

Assemblyman Michael Benjamin Additional Comments on Questions:

Restore the Public's Trust

1. Ensure that ethics, lobbying and campaign finance watchdogs are independent and powerful.

I support an increase transparency for lobbying and campaign finance.

2. End the practice of legislators drawing their own district lines during the redistricting process.

I do not support ending the practice of legislators drawing their own district lines. It is our constitutional prerogative to control the redistricting process.

3. Provide fairness in allocating legislative resources and "member items," and amend the legislature's rules to create a more open and accountable body.

(no additional comment)

Reform the State's Finances

4. Close obsolete public authorities through the creation of a "base closing commission," which would review all authorities and close down obsolete ones.

I would support legislation that would achieve this goal.

5. Establish an independent fiscal watchdog, along the lines of the Congressional Budget Office.

(no additional comment)

6. Open up the government's budget books and put them on-line, greatly expanding the amount of available information beyond the Comptroller's "Open Book New York."

(no additional comment)

Curb the Power of Special Interests

7. End "pay to play" for lobbyists and seekers – and receivers – of government contracts by dramatically lowering contribution limits for such donors.

I do not support this measure. I do support increased disclosure of lobbyists and their clients.

8. Require public disclosure of "independent" campaign contributions and close loopholes, such as ones that allow donations by LLCs to be treated as if they were contributions from individuals.

(no additional comments)

9. Bolster the role of small donors in the campaign finance system. For example, a system of public financing enhances the role of small donors.

I would not support this measure at this time because we are unable to afford a public campaign finance system.