



Questions for the DNC Chair Candidates - 2017
From Democrats Abroad

Lorna Johnson, candidate for DNC Vice Chair

1) Why are you running for DNC (Vice) Chair?

Like many of you, I woke up on November 9th upset and a little confused. We had lost when we were supposed to win. What happened? How did we get here? I don't have all the answers but what I do know is that I want to be a part of the solution going forward. I've been fundraising for Democratic candidates for the last 16 years – including two of the largest events in history overseas, working with some of you – and I want to take a more active role within the DNC to offer what talents I have to move our party forward.

2) How would you describe your management style? What is your relevant organizational management experience? Would you work as a full time or part time Chair, and if part time, how would you manage?

I'm a consensus-builder who works to find the right solutions from the combined experience of a talented group of people. I'm a business owner who founded and built my own Healthcare practice. It wasn't easy but I'm proud of it. Additionally, I'm proud to be the Honorary Consul for Jamaica in Los Angeles. I run the Consulate and its staff to serve the community.

3) Do you think the position should be filled by a single Chair or by two Co-Chairs, as has sometimes been done in the past?

I think the DNC chair works best when it is staffed by a single, full-time Chair with the time, energy, and experience to fully dedicate to the enormity of the job.

4) What lessons should we learn from the 2016 elections and what do they mean for our strategy going forward? How are we going to attract voters who did not turn out for Democrats in 2016?

I'm not sure anyone knows the perfect answer to this question, but one

answer has to be a more functioning, full-time DNC. It is not sufficient for the DNC to be an arm of a Presidential campaign every 4 years in swing states. We need a properly funded DNC, with proper emphasis on State Party funding, to continue to spread our message to the electorate every single day of every single calendar year.

The best way to combat the misinformation and demagoguery that we face as a Party is to have in-person, genuine conversations with voters. We need to give Parties the resources to do that work. It must happen at the state and local level.

5) What changes should be made at the DNC to make it a more effective organization?

In addition to my thoughts above, we must continue to work to make sure the DNC is as diverse as the electorate it serves. Our staff and our consultants must have the experience to be able to relate to the voters we are trying to persuade.

We need to restore the trust in the DNC by being more transparent and inclusive in our decision-making process. That means everything from providing more information on what is happening with staff inside the DNC to making sure that local leaders – the people that really move the Party forward – are involved in decisions that impact their communities.

6) Democrats Abroad members vote in all 50 states. What are your views on implementing a 50-State Strategy? What role do you see for Democrats Abroad?

Without question, Democrats need to return to the 50-State Strategy. I've pledged to work every day to raise \$5 million to specifically support the State Party Partnership to make sure we can adequately fund our Parties.

In my opinion, Democrats Abroad need to be properly funded and represented as any other State Party. Though the challenges are different, the rewards are great. Seeing the numbers of Democrats Abroad that live in states that decided the election was admittedly surprising and, more importantly, depressing. I will work to make sure that you have the funds to run the important and unique GOTV efforts that can help swing elections.

7) Concerning Democrats Abroad (DA):

- How would you plan to include Democrats Abroad in the DNC's resource allocations in future election cycles?
- Would you ensure that DA is allocated funding (like other state parties) under the State Party Program (SPP) to use for an Executive Director as well as Communications and GOTV initiatives abroad?
- Would you agree to designate a point person within the DNC for Democrats Abroad, allowing us easy and effective interface with the Party?

I'll answer these in bullet points just as you asked:

- **Resource allocation: DA needs to be funded as a full State Party and additionally given increased training and access to digital organizing tools that are more necessary for broad, multi-country organizing. I will push to make sure the technological advances we make are more available to State Parties and I will additionally make sure that there is effective communication within different departments at the DNC, like Communications and Digital, that are even more important for an organization with unique operating plans like DA.**
- **SPP Funding: I pledge to vocally support and advocate for full SPP funding as a minimum for DA.**
- **Point-person: As I mentioned above, DA has unique needs that require greater-than-normal access to DNC staff and I think it makes perfect sense for one staffer within the DNC to coordinate all of those requests.**

8) Like voters in all states, Democrats Abroad members have concerns specific to overseas Americans. What is the best medium for state parties like us to raise these issues within the Democratic Party and see them addressed?

With full and adequate representation within the DNC, Democrats Abroad will be able to address their concerns like any other Party. We need to additionally work to make sure that we, the DNC, offer frequent alternative methods of communication to make sure that Democrats Abroad have a platform to make their voices heard. Regular town halls and working groups that involve DNC staff are two ideas that immediately come to mind.

9) What other remarks would you like to make to Democrats Abroad?

I've worked with some of you before to host overseas events for candidates. I'm a nurse, I'm an immigrant, and I'm a philanthropist. Most importantly, like all of you, I'm a proud Democrat. I want to put my experience as a fundraiser to work for YOU. We need more funding for our State Parties. That won't just happen – we have to go out and get it. I want to raise money to make sure that Democrats are competitive every day, every year, and in every corner of the world, not just in important regions and in important swing states. We have the right message – we just need to make sure we're delivering it in the right way.

I hope I can earn your vote. I would be happy to speak to any of you at any time – please feel free to email me at info@LornaForDNC.com and let's set up a time to talk.

In solidarity,

Lorna Johnson