



MARICOPA COUNTY

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) REGARDING THE MCDP ENDORSEMENT POLICY

Q: Why endorse before the primary?

A: MCDP does a great deal to help turn out votes through our field program. Early and repeated voter contact by phone and at the door is crucial in turning out more Democratic votes on Election Day. Arizona's primary in late August, coupled with over half of voters voting early, leaves less than 5 weeks for Get Out The Vote (GOTV) between the primary and ballot-drop for the general election. By endorsing, we can amplify a candidate's message early enough to make a difference in a general election.

Q: Who is eligible to be endorsed?

A: The posting of the MCDP Endorsement Policy lays out a fair and transparent process in which any candidate running for office (excluding federal races) may participate. Once a candidate in a particular race comes to us seeking an endorsement, we will also contact other Democratic candidate(s) for that office who have filed with the appropriate elections office to enter the endorsement process.

Q: What criteria will be used in determining a candidate's approval for endorsement?

A: There are 5 things:

- Candidate Application
- Candidate Questionnaire
- Candidate Interview
- Vote by the MCDP Endorsement Committee
- Vote by the MCDP Executive Committee (plus, LD Executive Boards in Legislative races)

Q: Do other county parties endorse candidates?

A: Yes. Among other large urban counties, the Los Angeles County Democratic Party actively endorses candidates and its endorsements then become official endorsements of the state California Democratic Party. San Francisco County and Cook County (Chicago) endorse as well. Here in Arizona, the Pima County Democratic Party also has a formal, written endorsement policy.

Q: Does this require a change to MCDP Bylaws?

A: No. MCDP Bylaws do not address this issue. This is a change in MCDP policy to which MCDP Bylaws specifically address as being set by the Chair. Also per MCDP Bylaws, the Chair may set up ad hoc committees as needed such as the "Endorsement Committee" in this case.

Q: How did this policy come about?

A: The original draft was based upon existing endorsement policies used by other county parties. The original draft was presented to the MCDP Executive Committee, discussed and edited numerous times over several months, taking suggestions into account and resulting in the final policy as posted. Great care was taken to incorporate suggestions that were voiced by members of the Executive Committee.

Q: Will MCDP endorse candidates in every race?

A: Not necessarily. As the policy reads, a threshold of 60% voting to endorse needs to be reached twice -- once after the initial Endorsement Committee Interview and again in the vote of the whole Executive Committee. Options of "Endorsed", "No Endorsement at this time", "No Consensus" and "Unacceptable" exist in both votes.

MCDP will only consider endorsing candidates running for local, county, legislative, and statewide races -- not in federal races.

Q: Why won't MCDP endorse federal candidates?

A: Since MCDP is not a federal committee, we work on behalf of federal candidates in conjunction with the Arizona Democratic Party (ADP) and the Coordinated Campaign.

Q: How does this policy affect Legislative Districts' involvement with candidates?

A: LDs have always played a huge role in helping to identify strong, qualified Democrats to run for office. As residents of their communities, PCs and other active Democrats know their neighborhoods and the leaders in them. MCDP's Candidate Recruitment Committee, along with other leadership in the Democratic Party, depend on the eyes and ears of all members. Multiple avenues of communication and discussion with potential candidates have always been essential. None of this will change. In addition, for endorsements of Legislative candidates, the Executive Boards of the respective LDs will have a vote in the endorsement process.

Q: What happens after a candidate has been endorsed by MCDP?

A: The answer to this depends on the candidate's wishes: An individual candidate may or may not choose to include our endorsement on their website, campaign literature, etc. As MCDP endorses candidates, we could include their names on our website, unless a candidate does not want us to do so.

Q: If MCDP endorses a candidate, will PCs be obligated only to volunteer for that candidate?

A: No. PCs may volunteer for any Democratic candidate they wish.

Q: Can non-endorsed candidates participate in MCDP's Field Program and Neighborhood Teams?

A: The final paragraph of Section 2 of the Endorsement Policy clearly states that our Field Program is open to all Democratic candidates who "demonstrate their commitment to our Democratic values and to strengthening the Democratic Party and MCDP's efforts across the ballot and across the county." Such non-endorsed candidates may include federal candidates (where we cannot endorse) or candidates in other races where endorsements have not yet been made.

Q: Is it true that Democratic candidates who are not endorsed will be denied VAN access?

A: No. Candidate access to the VAN is determined solely by the Arizona Democratic Party (ADP), and has nothing to do with MCDP's Endorsement Policy whatsoever.

Q: Why have I heard and read so many things online about this policy that aren't true?

A: We have no control over what is said online, nor is it possible to monitor every conversation. It is our sincere hope that by posting the MCDP Endorsement Policy and these Questions and Answers, many myths will be put to rest.