



504 DEMOCRATIC CLUB

The First Democratic Club in the Country Focusing on Disability Rights

www.the504democraticclub.org



2009 Borough President Candidate Screening Questionnaire

Please save as a Word document, complete & return by e-mail to: president@the504dems.org by June 5th, 2009.

Candidate Name: _____ Borough: _____

Contact Person: _____

If there is a Campaign office, is it wheelchair accessible? _____

Campaign Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____ Website: _____

Endorsements: (Political, Community & Labor):

I. Action Shows Commitment!

a. While in public office/prior to this campaign, what have you accomplished in regard to advancing disability rights? This can include work towards accessible housing, transportation, employment, health care, education, and including people with disabilities in the political process?

b. Will you commit to only attend / sponsor events that are accessible to people with disabilities (PWDs including providing written materials in alternate formats, providing assistive listening systems, and sign language interpreters as well as ensuring that locations are physically accessible)?

II. General Questions:

a. What personal and professional experience have you had with people with disabilities in your personal life and in the workplace?

b. What type of jobs would you be willing to hire and to provide reasonable accommodation (e.g. flex or part time) for staff members with disabilities?

c. How will you work closely with the disability community to assure passage of vitally needed legislation through the City Council? What will be your strategy?

III. Housing:

a. What is your position on the development of supported apartments/homes and retirement homes for the mentally disabled in your borough? Please also explain same for physically disabled. What strategies will you utilize?

b. What is your position on making DRIE (Disabled Rent Increase Exemption) and SCRIE (Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption) programs income eligibility comparable? (At present for the cap for a individual senior or household income eligibility is \$28,000. While for younger disabled individuals income is only \$19,284 and \$27,780 for a household?)

c. What alternative programs will you propose to allow persons with disabilities to stay in their own homes/apartments? (i.e. protection from rent increases or undue eviction (harassment) and make funds available to make appropriate accommodations in present living environment). Another example: perhaps a dedicated housing trust fund should be established for making those housing accommodations. If so, how would you fund same?

d. What would you do to ensure that "Visitability" is enacted in New York City? Visitability is the movement towards establishing guidelines providing that newly constructed multi-family dwellings have basic accessible/adaptable features that permit friends and family with disabilities to visit, and for residents to "age in place," without having to move out when age and/or disability set in.

e. Visitability in private homes should at least have one entrance and accessible bathroom on the first floor. The issue is not that it be enforced, but that apartments be adaptable including added ramps, showers and bathtub grips, so that the disabled can function where they live. I would advocate, as Borough President, that these are included in new developments during the ULURP process.

IV. Transportation:

- a. Will you support, and what strategy will you utilize, to implement an expansion of affordable wheelchair accessible transportation in NYC, including taxis, livery service, express buses, airport shuttle service, more accessible subway stations, etc.?
- b. Efforts to secure a 100% accessible fleet of medallion taxis have been hampered by opposition from Mayor Bloomberg and the taxi industry. Wheelchair accessible taxis are present in many cities as a result of strong support from local Mayors and City Councils. What would you do to assure that all New York City residents, commuters and tourists have access to an important form of public transportation, our medallion taxis and community car services?
- c. Access-A-Ride has denied rides to many eligible consumers; cause unnecessarily long trips, causing workers to be late for work and consequently be docked pay and even lose their jobs; routinely leave many consumers stranded at the curb, lying to their clients that a bus is coming and calling consumer a "no-show" when the bus has not shown. Consumers who complain are often subject to retaliation. What would you do to improve the quality of service for those who must use Access-A-Ride?
- d. Do you favor the construction of the Second Avenue Subway? If so, is this a priority?

V. Civil Rights:

Under the Bloomberg Administration, the Corporation Council intervened on the side of the city of Sacramento when it sought to challenge the Americans with Disabilities Act regarding the requirement to maintain accessible sidewalks. Do you pledge to use your office to affirm or strengthen, rather than weaken, civil rights protections for persons with disabilities?

VI. Community Board:

- a. Do you support making sign language interpreters available for Community Board meetings? If so, how would you fund this?
- b. Will you appoint disabled persons to local Community Boards?
- c. How many have you/or will you appoint to Community Board?
- d. Will you support the "requirement" and implement, a Disabled Committee on every Community Board?

VII. Discretionary Funds:

Please Specify: Have you used (or will you use) your discretionary funds to support organizations serving persons with disabilities or service organizations seeking to make their programs accessible to persons with disabilities? If so, what percentage of your discretionary funds went to such organizations?

Date: _____