participation.

☐ Support ☒ Oppose

Redistricting

13. Simplify and consolidate New York State's court system by passing the Chief Judge's proposed constitutional amendment to modernize the courts.

☒ Support ☐ Oppose

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.

with 3A, a same day voter registration does not give a sufficient amount of time to complete a background check and other issues.

I would probably support #12 if I had more information about the governance system that provides for accountability, transparency, parent engagement, and democratic participation. Because I believe that the current mayor is a disaster, I don't believe in giving mayoral control of city schools.

With #14 I believe that there is too much gerrymandering now and I think that the districts should be made more sense geographically than they do now.

RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Government under the COVID-19 outbreak

14. Maintain the current redistricting process, supported by voters through a 2014 constitutional amendment, and particularly the elements that provide minority parties a voice in the process, allow the Independent Redistricting Commission to play a central role, and takes redistricting power away from the hands of incumbent lawmakers.

☐ Support ☒ Oppose

15. Provide public access to observe and participate in government proceedings, in meetings that would be public under the New York Open Meetings Law, via live and recorded video available on government websites.

☒ Support ☐ Oppose

16. The Legislature stopped holding regular meetings soon after the COVID-19 outbreak, and later reconvened in July and August for short sessions that dealt with urgent matters. Should the Legislature return to its regular, pre-COVID calendar next session?

☒ Yes ☐ No

17. The ability of citizens and advocates to make their voices heard in Albany has been severely curtailed since the Legislature shifted to work remotely. How can the Legislature remain open and accessible for New Yorkers who seek to engage their representatives?

Live streaming and archived recordings of remote sessions.

Serving the public under the COVID-19 outbreak

18. What are your concerns regarding the use of emergency powers during this crisis, and how do you think NY government can maintain public accountability standards at this time?

The governor has been given too much power during this crisis. Emergency voting sessions on some issues can be done remotely and through proxy for those unavailable to attend a remote session.

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.

19. What are the biggest challenges in your district in dealing with the coronavirus outbreak?

Small and large businesses going out of business and a large number of jobs lost.

20. What are the appropriate roles of city, state, and federal governments in a crisis such as this?

Putting the people ahead of party politics and not playing the blame game.

21. How will you help your future constituents, residents and businesses, access potential funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, or any other future government relief funds?

By keeping the people informed about programs that are available. I will have staff members that are informed about the details of programs available that will help guide people through the process. I will also work to help pass other programs to help those in need such as interest free deferred loans for small business owners.

CAMPAIGN PROMISES MADE TO VOTERS

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

Campaign Promise 1

A better education system with life skills classes, after school programs, and other improvements.

Campaign Promise 2

Regrow the economy by helping people get back on their feet with different programs. Funding programs like affordable housing with municipal bonds instead of 15 year tax abatements for developers.

Campaign Promise 3

Take on the homeless, mental health, and substance abuse issue by requiring testing for those receiving benefits and providing rehabilitation services for those who need it.

Campaign Promise 4

Take on the banks and their unfair overdraft fees and other unfair business practices.

Campaign Promise 5

Keep people informed about what is going on with legislature and expose corruption.



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Additional material

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

ETHICAL REPRESENTATION OF CONSTITUENTS

Citizens Union believes that all New Yorkers deserve to be represented by officials who work for the public interest and honor the public trust. With the corruption conviction of recent legislative leaders, we seek to endorse a candidate who will demonstrate that they will honor the full commitment of the oath of office, and always represent the public interest above all else.

Please tell us how you have and would continue to conduct the political affairs of this office in an upright manner, and maintain the public trust.

I am not a career politician and I am running for office because I don't trust politicians. I am not looking to further my career and unlike other politicians this is not a part time job for me. Other politicians are more concerned with their pockets and how things benefit them, but my only concern is what is best for the people. I will not be actively working any other professions and making the community a better place to live will be my only job.

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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