



ST. LOUIS  
YOUNG DEMOCRATS  
YOUNGDEMS.COM

## CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT GUIDE

### ENDORSEMENT MEETING

**Tuesday, May 1, 2018**

7:00 p.m., Schlafly Bottleworks, Crown Room

7260 Southwest Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63143

\*Open to the public, but only members in good standing before 4/18/18 can vote

### ST LOUIS YOUNG DEMOCRATS ENDORSEMENT

All Democratic candidates were invited to complete a questionnaire to be considered for an endorsement from the STL Young Dems. Their detailed responses are within. Only candidates who submitted responses by the deadline are considered in this process.

Members have the option to vote either via paper ballot at the May 1 endorsement meeting or online. All members eligible to vote will receive an online poll after the 5/1 meeting, and have until 11:59pm on Saturday 5/5 to vote. Candidates who receive a majority of votes win our endorsement. Members may also vote to “not endorse” in each race. For races with no majority winner, an online run-off ballot will be posted on Sunday 5/6. In the case of a runoff members must vote by 11:59pm on Monday 5/7. Through this democratic process, the STL Young Dems will push to support our endorsed candidates. While individual members may disagree on our collective endorsement decision, let’s maintain a dialogue of mutual respect and rally around our Democratic nominees after August 7th!

### STATE AUDITOR CANDIDATE

#### NICOLE GALLOWAY

##### **About Nicole**

I have led Missouri's taxpayer watchdog agency since April 2015. At the time of my appointment to Auditor, I was serving as Treasurer of Boone County. As Treasurer I managed a \$100 million investment portfolio and nearly \$200 million in annual revenues. As a board member of the County Employee Retirement Fund, I fought to extend benefits to same-sex spouses of county employees. As Auditor, I have uncovered more than \$250 million in mismanagement and my audits have led to criminal charges against corrupt public officials. Prior to serving in public office, I worked in the private sector as an actuary, accountant, and corporate auditor. I have an MBA from Mizzou and degrees in Applied Mathematics and Economics from Missouri S&T. I am a CPA and a Certified Fraud Examiner. My husband, Jon, and I have three sons, William, Benjamin, and Joseph.

##### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I'm the only Democrat running for State Auditor and the only Democrat currently holding a statewide office. Now more than ever, Missourians of all political leanings should be concerned about the possibility of single-party rule in Jefferson City. At a time when one party controls both chambers of the General Assembly and all the statewide offices except Auditor, the people of Missouri need someone leading their taxpayer watchdog agency who is independent of the insider, partisan machine that has tightened its grip on state government. It is my hope that the St. Louis Young Democrats can amplify that message because the race for Auditor does not often capture the attention of voters but is uniquely important in 2018.

##### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

We have reasons to be encouraged about 2018. But, we're going to have to be clear about what it is we're fighting for. For me, it's government that is open and responsive to the taxpayers who are footing the bill. It's government that guards the public trust and doesn't sell out to the highest dark money donor. It's government that puts you first and isn't self-serving. In a time when one party controls state government, the people of Missouri need an independent watchdog—not a Jefferson City lapdog.

##### **Democrats currently hold only one statewide office, and they may remain in the minority after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and hold Republicans accountable?**

As the person holding that one statewide office, I've already shown what I can accomplish in terms of making progress and holding officials accountable. I've taken on the Greitens administration. I've worked with Republicans and Democrats in the General Assembly to

advance legislation to restore whistleblower protections and strengthen anti-corruption laws. I was the first statewide office holder to expand paid leave benefits for my employees, including responding to incidents of domestic violence as protected leave.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

My work as Auditor takes me all across the state. In just the past few weeks, I've begun the process of auditing small communities, such as New Bloomfield, and large, such as the city of St. Louis. I seek citizen input and tips every step of the way. Efficient and effective use of tax dollars is something all Missourians can get behind, so that is how I start conversations anywhere I go. I campaign the same way I serve: I listen to what people are saying about their communities and seek to help them make their communities and their government work better. I never ask to which party they belong because the work of the Auditor's office isn't partisan. It's about maximizing government efficiency, eliminating waste, and preventing fraud. Those are concepts I've found appeal to all Missourians.

## COUNTY OFFICE CANDIDATES

### COUNTY OFFICE CANDIDATES

#### LISA CLANCY, ST. LOUIS COUNTY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 5

##### **About Lisa**

A passionate advocate for equity, Lisa Clancy's path to elected office follows a lifetime of service to others. Born and raised in Webster Groves, Lisa left St. Louis after college graduation and relocated to post-Katrina New Orleans, where she served as a Teach For America Corps Member. In her special education classroom, Lisa saw firsthand how her low-income students and their families deserved strong advocates both in the classroom and in their communities. In the ensuing decade, Lisa has worked in the nonprofit sector, focusing on work that breaks through the status quo in order to improve the lives of children, families, and communities most in need. Lisa is currently President of the Hadley Township Democratic Club and she serves as Secretary of the NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri Board of Directors. Her favorite role is Mom to her one-year-old son, James. She lives with James and her husband, Jeremy Farrar, in Maplewood.

##### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I'd be honored to receive an endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats because I'm a longtime member of the organization and have seen how the organization has grown the ability to mobilize members for action. It's critical that we continue to provide forums and opportunities to engage young people in politics. I see a lot of alignment between my platform and with the group's current priorities; an endorsement from Young Dems would be a good fit for members to get involved in a local campaign with shared values. Additionally, I'd like to see Young Dems get more engaged region-wide, not just in the City of St. Louis. The changes that our region seeks for itself will require us to work across City and County boundaries.

##### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

Experience-- I'm a 33-year old working Mom, a demographic not present on Council. I've committed over 10 years to social justice work in the education and nonprofit sectors.

Vision-- St. Louis County must enact policy and systems change that can lift us all, starting with recommendations made by the Ferguson Commission and For the Sake of All. My opponent's commitment to these calls to action is unclear at best and he's not been part of enabling the change we need.

Commitment to reform-- Big money in county elections enables pay-to-play schemes that favor big donors and cost taxpayers. My opponent was the only Council member to vote against advancing a measure that would impose limits to campaign contributions; there are currently none.

Team player-- My opponent's alliance with a problematic County Executive has cost him a good working relationship with his Council peers and comes at the expense of constituent interests.

### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

We have reasons to be encouraged about 2018. But, we're going to have to be clear about what it is we're fighting for. For me, it's government that is open and responsive to the taxpayers who are footing the bill. It's government that guards the public trust and doesn't sell out to the highest dark money donor. It's government that puts you first and isn't self-serving. In a time when one party controls state government, the people of Missouri need an independent watchdog—not a Jefferson City lapdog.

### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

1. Thinking and acting regionally— We must work relentlessly across our region's many siloes in order to strengthen our collective power and improve people's lives. This will require new and creative solutions to foster more coordination and collaboration among municipal, city, and county leaders.

2. Ensuring opportunity for all—I will work to implement calls to action from the Ferguson Commission and For the Sake of All reports; these calls to action are key to addressing our region's rampant racial inequity and economic decline. I will stand up for working families by advocating for higher wages, strong labor unions, and paid family leave. Our state continues to chip away at protections for our most vulnerable populations and we must be proactive at every level of government to ensure equity and justice.

3. Ensuring responsible, ethical, and accountable governance—The influence of big money in county politics must end. Further, County Council must be fully empowered to protect taxpayers' interests.

### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

It's a priority for me in my campaign and will be as Councilwoman to stand behind and amplify the voices of others who are too often shut out. We can't be a more inclusive and equitable community or Democratic party until we seek to understand those whose experiences are much different than our own. This means building new relationships and showing up to listen during community conversations and events, especially when what community members have to say might be tough to hear. That's been a priority for me for a long time personally and professionally and will continue to be in elected office. I also plan to regularly convene office hours and Town Halls so that I can foster transparency and trust with my constituents. I'll be intentional about engaging a diverse group of constituents and will partner with grassroots community groups and change agents so that I can be of service to them and we can advance shared priorities together.

**Do you support some form of unification between St. Louis City and St. Louis County? If so, what form and why?**

Fragmentation is a significant problem in our region that inhibits our growth and quality of life. I think there's ways to begin to address this that do not require formal unification between St. Louis City and County. This might include the consolidation of some municipal services when it presents a savings and quality improvement to taxpayers. We do not yet know enough about the process of unification between City and County to move forward at this time, and I'm hearing from District 5 voters that they are not ready for this and see other opportunities for City/County collaboration.

**The Forward Through Ferguson Report made 189 specific calls to action and the Department of Justice's Ferguson Report made 109 recommendations to address inequality and institutional racism in St. Louis. If elected, would you apply a racial equity lens to your office's work? If so, how?**

More St. Louis County citizens can succeed and prosper if policymakers and other leaders apply a racial equity lens, and that's a commitment I make as a candidate and as Councilwoman. I pledge to always ask "Who benefits? Who misses out? Are there disparities among lines of race and what is missing that could decrease these disparities?" Again, I would use the Ferguson Commission Report, the DOJ Report, and For the Sake of All as a compass for the policy changes that need to be enacted in St. Louis County. A racial equity lens also means being accountable to the Community through opportunities to hear directly from a diverse set of constituents. I will be intentional about this.

**COUNTY OFFICE CANDIDATES**

**DANA KELLY FRANKS, ST. LOUIS CITY LICENSE COLLECTOR**

**About Dana**

Business Owner/Financial Specialist

Financial Literacy and Empowerment Instructor

At age 15 I was a displaced teen with a newborn. Over the next two decades, I built a career in the corporate finance industry, became a published author and founded the non-profit Sheroes. Over the last decade I became the lady excited about finance that travels across the U.S. to disenfranchised communities to teach financial literacy and empowerment. For over 14 years I've owned my own financial firm where I now serve over 900 clients. Today, I share my life with my husband, 78th District State Representative Bruce Franks Jr. Together we have a blended family consisting of three boys and four girls. My hope is that my diligence and tenacity will make a comprehensive positive impact on my family and community.

**Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

St Louis Young Democrats are progressive, inclusive and community driven. These are qualities we share. Getting the endorsement of St Louis Young Democrats would show care and unity for the community we're working so very hard for.

**If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

My financial and operational backgrounds and my commitment to doing whatever it takes to achieve good government and true modernization differentiate me from my opponent. Over the past 5 years, this office has seen a less-than -1% increase in revenues and more than a 13% increase in expenditures while influencing little to no critical mass level impact, and maintaining outdated, tedious processes. It's time for a shift in leadership.

**What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

The three issues most important to me are 1) the funding of vital resources for the city through an increase in revenues, 2) the implementation of best practices, including the application of a racial equity lens to all policies and systems, in an effort to create more effective local government, and 3) access to business education, sustainability and growth in the City of Saint Louis.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I have been and continue to be in the community I will represent. I have been an employee and am an employer. I am the founder of a non-profit helping youth in our neighborhoods. My strong understanding of business culture combined with my knowledge of and

consistent presence in our many communities make me an advocate who can lead with empathy, compassion, and pragmatism.

### **Do you support some form of unification between St. Louis City and St. Louis County? If so, what form and why?**

I support taking a critical look at best practices in government and identifying ways to consolidate services and eliminate waste, including the potential elimination of the License Collector's Office as part of one consolidation effort. I believe that some form of unification between St. Louis City and St. Louis County could be a smart, equitable move for our region, and I am committed to working with other regional leadership to identify what that looks like, and to lobby the city, county and state to make it happen. The racial climate, lack of resources and constant line drawing is only perpetuating the divisiveness our city can no longer afford.

### **The Forward Through Ferguson Report made 189 specific calls to action and the Department of Justice's Ferguson Report made 109 recommendations to address inequality and institutional racism in St. Louis. If elected, would you apply a racial equity lens to your office's work? If so, how?**

I will apply an equity lens to the systems and processes within and surrounding the License Collector's Office, and will complete an audit that looks critically at all aspects of the office as a first step within my first 100 days. I will collect input from the constituents of this office, regional leadership, leaders in other cities, large and small businesses, and the residents of our many communities to inform the direction I plan to lead this office. I will hire local firms and employees to fully modernize the office, to innovate new solutions to problems that should have been solved long ago, and to explore and potentially implement the consolidation of the License Collector's Office into another local office as means to eliminate waste, streamline processes, grow revenues, and expand services. I will do these things as intentional steps toward equitable outcomes that will ensure ALL people in ALL of our 79 neighborhoods have access to opportunity and quality of life.

## **COUNTY OFFICE CANDIDATES**

### **WESLEY BELL, COUNTY PROSECUTOR**

#### **About Wesley**

Wesley lives in Ferguson MO, where he is an avid Cardinals fan and proud alumnus of Hazelwood East High School. After graduating from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law, Bell started his career at the Special Public Defender's office. In 2013 Bell was appointed as a judge, and later as a Municipal Court Prosecutor in Riverview, MO and the Consolidated Municipal Courts (CMC). As a Municipal Court Prosecutor, Bell actively worked with others to create the North County Policing Cooperative with a focus on Community Policing. Having worked as a judge, public defender and prosecutor, Bell brings a well rounded and comprehensive understanding of all facets of the criminal justice system. Wesley has dedicated himself to serve his community both professionally and personally. In 2015, the City of Ferguson elected Wesley Bell as a City Councilman. He played a vital role as part of the negotiation team for the City of Ferguson with the Department of Justice and was able to help negotiate and pass the Ferguson Consent Decree, which has up till date brought the most comprehensive community policing and court reforms in the region to the City of Ferguson.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

We are seeking the endorsement of the Young Democrats because we believe that Wesley Bell's vision of Safer Saint Louis is in an actionable path towards creating a necessary and much needed change to the criminal justice system in the Saint Louis region. We believe that our campaign's values are inline with the St.Louis Young Democrats platform of creating actionable and sustainable political change.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

Wesley's has a commitment to community engagement and actual criminal justice reform. In order for our system to work we seriously need to look at alternatives to jail time and convictions especially when it comes to non-violent offenders. If elected, our office would focus on a community prosecution model which is a preventative and treatment based and that is centered on the understanding of the direct intersection of criminal justice and Public Health.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

1-Increase and expansion use of Diversionary Programs (i.e Mental Health, Job Readiness and Drug treatment programs...)

2-Smart Start Prosecution that includes, community engagement, prosecutors that are assigned to geographic areas so they know those areas and can work to ensure that the individual needs of those areas are addressed.

3-Taking a serious re-evaluation of the ineffective cash-bond system.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

Our campaign is grassroots and we are hitting every area of the county (South, West and North) both on our feet as well as all and every community meeting we can get to in order to hear the concerns of the people in order to understand the needs of the community.

**Do you support some form of unification between St. Louis City and St. Louis County? If so, what form and why?**

I believe that a regional approach to the challenges issues affecting the St. Louis region and metropolitan area.

**The Forward Through Ferguson Report made 189 specific calls to action and the Department of Justice's Ferguson Report made 109 recommendations to address inequality and institutional racism in St. Louis. If elected, would you apply a racial equity lens to your office's work? If so, how?**

Inherent is our platform, an acknowledgement and understanding that racial equity lens being the central method of ensuring that all citizens are treated fairly and transparently.

## FEDERAL CANDIDATES

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#### REP. WM. LACY CLAY, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 1

##### **About Lacy**

I am the senior Member of Congress for the St. Louis region and Missouri's senior Democrat in Congress. Born and raised in St. Louis, public service is in my DNA. I grew up at the right hand of my Dad, the legendary Bill Clay, civil rights champion, Missouri's first African American Member of Congress, and a co-founder of the Congressional Black Caucus. I am honored to be a fearless, progressive advocate in Washington, DC for St. Louis City and County as we strive for jobs, education, healthcare for all, housing, voting rights, criminal justice reform, and racial equity in our economy.

##### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

As the 4th most progressive Member of Congress (as rated by the National Journal based on my voting records) I share your values, I work hard to advance the issues that you care most about and I welcome the enthusiasm, intelligence, passion and commitment of young Democrats as you reinvigorate our party at the federal, state and local levels. I would be honored to have your endorsement and your strong support at the polls on August 7th. I also invite you to join me as I lead the effort to Repeal Right to Work, raise the minimum wage, and win a new Democratic majority in the U.S. House.

##### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I'm running on my record because unlike my opponents, I actually have one. I'm the only candidate for Congress in MO-1 who has protected and brought thousands of jobs to STL; doubled the federal investment in community based healthcare in STL, won the NGA competition, bringing a \$1.75 billion federal investment to North St. Louis...the largest federal project in STL history; cleaned up and in process of cleaning up three environmental hazardous waste sites (SLAAP site at Goodfellow and I-70, Carter Carburetor and WestLake Landfill); and I am the only candidate who has directly stood up to the NRA and Donald Trump.

##### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

My three core issues remain jobs, healthcare for all, and protecting the right to vote.

##### **Democrats are currently in the minority, but this may change in one or both houses come November. Whether in the minority or not, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and hold Republicans accountable?**

As a senior member of the House Progressive Caucus, if we win a new Democratic Majority in the U.S. House...I will fight for five essential progressive issues: (1) Raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour (2) Medicare for All (3) Restoring the full coverage

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of the Voting Rights Act (4) Restoring true net neutrality and (5) holding Donald J. Trump responsible for the terrible damage he has done to our democracy

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

In addition to my own reelection, I'm supporting diverse candidates for a wide range of public offices at the local, state and federal levels and I have told both the House leadership and the leadership of the DNC that we must make a place at the table of power for a new generation of young leaders who want to expand and grow our party...that includes more women, more LGBTQ leaders, new Americans, the disabled, and full inclusion for Black and Latino voices in our party.

**How will you work to ensure federal investment occurs in all of Missouri, not only for those who are wealthy, well-connected, or living in certain districts?**

I often work with communities and leaders across our state to help bring them federal resources. That job would be immensely easier if we can restore a Democratic majority in the U.S. House and end the culture of corruption in Jefferson City. I take great pride in helping all parts of Missouri, working in a bipartisan way to advance opportunities for everyone in our state.

## FEDERAL CANDIDATES

### CORI BUSH, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 1

#### About Cori

Nurse. Ordained Pastor. Single mother. Survivor. Lifelong resident of St. Louis. While these all describe Cori Bush, they fail to capture the whole picture. Cori has been on the frontline fighting for all of St. Louis' citizens. From Ferguson, to battling homelessness, to challenging the school-to-prison pipeline, Cori has always stood with the people of St. Louis.

Since she was 19, Cori has worked to bring education and health care to our community. First at an early childhood center, then as a transplant nurse, rising to lead the unit's nursing team, she continues today to fight for healthcare for those that need it most.

Cori co-founded the Truth Telling Project after she realized that those who have suffered injustice needed a way to share their voice. She has been recognized by countless organizations as a tireless fighter promoting racial, social, and economic justice.

#### Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?

I believe that now is a time for change. It is time for new voices to take the reins. It is time to buck the status quo and fight for those whose voices have been silenced.

## ST. LOUIS YOUNG DEMOCRATS – CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT GUIDE

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When I chose #BeTheFirst as a slogan, it was not just to have a woman hold this seat. I chose it because I stand for ALL of the First District. #BeTheFirst is more than a catchphrase, it is a clarion call for change.

The St. Louis Young Democrats represents the voice of progress: young, active, and involved. I am running to be the voice that stands up to the establishment and demands to be heard. I am asking for your support not so that they see the first woman to hold this seat, but so that they see the embodiment of the First District, standing together fighting for the rights of our citizens.

### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

It is no longer enough any more to just vote well. It is no longer enough to be "good enough." It is no longer enough to just be loyal to the Party. It is time for Leadership.

St. Louis needs a voice. We need a champion who is not afraid to stand up and be noticed. We need a fighter who is willing to lead.

I have proven time and again that I will stand on the frontline against injustice. I have shown that I will not back down when faced with threats, with opposition, with abuse.

Missouri's First Congressional seat has existed for 171 years and has never had a woman's voice protecting our rights and standing up for our needs. We don't need someone who is here to protect the status quo or the establishment. We need someone to #BeTheFirst to stand for real, meaningful, and powerful change.

### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Fighting for health care for everyone. Standing for a living wage for our workers.

Fighting against the school-to-prison pipeline and to end mass incarceration

### **Democrats are currently in the minority, but this may change in one or both houses come November. Whether in the minority or not, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and hold Republicans accountable?**

As a member of our community, I have stood up against injustice and for people for my whole career. I stood up for the people after Ferguson, after the Stockley verdict, after countless injustices against our citizens. I am not afraid to make my voice heard.

I will stand up with anyone who is also fighting for the rights and needs of our citizens. But I will not be bullied into the background by those who want to only protect the rights of the few. I am not afraid to hold the line.

District 1 needs someone who has the strength and will power to stand up against the voices trying to shout us down. It is crucial that the Democratic Party has elected officials who are not afraid of being a Progressive. I am not afraid of being called a Progressive, because I fight for Progress. I fight for

### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices.**

### **What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I speak for the people of our District because I have been one for my whole life. I speak for the underserved because I work with them--and for them--every single day. I speak for those who have faced injustice, because I have faced injustice. I speak for those who have been hurt by a flawed system, discrimination, homelessness and lack of services because I care for them everyday, while at my job as a nurse, and I am out speaking for them after I get off. You can be assured that I won't stop working for the betterment of all the voices of our District, because I do that already, at work, after work, on the weekends, every day.

I strive to be the voice of those whose voice goes unheard. Going to Washington will not be doing something new, it will be amplifying and multiplying what I already do

### **How will you work to ensure federal investment occurs in all of Missouri, not only for those who are wealthy, well-connected, or living in certain districts?**

I believe that we can make the city and surrounding areas of St. Louis and all of Missouri into one of the most vibrant and thriving areas in the country. I believe in the power of our people, because, even after decades of challenges and neglect, we still believe that it is important to stand up and fight for our beliefs. After Ferguson, our voices were heard around the world and we brought change, to our local government, our police, and our communities. Our voices need someone who is willing to go to Washington and trumpet the virtues and values of the people of St. Louis. This is what I believe in.

I am a woman who believes strongly in the power of community. Missouri is made up of a patchwork quilt of communities that need opportunity. Opportunity to get out from the weight of past injustices, and get past the history that has divided our region.

## **FEDERAL CANDIDATES**

### **DEMARCO DAVIDSON, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 1**

#### **About DeMarco**

After graduating from Missouri University of Science & Technology in 2006, I came home to St. Louis with the skill of recognizing flaws in systems & processes for improvement. I planned to work for a Fortune 500 engineering firm. After visiting my high school and traveling through my old neighborhoods, I saw the problems that were afflicting St. Louis. Unfortunately, I did not see many solutions. I learned about the systems and processes that created St. Louis to become what it is today. Since 2006, I have had the opportunities to teach & serve in schools and after-school programs, worked for non-profits, organized political campaigns, challenged City & County ballot issues, mentored youth, served behind the scenes in the church & the streets during Ferguson, assisted in creating alternatives to homelessness, and I have been mentored by many of the great leaders of St. Louis.

### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I was first introduced to the STLYD as a field organizer for Barack Obama in 2008 while working with Jack Coatar. I was impressed that him and many others were highly politically active. Being in Rolla, MO during elections, I had little to no understanding of local politics and their influence in St. Louis. Organizations like STLYD not only have a rich history but it continues to shape the future of STL politics. An endorsement from STLYD would be an honor knowing that you all influence the next generation of leaders. You all keep the Democratic party accountable and push them to be progressive in STL.

### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I understand many of the adversities we face in St. Louis. My family personally has been affected by the health epidemics of drug abuse, gun violence, and systemic poverty. I have seen the increase in violence, unemployment, lack of resources, and missed opportunities to bridge the gap between the County & City while our schools and neighborhoods are treated as an afterthought. Engineering is taking a big problem, breaking it down to smaller problems, creating small solutions, and forming one big solution. Therefore, I have a distributive power leadership style to empower & fund the community-oriented solutions. I will bring in new industries to create new jobs that will push revolution & reform in education.

### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Education, Employment, and Energy (Renewable). All 3 go together and will alleviate the majority of issues affecting America. As an Educator & Engineer, we must raise the standards for American education to prepare our youth for new industries in the Age of Information and Renewable Energy. American education has continued to resemble the times of the industrial age. I will develop the standards for American education to prepare our youth for new industries to create more jobs for students coming out of high school & college to keep America competitive in a global market. If a budget is a moral document, then we should budget education as our top priorities by better funding early childhood, public education, & paying K-12 teachers more. Improving educational opportunities to shrink income disparities depends on increasing the resources available to school districts. I will advocate for Emotional Intelligence & Mental Health in public education.

### **Democrats are currently in the minority, but this may change in one or both houses come November. Whether in the minority or not, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and hold Republicans accountable?**

Regardless of what's going on in DC or JC, a congressperson has the ability to connect with people across the globe to provide resources and funding for advancements for their constituents. Republicans are in the majority BUT Kansas City continues to become more progressive than STL w/ legislation that is supported by their congressperson. The state of Illinois, next door to us, continues to be progressive in the fields of renewable energy and other issues. We have some of the best grassroots/community organizations who need resources to do the work that Republicans don't want done. I will bring those resources

while also supporting our State Representatives & local elected officials.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I was born and raised in St. Louis. I will be held more accountable because I have my family, throughout the entire city, my friends, my church members, the students who I have mentored and taught over the past 18 years, my school districts, and my elders still live in St. Louis. I want the absolute best for them and all of St. Louis. I will stay connected with the city by collaborating w/ local organizations to host a monthly town hall. Because of my technical & business background, I will change the culture of politics to be more people & community oriented. Other candidates say they want to be a "voice for the voiceless." The voiceless do have a voice, but people don't listen to them. I will create legislation that reflects the voices because I listen to them and I will get legislation passed to lift up the people who were once considered voiceless.

**How will you work to ensure federal investment occurs in all of Missouri, not only for those who are wealthy, well-connected, or living in certain districts?**

I was born & raised in St. Louis, Missouri. After living in Rolla, Missouri for 7 years while in college & traveling across the state on business, I have learned that many people are suffering. Many of the counties near the boot hill and other places in the state are struggling to climb out of poverty. Most people are pushed by pain until they are pulled by vision. I will work to connect those in the rural areas with those in the urban areas to recognize our common pain but strategically develop a unified a vision that is realistic. Similar to Congressperson Adam Clayton Powell Jr., I will develop legislation & amendments to bills to get the necessary investments to help our counties that need the most help to strengthen our entire state. A stronger Missouri will be more attractive to companies like Amazon and others.

### FEDERAL CANDIDATES

#### **ROBERT HAZEL, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 2**

##### **About Robert**

Other than a brief stint in State Government right after college, followed by service in the Peace Corps in Korea, I spent my adult life working for various non-profit organizations, with and through volunteers, all focused on working cooperatively for the Public Good. I'm married to a wonderful woman, have two amazing grown children and one adorable granddaughter. Additionally, I've had some success in writing, though not enough, having been to the cast and crew screening of the film made from one of my scripts, "Illusions of Cyn", which hopefully will be showing at a theater near you soon. I have a great life.

##### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I am running for public office, when I would much rather be engaged in other pursuits, because I am convinced that we have reached a dead end, with Conservatism as our underlying, operational, political premise. We must reject it and turn away from it. The One Percenters hold almost all of the recently created wealth; mainline Christianity, with its Prosperity Theology and Republican Jesus, is a blasphemous caricature of itself; and the vile, hatred toward various minorities, when we are all minorities at this point, is nothing more than cannibalistic tribalism taken to its logical extreme. Conservatism has failed us and must be rejected if we are ever to truly realize American Exceptionalism and become the City on the Hill.

##### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

There are five of us in the Democratic Primary for the US HOR in the MO 2nd Congressional District, and in many regards we hold similar positions. I will vote for myself in the Primary and for whomever is selected by my fellow Democrats in the General Election, so I will not say anything against any of the other four, should one of them prevail rather than me. Speaking only for myself, however, I absolutely abhor the direction in which this country is going, and will do whatever I can to change our course. Conservatism, the prevailing reality, is a dead end street and must be rejected and replaced. It's like kudzu, in that it overgrows anything of beauty and value and is an noxious weed that needs to be pulled out by its roots.

##### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

I'm an old-fashioned, New Deal Democrat without equivocation, qualification or apology, running for the United States House of Representatives (D), who abhors the fear, hatred and prejudice prevalent in this country and favors Medicare for All, Equal Rights/Opportunity/Pay for Everyone, and Common Sense Gun Control, just to name three positions; and dedicated to the exposure, ridicule and ultimately the elimination of the Korporate Khristian Konfederacy, the corrupt, sacrilegious and racist rot, which is an existential threat to Liberal Democracy, aka Western Civilization, including Self

Governance itself, thrust upon us by the Radical Right.

**Democrats are currently in the minority, but this may change in one or both houses come November. Whether in the minority or not, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and hold Republicans accountable?**

I favor a massive public works infrastructure undertaking, for both for virtual and real projects, every generation or so predicated on the ones from the New Deal, the Interstate Highway System and the I64/US40 construction of just a couple of years ago here in STL. Such endeavors are examples of the proverbial “tide that raises all ships” benefitting every single one of us, no matter who we are, what kind of work we do, or where we hail from. And enterprises such as these remind us perhaps like nothing else does that, indeed, we are all in this together and have little rational choice other than to work in concert for the Public Good. Such capital investments can be used to reduce unemployment and while opponents of internal improvement programs argue that such projects should be undertaken by the private sector, rather than the public sector, in the private sector, entrepreneurs bear their own losses and so private sector firms are generally unwilling to undertake projects that could result in losses or would not develop a revenue stream at all or not quickly enough as other investments. Governments may invest in public works because of the overall benefit to society when there is a lack of private sector benefit (a project that will not generate revenue or sufficient) or the risk is too great for a private company to accept on its own.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

We are all in this together, and that includes everyone. Progressives, Moderates and the delusional MAGA True Believers. There is no need to pick winners and losers, when we can pick programs and platforms that benefit everyone. A massive infrastructure undertaking, for example (see immediately below), is just one example of the tide that would lift all boats. Replacing Kentucky Fried Healthcare, our current system, with Single Payer will not only improve quality, but will do so more inexpensively. The Democratic Party used to represent everyone, and we can be that party again, with ideas like these two.

**How will you work to ensure federal investment occurs in all of Missouri, not only for those who are wealthy, well-connected, or living in certain districts?**

I favor a massive public works infrastructure undertaking, for both for virtual and real projects, every generation or so predicated on the ones from the New Deal, the Interstate Highway System and the I64/US40 construction of just a couple of years ago here in STL. Such endeavors are examples of the proverbial “tide that raises all ships” benefitting every single one of us, no matter who we are, what kind of work we do, or where we hail from. And enterprises such as these remind us perhaps like nothing else does that, indeed, we are all in this together and have little rational choice other than to work in concert for the Public Good.

Such capital investments can be used to reduce unemployment and while opponents of internal improvement programs argue that such projects should be undertaken by the private sector, rather than the public sector, in the private sector, entrepreneurs bear their own losses.

### **FEDERAL CANDIDATES**

#### **JOHN MESSMER, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 2**

##### **About John**

I'm 51 years old, married, and the father of two children. I was born and raised in south St. Louis City and now live in south St. Louis County. My parents were German immigrants who came to America in 1955 and proudly became citizens in 1960. I have a PhD in political science from Mizzou and have been a professor of political science at St. Louis Community College - Meramec since 2002. I teach courses in American politics, Constitutional issues, state and local politics, and international relations. Before teaching, I worked as a researcher in the Missouri Senate and as a program manager at East-West Gateway Council of Governments. I was the vice-president of the Concord Township Democrats for several years and served two years as the committeeman for Concord Township on the St. Louis County Democratic Central Committee.

##### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

Since I am running for the Democratic party nomination, I naturally would want the endorsement of any Democratic organization. But I think it's particularly important to get the endorsement of young Democrats. As a college teacher for the last 16 years, I have witnessed a steady decline in confidence in the government among college students. Young voters are frustrated in government's failure to address real problems. They are disgusted in what they see as a rigged and corrupt system. They are aggravated in a system that equates political worth with net worth. Young voters care about their communities. But more than ever they don't see politics as a vehicle for progress. That needs to change. But that will require fundamental change in the way institutions like Congress operate. An endorsement would mean that they have confidence that I am the candidate that can deliver these imperative reforms.

##### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

The four candidates that I am running against for the Democratic Party nomination are fine men. If one of them should win the primary, I would not hesitate to endorse them in the general election against Ann Wagner. As I can tell, our positions on the important issues are very similar – if not in some cases – identical. But my serious difficulty with them is their failure to make fundamental political reform a priority; their inexplicable reluctance to commit themselves to these necessary reforms. Congress is corrupt and dysfunctional. And it won't fix itself. We can only achieve the changes we need with candidates committed to campaign finance reform, election reform, and ethics reform. This represents

the foundation upon which the other issues are built. By not making political reform a priority in their campaigns, they are naively suggesting that there aren't serious problems in Congress. They're wrong.

### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

1. Fundamental political reform: What's required is a concerted effort that addresses campaign finance reform, election reform, and ethics reform in Congress. The specific reforms that I propose will help us return the people's branch back to the people.

2. Healthcare Reform: A civilized society should care about the well-being of its people. But our healthcare system only adequately serves a fraction of the population. This is a disgrace. Moreover, our national healthcare system is ridiculously inefficient. That's intolerable. We need universal coverage through a single-payer national healthcare policy.

3. Economic justice: Our "pay-to-play" Congress means that political worth is equal to net worth. That is a corruption and it explains why economic policy favors the wealthy and well-connected. With real fundamental political reform, we'll begin to see economic policy in this country that again respects the needs of labor and the middle class and not just wealthy campaign donors and their legions of lobbyists.

### **Democrats are currently in the minority, but this may change in one or both houses come November. Whether in the minority or not, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and hold Republicans accountable?**

Harry Truman once said: "If you want a friend in Washington, get a dog." My job will not be to make friends. But I do intend to gain respect by working determinedly with other reformers in Congress – reformers that are almost exclusively progressives. I'll gain respect and find success in Congress by being a relentless advocate for a progressive agenda that demands an intolerance for injustice and the weeding out of corruption and abuse of power. The people are tired of our dysfunctional and corrupt Congress. The momentum in the nation is with the reformers. I intend to be one of their leaders.

### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

Three days after announcing my candidacy, I was approached by a Missouri Democratic Party leader who strongly encouraged me to drop out. He made clear that the party had a nominee in mind and that I was in the way. That's absurd. And that cannot be tolerated. My campaign wants to embrace needed political reforms. Not just in Washington D.C. but in Missouri. Not just in Congress, but in our political parties. That means that my campaign is devoted to smashing the "smoke-filled back room" mentality that plagues so many of our political institutions and results in the silencing of countless voices in our communities. If elected, I will become a champion for reform and a powerful advocate for those that have traditionally been silenced and left on the sidelines.

### **How will you work to ensure federal investment occurs in all of Missouri, not only for those who are wealthy, well-connected, or living in certain districts?**

I am advocating a very specific 15-point plan for reform that is designed to tackle corruption and bring a level of respectability back to Congress. Moreover, these reforms challenge the “pay-to-play” culture that plagues our legislative and appropriation processes. Federal investment in Missouri needs to go where it is needed; where clear and level-headed research and objective analysis has determined. By reforming our campaign finance system and demanding real ethics reform, we can begin to make serious strides in finally eliminating the unfair advantages that wealthy and well-connected interests have enjoyed. This should not be a partisan or ideological issue. It is a question of justice. And it speaks to the integrity of our republic.

## FEDERAL CANDIDATES

### **CORT VANOSTRAN, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 2**

#### **About Cort**

I’m originally from small-town Missouri. I was raised, together with my younger brother and sister, by a single mom from the time I was eight years old. My mother’s example of hard work, empathy, and perseverance motivated me, and taught me those same values. Thanks to her example and strong community support, I was able to climb the ladder to the middle class, and I attended Harvard on a scholarship from the Elks Foundation.

Today I’m an attorney, often advocating for working people against large corporations. I teach law students at Washington University and coordinate a program that provides Constitutional Law education in St. Louis public schools. I’m a former board member of a nonprofit dedicated to rehabilitative efforts in prisons, and an alum of the FOCUS St. Louis Emerging Leaders program. I care deeply about improving lives and giving others the same path to the middle class that my mom made available for me.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I’ve been a member of the St. Louis Young Democrats for the last couple of years. The enthusiasm of this group is one of the things that encouraged me to run for office in the first place. Our state and our nation are facing a moment of crisis: from deepening inequities to a lack of accountability and stability in government, we need change now. I believe it is time for a new generation of leadership to provide that change.

This organization stands for the proposition that young people like us can lead the way. That’s why I would be honored to have the support of my friends in the Young Dems.

### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

We're facing a formidable Republican incumbent in Ann Wagner. To win this race, we need a strong, unwavering progressive message and a professional campaign with broad support. I'm the only candidate with both.

My experience with direct advocacy on behalf of vulnerable groups is unique in this race. And my own life experiences help me understand how the decisions made in Washington affect real peoples' lives. That perspective will always drive my decision-making.

Our campaign has the bandwidth to unseat Congresswoman Wagner. I've been endorsed by national progressive groups like End Citizens United and NARAL Pro-Choice America. I've received the support of progressive leaders like Stacey Newman, Tracy McCreery, and Cora Faith Walker. And we're the only Democratic campaign ever to oust Rep. Wagner in a quarter—which we did twice, without accepting a penny from a corporate PAC.

### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

1. Healthcare. I lost my mom to cancer in late 2016. My mom's health insurance, which she purchased through Missouri's ACA exchange, alleviated stress for my family during an incredibly difficult time. When I watched Rep. Wagner vote to repeal the ACA, I knew I had to do something to protect the strides we've made and fight for accessible healthcare for all Americans.

2. Education. Children in our community are too often condemned by a lack of opportunity at an early age. I will fight for a quality education and fair chance for everyone, and end crushing debt for those who seek a college education.

3. Gun sense. For too long, Washington has been in the pocket of gun industry lobbyists. I'm not afraid to stand up to the NRA. Now is the time for common sense gun reform measures that will keep our communities safe.

### **Democrats are currently in the minority, but this may change in one or both houses come November. Whether in the minority or not, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and hold Republicans accountable?**

In recent years, Democrats have had two inextricably connected problems: a messaging problem and a policy problem. Our messaging problem is that we support programs that help the American people and are made up of popular components, but we don't effectively market them to voters. Our policy problem is a failure of conviction. Although we should always be willing to work across the aisle, many Democrats have flip-flopped or equivocated on key issues, ceding too much ground to Republicans—who have clearly never been shy about being too extreme. To move our agenda forward, we need to take a head-on approach to both problems. We need to stick by our progressive principles and say what we mean. We need to make an honest, forthright argument to all Americans for why we should be helping each other and treating everyone fairly. A message of progress can succeed—it just requires us to voice it with the full courage of our convictions.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

An authentic commitment to diverse voices is possibly the most important thing that Millennial leadership can provide. I am working to build a campaign that reflects my own values when it comes to inclusion. My campaign is led by a woman, and we are working to build a team that is diverse in perspectives. Doing so gives us the best shot at unseating Rep. Wagner in November. One of our current Congresswoman's biggest problems is her failure to acknowledge that St. Louis will rise or fall as a region; Rep. Wagner often acts as though nothing exists east of Hanley Road. Once in office, I will lead in a way that acknowledges our region must work together to achieve progress. Finally, we can support diversity by looking inside our own house: Democratic leadership in Congress is too often representative of only one point of view, and we can benefit from supporting different perspectives in leadership positions.

**How will you work to ensure federal investment occurs in all of Missouri, not only for those who are wealthy, well-connected, or living in certain districts?**

"Federal investment" is a broad term, but I think we should define it to include investments in our most important resource: our people. We should not shy away from bold investments in education and college affordability, which provide a lifeline to a better future. We must also protect our investments in programs like Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security, which protect our most vulnerable citizens.

**FEDERAL CANDIDATES**

**MARK OSMACK, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 2**

**About Mark**

I am a 4th generation St. Louisan born and raised in Missouri's 2nd Congressional District. A graduate of Lindbergh High and Mizzou, I'm a product of public education. During college, I worked at Busch Stadium as an usher, and at local grocery stores as a member of UFCW Local 655. I joined the U.S. Army after college, serving two tours in Afghanistan where I earned a Bronze Star. I currently serve in the Army Reserve as a company commander. Using the GI bill, I earned my MPA from George Washington University while working on national defense and veterans affairs issues in Washington, D.C. Currently, I help agencies and departments of the federal government operate more efficiently as a consultant in the St. Louis office of Deloitte Consulting, LLP.

**Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

If I was not running for this seat, I would be serving our party as part of this group. I am

seeking your endorsement because I believe the Young Democrats will definitively shape the future of the Party, not just in St. Louis but in surrounding areas as well. The St. Louis Young Democrats are the best possible representation of what our country and our region should look like to move forward – diverse, welcoming to new citizens, driven, committed to service, and committed to building a society that prioritizes that which will make us stronger: healthcare for all, civil rights, fair wages, respect for the natural world and the science behind it all. I am proud to be a Missouri Young Democrat and excited to work with you all as we bring real, progressive change to the St. Louis region together.

### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

Experience, service, roots. I have leadership and combat experience as an officer in the Army; I've worked low wage jobs; have been a dues-paying member of a labor union; and I'm willing to take strong stances on the issues. I'm the only candidate with experience on Capitol Hill, working with Senators Claire McCaskill and Tammy Duckworth. I'm the only candidate who supports Medicare for All and federal legalization of marijuana. I believe Democrats win with authentic progressive candidates who aren't afraid to challenge the status quo, and I'm humbled to have received the endorsement of Rep. Bruce Franks, a bold progressive fighter. I also have the biggest and most engaged social media following, a broad base of small-dollar donors—the vast majority from the district—and a strong volunteer corps who canvass every week in Ballwin, Brentwood, Kirkwood, Webster, Shrewsbury, O'Fallon, Affton, and Fenton. Ours is truly a grassroots campaign.

### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

My focus is on universal healthcare, civil rights, and equity in employment and education. Systemic racism is real, and our leaders must do more to dismantle the deeply rooted forces that shut people off from the American dream for arbitrary and unfair reasons. Voting rights are under attack by Republicans at all levels of government. The criminal justice system and private prison industry is tearing families and communities apart while substance abuse treatment is underfunded. People of color, LGBTQ+ Americans, and women don't just get paid less because of race and gender bias--they are at risk of violence from police and bad actors.

My stance on healthcare is simple: you shouldn't have to join the military, work for a Fortune 500 company, or go to Congress to get affordable insurance. We urgently need Medicare For All to end the cycle of families going broke when someone gets sick.

### **Democrats are currently in the minority, but this may change in one or both houses come November. Whether in the minority or not, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and hold Republicans accountable?**

I think that Bruce Franks Jr. provides an amazing model of how to work across the aisle and also to hold people accountable to represent what would best serve the greater good in our communities. I would seek to adapt a similar model at the federal level. There are usually core principles that most people can agree on regardless of party, and that can be used as a foundation to move forward and make progress. Rep. Franks has excelled at

ensuring funding for programs which provide training and education for young people, and finding common ground with Republicans on issues like youth violence, protecting civil liberties, and providing economic opportunity--all while remaining true to his community and his roots as a defender of free speech and someone who declares unflinchingly that black lives matter. I will use that model, collaborate with anyone willing to move forward a good solution to a real issue, but will never compromise the core values of my constituents when casting my votes.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

My campaign team has always included a diverse array of St. Louisans who work with me and each other to craft our message and chart the campaign's path forward. I constantly engage with the entire community, not just likely Democratic voters or big donors, by going out and listening to voters everywhere. I'm not here solely to speak about my ideas and values. I want to understand the members of our communities not as numbers on a page but as people; I want to develop ideas and gain perspective from them. If elected, I would employ a diverse team here in home sweet STL and in DC, and would stay in constant communication with folks from my district in order to best represent their values in Washington. To me, inclusion means seeking out other perspectives to broaden one's understanding. As an elected leader, I would involve people of diverse races and ethnicities, different socioeconomic statuses and levels of education in my work.

**How will you work to ensure federal investment occurs in all of Missouri, not only for those who are wealthy, well-connected, or living in certain districts?**

I think it starts with a very simple idea that shouldn't be controversial: investment of our tax dollars should benefit working people, not big corporations. Income levels in the Second District range from the working poor to the very wealthy. I grew up here in humble circumstances but have also experienced times when my family or I could afford more privileged accommodations. We often hear most from those who have the money and leisure to write big checks to unduly influence our public servants. It is absolutely vital that we reach out to and advocate for the voices that we do not (or cannot) often hear. This is something that I appreciate most about unions – working class people being able to speak in a collective voice and leverage their power for economic fairness. As a party, we must strive to do a better job reaching everyone in a systematic way by regularly holding town halls, spending time with the voters where they live, and listening attentively to marginalized voices. One of the biggest mistakes our legislators make is to forget that being elected means you are a representative of the voters, not the donors. I will work to write, support, and pass legislation to fix our broken campaign finance system, including pushing for the 28th Amendment to remove the influence of big money in politics. The simplest way to provide balanced input for the decisions of our government is to make sure our votes are what is counted in politics, not our money. Equitable federal investment will come to our region when we return government to the voters and make it responsive to actual people. The government's priorities will align more with the interests of hardworking

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Missourians once we elect better leaders who will address the structural incentives that help the rich get richer and ensure that the poor stay poor. Postscript: I won't be afraid to partner with and advance legislation with a Republican if it helps the voters in my district. But given the current state of the Republican Party, I'm not holding my breath.

### FEDERAL CANDIDATES

#### **KATY GEPPERT, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 3**

##### **About Katy**

I grew up in a middle-class, union home in the Metro East. My parents were able to earn enough to provide me and my siblings with happy, stable childhoods. This stability allowed me to attend an above-average public school and earn a scholarship to Quincy University. There, I took on the leadership role of Resident Assistant and joined Alpha Omicron Pi (AOII) sorority. Both of these opportunities taught me the importance of leadership and service to the community. Since graduating with a degree in chemistry, I have worked in industry for companies big and small in the St. Louis region. While working full time, I earned my Master's from SLU and became Six Sigma Certified in process improvement and Root Cause Failure Analysis. I currently live in the St. Louis region with my husband, Tyler, and 2 y/o daughter, Willa, and volunteer with AOII as a mentor to young women.

##### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

Since joining the Young Democrats in 2017, I have learned their mission and goals match my own. I am looking for endorsements from organizations whose core values not only match my own but also have aspirations toward the betterment of my district. District 3 is a rural, suburban, and exurban district outside of St. Louis County. While the Young Dems' focus is largely on the issues facing the urban areas of the region, many in District 3 face the same issues. When we understand that this overlap exists, we can collaborate in finding solutions to our shared challenges. I hope to use this endorsement to show that urban and rural areas can work together to find solutions to common problems.

##### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

The major difference between my opponent and myself is that I have a STEM background. I have formally been working as a scientist for 14+ years where it has been my job to literally troubleshoot and solve problems, big and small, every day. A few minor differences are that I am a member of the Young Dems, I have a functioning campaign staff, and I have out-raised him in the first quarter of 2018. (Note: My primary opponent has suspended his campaign but he has not fully withdrawn.)

##### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

The three issues most important to me are: providing healthcare for all, fully funding public education, and working for a strong economy by ensuring a living wage and access to unions for all workers. I believe that healthcare is a right (not a privilege), that public education is a pillar of our democracy, and that a robust economy is built by the middle class (not corporations and their shareholders).

##### **Democrats are currently in the minority, but this may change in one or both houses**

### **come November. Whether in the minority or not, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and hold Republicans accountable?**

To move a more progressive agenda forward, I will look to work with Republicans in “blue” states to build a consensus. They may be more receptive to improving healthcare, funding education, and providing a living wage since many of those states already have more progressive laws (e.g. Medicaid expansion) at the state level. If I am elected to the House and we, the Democrats, have the majority, another way I would move forward a progressive agenda would be to use the committee process for oversight of the Republican-passed laws. For example, I would like to call in executives from corporations that received the largest of the tax breaks in the most recent tax bill to find out what they are doing with the money they saved. Another way to advance a progressive agenda is to look at changing leadership within the party. This would include a strategy to include more women, people of color, and those who represent lower income communities and districts.

### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

So far in my campaign, I have been going where the people are (e.g. farmers’ markets, fairs, and concerned citizen meetings), introducing myself, and listening to their concerns. When I hear of new issues that people are facing, I think about how this can work within my platform and make adjustments as needed. After November 2018, I will work with other members of Congress to review current laws and propose legislation that will ensure inclusiveness. I would also like to start a writing program that teaches citizens how to propose and write legislation that they could then submit to their representative’s office for review. This will allow citizens to have direct input with the laws.

### **How will you work to ensure federal investment occurs in all of Missouri, not only for those who are wealthy, well-connected, or living in certain districts?**

The two main areas of federal investment that need to happen in Missouri are education and infrastructure. Since rural areas of the state seem to get shut out from federal investment, I will work with the local governments and school districts so they may have their voices heard and be able to promote investment in their communities.

## FEDERAL CANDIDATES

### SENATOR CLAIRE MCCASKILL, U.S. SENATE

#### About Claire

I have lived in Missouri my whole life. I was born in Rolla and raised in Houston and Lebanon, where my mom's family ran the corner drug store. I'm a proud graduate of Missouri public schools and waited tables to help put myself through Mizzou and Mizzou Law.

#### Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?

The participation of young people in our political process is critical to our democracy. I love spending time with the Young Dems in our state to find out what's on your minds, because it helps me be a better advocate for you in the Senate. And I hope that you will support me in my re-election so I can keep fighting for you.

Throughout my time in the Senate, I have worked on issues that directly affect our students and young people. I cosponsored legislation to reverse the FCC's decision to repeal net neutrality. I've voted to increase access to affordable student loans and grants, cosponsored legislation to allow borrowers to refinance their student loans like they can their house and car, and launched the first Congressional inquiry into how colleges and universities handle rapes and sexual assaults on campus. I am also the only candidate in this race that supports a Constitutional amendment to overturn Citizens United.

#### What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?

My number one priority is fighting for the people of Missouri. This includes ensuring that our veterans receive the care they need and deserve, fighting to stem the tide of the opioid epidemic through any means necessary, and protecting women and children from sexual violence.

#### Democrats are currently in the minority, but this may change in one or both houses come November. Whether in the minority or not, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and hold Republicans accountable?

My number one priority is making progress for the people of Missouri. And no matter which party controls Congress, I am committed to working across the aisle to get things done for Missourians.

But I am also not afraid to stand up to my Republican colleagues when it is in the best interest of Missouri. I voted against the Republican tax plan because it was a giveaway to health insurance companies and pharmaceutical companies. I voted against Judge Gorsuch because his opinions revealed a rigid ideology that always put the little guy under the boot of corporations. And I have consistently fought Republican attempts to repeal the

Affordable Care Act -- instead supporting commonsense ways to fix and improve the ACA to ensure that all Missourians have access to quality, affordable healthcare.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I have done over 50 town halls in the past year all across Missouri, because I take seriously my responsibility to hold myself accountable to Missourians. Hearing what's on your minds helps me better represent you in the Senate. I am going to continue to show up in every corner of our state and my campaign will be opening dozens of offices across Missouri. I intend to run a campaign that everyone can be proud of -- and I'm not taking a single vote for granted.

In the Senate, I have worked hard to incorporate voices from all over our state and to advocate for all Missourians. From sponsoring the Emmett Till Act to fighting Republican efforts to restrict voting rights, I will always work to ensure that all Missourians are represented in our government.

**How will you work to ensure federal investment occurs in all of Missouri, not only for those who are wealthy, well-connected, or living in certain districts?**

My number one priority is fighting for all Missourians, and I have worked to ensure that federal investment occurs across the state. For example, I recently fought to have the Department of Housing and Urban Development address infestation at the Clinton-Peabody complex. I also successfully advocated Secretary of Defense Ash Carter, President Obama, and others at the highest level of our government to bring the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency's western headquarters to St. Louis. And after the devastating 2011 Joplin tornado, I worked to ensure that Joplin and the surrounding communities received all of the federal assistance it needed to recover. I will continue to work to ensure that federal investment goes to Missouri communities in need.

## STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

### STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

#### JAKE HUMMEL, MISSOURI SENATE - DISTRICT 4

##### **About Jake**

Jake Hummel was born and raised in St. Louis City and is a 1994 graduate of St. Mary's Catholic High School. He resides in the Holly Hills neighborhood with his wife Sarah and two children. Currently, Jake is the Secretary Treasurer for the Missouri AFL-CIO. He is a third-generation union member and a 20-year member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Jake Hummel served in the Missouri House of Representatives for 8 years, representing a portion of South St. Louis City (District 81). He was elected to the State Senate in a special election in 2016. In addition to his legislative and union duties, Rep. Hummel is a member of the Carondelet Community Betterment Federation, Holly Hills Improvement Association, Boulevard Heights Neighborhood Association and the Dutchtown South Community Corporation.

##### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

As a former member of the St. Louis Young Democrats, I know that our state and nation need to encourage and involve more young people in our democratic caucus. Your voices and perspective are paramount to ensuring that the future of our party is strong and diverse. The City of St. Louis, and all the communities within the 4th Senate District, will not prosper if they are not appealing to young people. From good jobs, to reliable public transportation, to a diverse community culture, our elected leaders have a responsibility to addressing the issues important to younger generations.

##### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I am proud to have served the City of St. Louis in the General Assembly for nearly a decade. This experience, including two years in the State Senate, have prepared me to hit the ground running when the 2019 legislative session starts in January. Right now, Jefferson City is awash in scandal because of the lack of experience of our Governor and Attorney General. The people of St. Louis deserve a leader with experience they can trust - experience I am proud to bring to the State Senate.

##### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

- 1.) Embracing diversity and putting an end to the systemic discrimination that keeps too many young people from reaching their full potential.
- 2.) Making higher education affordable so students graduate with the skills they need to

get a good job, not a mountain of crushing debt.

3.) Putting an end to gun violence so that our streets are safe for the businesses, families and children of our City.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

Our numbers may be small, but our voices must be heard. If we cannot out number our opponents, then we must out work them, out smart them and out maneuver them so that we can win progressive victories for our citizens.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

Our campaigns must reflect our community. I look forward to continuing to work with those individuals and organizations that ensure diversity and inclusion within our party.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

Jefferson City bureaucrats and politicians need to mind their own business and let the City of St. Louis govern itself. I fought against past attempts of Jefferson City to usurp our local control, particularly with preempting the city's minimum wage and I will continue to fight for local governance if re-elected this November.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **BRIAN WILLIAMS, MISSOURI SENATE - DISTRICT 14**

#### **About Brian**

Williams attained an undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice and earned master's degrees in public administration and legal studies from Washington University.

Studying government and public health policy inspired Williams to pursue a career in public service. As a congressional staffer, he honed his skills in strategic planning, coalition building and bringing resources to the community.

Throughout his career, Williams has worked to strengthen the community by helping bring a quality healthcare facility to a Schnucks location in Ferguson, MO through his position as a Board Director for People's Health Center. He advocated for a quality health care facility that provides mental health care for children in underserved communities. He oversaw the rollout of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace in Missouri as a congressional ACA coordinator.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

It's imperative that the Young Democrats have an energetic voice in Jefferson City to advocate for access to quality healthcare, address mental health disparity, education, and social and racial equity. There's also a need for fresh leadership in government and politics. I believe an endorsement from the Young Democrats would create a domino effect of young talent seeking public office.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

My experience working as a congressional staffer in the U.S. Congress has allowed me the ability to understand how policy and government works on multiple levels. I've spent my career building relationships with local and state agencies that has given me the tools to help constituents, non-profits, businesses etc. I am the only candidate in the primary to oversee the rollout of the Affordable Care Act Marketplace, clean up a radioactive waste site (Carter Carburetor and West Lake Landfill) and take the lead to build a mental health facility that focuses on disparity in urban communities.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Education, Mental Health and Economic Development.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work**

### **to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

It will be important to focus on building relationships across the aisle. I have the ability to work with municipal and federal elected officials to create opportunities for funding and resources in the region. Serving as a board director for a community health center, I was able to work with a republican U.S. Senator's office to appropriate funding for community health centers to focus on mental health disparity and the opioid crisis in Missouri.

### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

Our campaign is focused on social and racial equity in education as well as discuss issues around sexual harassment in government and the workplace. We have also been able to engage young voters as well as seniors to discuss the importance of women reproductive rights, community policing and municipal court reform. As a son of single woman in the workforce, it's important that our campaign fights for equal pay and opportunities for women. Last but not least, to be a voice for the LGBTQIA+ community to ensure we are fighting for equality and same sex marriage.

### **In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

State and local governments should be thoughtful of each other in regard to addressing issues like reproductive rights and minimum wage to ensure that governance is inclusive to the needs and wants of the constituents in St. Louis. I believe it's important to build relationships in the State Senate and to ensure productive conversation around policies and legislation. As a member of the minority party, it will be important to negotiate on a high level as well as have the energy to fight and articulate the nexus between disparities in urban and rural parts of Missouri.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **ROBERT BUTLER, MISSOURI SENATE - DISTRICT 22**

#### **About Robert**

I grew up in Normandy, Missouri with my mother, father, and three siblings. My interest in politics began when I was 7 years old, when my father was elected to the St. Louis County Council in 1972. I was always so proud watching him serve as county councilman, and hoped to one day follow in his footsteps and run for office.

I hold degrees in accounting and law from the University of Missouri-Columbia. I began my career as an insurance defense attorney, but left soon after to search for a job that allowed me to represent the employees. I have always felt the call to represent those who were underrepresented. Twenty years ago, I opened my own law firm and specialize in Workers' Compensation.

I moved to Jefferson County over 20 years ago with my wife Miriam, and our four children. We have five rescue dogs and one rescue cat.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

Jefferson County does not have a young Democrats organization and I would like to increase participation and involvement by younger people. I believe young people are the future of the Democratic Party, and I want to involve them in my campaign and in my district. I hope a partnership with the St. Louis Young Democrats will help to energize the younger people in my district to get involved and engaged with the Democratic Party in Jefferson County.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I do have a primary opponent. I believe what differentiates myself from my opponent is the fact that I have lived in the district for over 20 years, and I understand the issues and challenges being faced by the citizens of Jefferson County. I am very involved in the Jefferson County Democratic Central Committee, and have been involved in Democratic politics in Jefferson County for many years. My opponent, on the other hand, has just recently moved into the district, and has no political background.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

- 1) Right-to-Work: The passage of right to work would lower wages even more, and would decrease on-the-job safety in Missouri. This issue is particularly important to working families in Missouri.
- 2) Health care/Medicaid expansion: For too long, the Missouri legislature has ignored the health needs of the people in Missouri. Pushing for expanded access to care and

better quality care for Missouri citizens will be one of my top priorities.

3) Education: Each year, the Missouri legislature implement cuts to education, specifically higher education. These cuts have had a significant impact on the quality of education and the availability of educational resources in the state. The cuts to higher education and the university systems affect the state's ability to attract qualified professors, quality students, and businesses to Missouri.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

Many of the challenges being faced in My District of Jefferson County are the same as those faced in the St. Louis Region. If elected, I will advocate for higher wages, more education funding, and better access to health care. The needs of people in Jefferson County and St. Louis are essential needs vital to living a healthy life. I will work to support legislation that benefits all Missouri citizens, not just those living in my district.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

Jefferson County has struggled for many years with diversity. A number of groups in the district are left out and have been ignored. One goal of our campaign is to reach out to a number of these diverse organizations and groups in Jefferson County. In Jefferson City, I would work to expand representation and be an advocate for them. I hope to be the voice for them that they have lacked for so long.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

I believe there needs to be a level of local control over issues, specifically issues such a minimum wage. The cost of living in an urban area, such as St. Louis, is much different than in a rural area. Therefore, rural legislators frequently lack the understanding of the challenges that confront urban residents. I would vote and advocate to ensure the St. Louis region is protected and given an ability to control issues of local concern for them.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **JILL SCHUPP, MISSOURI SENATE - DISTRICT 24**

#### **About Jill**

Being a wife, mother of two grown sons, a former teacher and small business executive informs my values. Since 2000, I have worked as an elected public servant, advocating for everyday Missourians. A passion for education and a vision for improvement inspired my run for school board. In six years, the changes I ran on making were all achieved. Working well with those with disparate viewpoints led me to run and serve as a City Council member. Shortly thereafter, I was elected to serve three terms in Jefferson City as a State Representative. Currently, I am serving in my first terms as one of 9 Democratic State Senators. Running for each new office brought very competitive races. I am grateful that my candidacies were well received, and hopeful I have inspired trust. Maintaining trust and integrity are at the heart of my service.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

Young people are and will continue to make meaningful changes in our state and nation. The impact STL Young Democrats have had in our community makes me proud and inspires me. Energized engagement, critical community conversations and unapologetic advocacy for the values of inclusion and justice are the hallmarks of your generation. I am inspired by your actions and want to travel forward with you. I would be honored to receive your endorsement.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Education, healthcare and economic justice and opportunity.

#### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

My service in Jefferson City has always been as part of the minority. Optimism, hopefulness and tenacity are characteristics essential to success as a member of a party further diluted by a supermajority across the aisle. Building relationships and seeking out common ground while staying true to my core democratic values have been the cornerstone of my service in this environment.

Because we do not always agree, my Republican colleagues have come to know that I will stand up for what I believe is right, and will take the time needed to modify or attempt to block a bill from passage. They know I take my responsibility to represent the interests of my community seriously.

## ST. LOUIS YOUNG DEMOCRATS – CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT GUIDE

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Our minority status will never prevent me from working toward progress. The balancing act of a filibuster, prioritizing issues and finessing change is a moving target that I am cognizant of in each of my actions.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I have always been compelled to protect the rights of the underserved. When we all have the opportunity to thrive, we create a better community and state.

During the campaign season and during the interim, I will reach out to those who might never meet their elected officials by knocking on their doors. At the same time, each of my constituents receives invitations to a variety of activities within the district including access to free healthcare services, and a community mental health training day.

When I return to the legislature, I will continue advocating for the passage of MONA, the ERA, protection of women's reproductive rights, access to due process, whistleblower protections (my bill just may pass this year) expansion of Medicaid, the right to vote and a plethora of issues that allow the voiceless to access necessities and opportunities to make their lives better.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

I support local control. Government that is closest to the people should be making decisions for the people in the community. The state should be involved when policies will directly impact people across local political subdivision lines. Minimum wage, when passed by a local community for its betterment, should not be overridden by the state. Non-discrimination protection should be passed statewide. When the state cannot move forward, a local community must be able to put into place protections for its residents. I will continue to support the efforts of St. Louis City and other communities to advance progressive goals.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **JOHN KIEHNE, MISSOURI SENATE - DISTRICT 26**

#### **About John**

John Kiehne was born and raised in St. Charles, Mo., studied music at Webster University and has worked as a professional musician for over 30 years. He lived and worked in Boston, Ma. during the 1990's and he and his wife Michelle now live in Labadie, Mo. John and Michelle have been active as foster parents and advocates over the past 10 years and have 4 grown children.

John's parents were career public educators and his family has owned a farm in Southeast Missouri since 1888. Education and agriculture are priorities for but he has also been motivated to run for public office due to his frustrations with toxic state of politics in our country.

John hopes to bring his experience as an artist, businessman, instructor, advocate and foster parent to Jefferson City to help to make Missouri a more prosperous, just and peaceful state for its residents.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

The Democratic Party in Missouri is in a rebuilding year so to speak. Leaders and institutions MUST make it a priority to not only win races but to nurture successive classes of forward thinkers to make sure that the Democratic Party builds and retains an engaged and vibrant membership- young and old. We cannot afford to rest on our laurels or rely on old ways of thinking and doing things in order to put forward a new and forward-thinking agenda.

I truly believe that as a candidate I need to inspire and be inspired by our younger generations as they stand to inherit the world that past generations have created. I'm truly inspired by the younger generations that are stepping up as I believe that America needs fresh ideas, new approaches and a more youthful, optimistic outlook so that we can have a brighter, more peaceful and prosperous future.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I will not have a Primary opponent as a Democratic candidate for Senate District 26.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Education: Support for teachers, schools and students is imperative. Our civilized society and its social, artistic and technological advances depend upon having great thinkers, inventors, engineers, craftsmen etc. who have studied, discovered and passed down

information from generation to generation.

**Environment:** We must protect our environment and clean up pollution that is already poisoning Missouri residents. Toxins from CAFO's, power plants, industry, etc. are poisoning our soil, air and water. We must protect future generations from a toxic legacy borne of corporate greed.

**Jobs/Economy:** We must educate and train Missouri residents for careers in our workforce and also provide job opportunities for able-bodied workers to earn a living wage to support their families. We must provide and encourage training for the trades as well as protecting our workers' right to collective bargaining so that union jobs remain career jobs that provide workers with fair wages and benefits.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

I believe that the very nature of our modern society is based on progress. The inverse of progress is to \*regress\*- which is the direction our state and country seem to be headed in the last year or so. I look forward to caucusing with like-minded legislators on a variety of issues including reforming our justice system, law enforcement, tax reform, agriculture and family farms, social services, gun safety, the state budget and so forth as well working to reach across the aisle to create and pass legislation that will help to make Missouri a more just, peaceful and prosperous state.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I believe that the intersection of a complacent and under-represented Democratic Party combined with the GOP's one-issue appeal to voters has led us down a path in which the other party's message was simplified and amplified to win votes. In my opinion the GOP doesn't actually represent the best interests of constituents. I believe that Democrats must do a better job at not only having concrete policies to address voters' concerns but we must also work on crafting our message so as not to appear as elites, freeloaders, supporters of terrorism, etc. as the GOP characterizes us. We must make sure that voters see that we are parents, children, workers, business owners, farmers, doctors, lawyers, etc. and that our concerns are the same as their concerns. I believe that we all share many common values and that we can all be prosperous without taking away from one another.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

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First of all I believe that if state laws were more progressive than St. Louis (or Kansas City) would not have to pass local laws in order to counteract the actions (or inaction) of our state legislature. On one hand I support St. Louis' efforts to counteract discriminatory policies coming from our state capital however I wonder if that freedom might also be used in other municipalities to \*further\* discriminate against groups based on race, religion, ethnicity or what have you.

I would advocate for whatever approach best addresses Missouri residents' rights to peace, justice and prosperity.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **ASHLEY FAJKOWSKI, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 62**

#### **About Ashley**

I'm a stay-at-home parent in Rolla, Mo. My family moved here from south city STL in October of 2016. I learned two days before close that there was no Democratic candidate in my district, and drove to Jeff City with my son to file. I'm learning as I go, but the outpouring of support from the party and progressive members of my district has been amazing. I work on my campaign throughout the day, between caring for and teaching my 4 year-old and maintaining my property (we're working towards a self-sustaining household) and in the evenings after everyone has gone to bed. I believe we need more Reps who understand and want to meet the needs of the people in their districts, instead of pushing legislation that seeks to shame those living in poverty, denies women health care options, and fails to provide assistance for our growing number of citizens struggling with addiction.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

Since I've lived in both rural (currently and as a child) and city (the majority of my 20's) settings, I see commonalities between the different communities I've been a part of and I believe more and more people are ready and willing to move forward to make the changes our state and nation need and we need to do it together. With an endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats, I believe I can bring more attention to the need for support from our cities to our smaller towns. The people in districts like mine are more difficult to reach; it's difficult to canvas county roads and high-speed internet isn't available in a lot of areas. The more word of mouth and online presence rural candidates are able to get, the more outside donations we receive, the better able we are to reach the people who need us.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I do not have a primary, but the current Republican Rep here is Tom Hurst and I feel it's important that more people be aware of his track record. He continually sponsors and pushes for aggressive, anti-choice legislation and votes against prescription drug monitoring programs. He votes against our labor unions, and against funding for secondary education. He has also sponsored a bill to force inmates who have received a life sentence to work manual labor, and that also offers that one be taken off of the table during sentencing if a defendant agrees to perform manual labor.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Education - Rural public schools are always in need of better funding. Often times text

## ST. LOUIS YOUNG DEMOCRATS – CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT GUIDE

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books are seriously out of date, and arts and music programs are lacking or non-existent when they are sometimes the only option our children would have for activities to engage their creativity and a safe space for them to develop emotionally. Lack of mental health care access for our students is astounding, often times a single person is assigned for 3-5 schools. Our teachers and students both deserve better.

Workers rights - Our laborers are facing legislation that would cripple their CBA, and it must be stopped. It is a top priority, as is organizing ride shares and registering absentee ballot voters to assure our workers are able to support their families and enjoy time with them.

Conservation/Natural Resources - The natural areas in our state are remarkable, and hold a potential to draw visitors from outside our communities to not only help our local economies but to also build love for our planet.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

As my son will be entering school this fall, I will have more and more time to devote to meeting with people throughout the state and in STL. Outside of session, I wouldn't have an additional 'job' during the rest of the year; my time would be devoted as it is now, to researching legislation and promoting change. I have a lot of commonalities with people in my district and our state. I grew up on a farm, I was raised by a single parent, and I'm the second person in my family to graduate high school. I believe the things I have been through give me a better idea of how to approach a political opposition.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I want to work to register more women to vote. Many working families have only one car, one source of income, and are busy trying to make sure their kids don't go to bed hungry. I'm working to meet with schools and homeschoolers in my area to develop networks to help mothers get registered to vote and get them to the polls, and I'll continue to do this after November no matter what happens. I would love to be able to work on legislation to improve our absentee voter capability. A vote is the strongest way to use your voice.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

I believe if any city passes an ordinance that aims to better the lives of its people, for the state majority who is supposed to strive for smaller government to deter those efforts is ridiculous. It benefits no one, and wastes time and money the state that could be better

spent. City, county, rural; I want to work towards better daily lives for all Missourians.

### STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

#### **LADONNA APPELBAUM, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 71**

##### **About LaDonna**

I have lived in St. Louis for 20 years. I graduated from Tulsa University with a Bachelor of Science in Sports Medicine. I have worked in healthcare industry and for a energy efficiency business. I have been a small business owner. My company Orthomotion, provided orthopedic and physical therapy products. I made sure every patient received what the doctor ordered regardless of their health insurance status. I have been involved in politics as an activist since 2004 in many ways. I have lobbied for clean energy in DC, the ACA and medicaid expansion in Jefferson City, my “story” was featured in an Amicus Brief in front of the United States Supreme Court defending the ACA. I also instigated and organized the 2012 Welcome Home the Heroes parade. It was the first of its kind in the US.

##### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I believe that the young Democrats are our best hope for the future. The Democratic party of Missouri is in a rebuilding phase right now and it is imperative to have a strong foundation for getting our message out that we develop and encourage younger progressives. Since I believe that this organization can be effective at achieving this, I value this endorsement. I have also been to a number of events hosted by this organization, so I’ve seen first hand how actively engaged it is in party activities.

##### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I have not had the opportunity to meet him yet. I am not sure where he stands on issues concerning labor, women’s right to choose and climate change. I know that I believe workers have a right to organize, women should have the right to make their own choices and climate change is a real threat. I have been actively involved with my local township and served as secretary and vice president since 2009. I have also organized a green energy rally and coordinated with then State Rep Jill Schupp to create clean energy jobs. I have also volunteered and knocked on doors for many progressive school board candidate, state representatives, state senators, congressmen, senators and presidents.

##### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

The three issues that I am most passionate about are healthcare, the rights of workers and clean green energy jobs. These issues are all interconnected in our state and tells us how we are doing compared to the rest of our country. I am ashamed of our current legislators that did not approve medicaid expansion. As someone who survived breast cancer because of the ACA, I am a strong supporter of some form of universal healthcare. Green

energy jobs are safe for the environment and will reduce healthcare issues for workers. I want to make sure workers are safe on the job, have the ability to organize and have full representation in Jefferson City.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

I am currently working with other candidates and doing my best to make sure we are not a superminority. When elected I do not intend to compromise my core progressive values, but I am willing to find common ground where it exists. Tactically, working in a minority it is hard to get anything done. One method could be to frame legislation so that it could get broad support. For example, in 2010 I worked to help get a law passed whose goal was to promote energy efficiency. But, instead of framing it as an “environmental” bill, it was framed as an economic development bill and we were able to get it passed in the first session.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I support our LGBTQ community and I believe that Black Lives Matter. During my campaign I have been outspoken and have campaigned for other progressive candidates that support the LGBTQ community and who have stated unequivocally that Black Lives Matter. Most recently, the Parkway School Board race featured a certain candidate that was a self-described Confederate that decried the Black Lives Matter Movement and insulted our Muslim community. I have used my platform to speak out against this individual and to promote the two progressive candidates that pledged to support all students and make sure racism stays out of Parkway and all voices are brought to the table. After I am elected, I will continue to support these issues and vote against any bill that would harm those communities.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

This issue prominently demonstrates the hostility that rural legislators have for St. Louis. I recently attended a candidate training that specifically addressed Democratic messaging for rural people. The St. Louis region is the cultural and economic heart of Missouri and the divide between rural and urban areas in this state is used as a tool by conservatives for political ends. Rural people routinely vote against their interests because of their animosity towards urban areas, because they believe city folks look down on them. I was raised in Springfield and rural Arkansas, so I can be an effective voice against this animosity and

use my voice in the legislature to help speak past this narrative.

### STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

#### **DOUG CLEMENS, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 72**

##### **About Doug**

I am a lifelong resident of district 72, growing up in Bridgeton and living now in St. Ann. I am a Pattonville High School grad and earned a degree in International Relations with a minor in history from Mizzou. I have been a member of UAW 282 and UFCW 655. I am founding member, first Chair and presently on the executive board of the West Lake/Bridgeton Landfill Community Advisory Group. I have a long history of political involvement working on issues from profiling issues with the local police department to West Lake Landfill. Most recently I have worked on the CLEAN petition drive with Jobs with Justice. I work installing live captioning phones for the hearing impaired under an ADA program.

##### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I am a lifelong democrat and party member. My personal values reflect those of the party platform. I am not only interested in representing the party in our government but working to grow our efforts in increasing that representation. We are living in a time which it is more important than ever to be proactive in protecting the values we hold dear. I am pledged to being proactive as a legislator and advancing party goals.

##### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I have a broad spectrum of education about issues facing my community and our state ranging from worker's issues to environmental issues. I have an education which provided an emphasis in economic studies and policy. I have worked on various issues over the years providing me experience in a multitude of issues. In terms of the campaign I have out raised all of my competitors Democrat and Republican combined for three quarters straight. I have previously run in the old District 77 losing by 7 votes after the recount and as I do voter outreach find I have very good name recognition from the previous run and my part in the movie "Atomic Homefront".

##### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Health care is one of my top priorities. It is also a personal issue for me as my close high school friend and brother-in-law, Steve was paralyzed during surgery a year and a half ago. I believe health care should be affordable and accessible to everyone.

Jobs which actually allow a middle class to grow wealth is another priority. Being raised in a third generation organized labor family I know the value of a working wage, benefits on the job, and safety on the job.

A good education is a necessity for a functioning democracy and must be equitably accessible to every citizen. My brother was a St. Louis City teacher and Regional VP of the American Federation of Teachers. I am a strong proponent of pre-K early childhood education and affordable access to university or specialty vocational training.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

Being in the minority has cut us off from even fair participation in committees. In order to advance our agenda we must learn to team up on specific issues with those across the aisle which share our beliefs on those particular issues.

We also need to spend time mobilizing voters who share our values to interact with their elected officials from the other party. This means when a bill comes up hurting farmers in favor of corporate agriculture we have a network to call in the outstate. That network can apply pressure for us.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

My life has been filled with diversity and I have learned a great deal about listening to different voices. Even before I ran for office, I had to work with the ACLU and MIRA in several conferences with the Mayor and Chief of Police of my city to deal with police profiling issues. Since those experiences I have actively looked at protecting the rights of all human beings and working to understand their unique needs. My campaign has been centered on making sure ALL RESIDENTS have a voice, not just those unaffected by discrimination. In the past I have had the endorsements of PROMO and the St. Louis American based on my inclusive outreach.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

It is interesting to live in a state where the controlling party speaks of local control and smaller government yet strikes out against the very same. Our state is unique in its demographics with two large population centers in a mostly rural state. The metropolitan centers of Missouri have vastly different needs from the outstate. One way to curtail the interference of outstate legislators in city affairs is simply educate them. This can only be done by invitation to tour areas of St. Louis and Kansas City. Another way is to introduce legislation defining the jurisdictional powers of the cities versus the state. In many ways the courts may have to ultimately define these issues on a constitutional level.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **DAN WIBRACHT, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 72**

#### **About Dan**

I am a 3rd generation member of the Plumbers and Pipefitters 562 and a proud husband and father to 4 children. My wife and I both graduated from Hazelwood West in 2004 and got married in 2016. She had 3 children when we started dating and we had a child together in 2015, yes 4 kids keep us busy. However my children are a motivation for me to change our political landscape, not for me but for them. For the first time every young people are not as well off as their parents when they reached adulthood and that must change.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

Us as Millennials now outnumber the baby boomers but as of late we have not shown that at the polls. We need to show that we are ready for a change and that the time is now. We can do that by electing young like-minded Democrats, which is why I would appreciate your support.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

My kids! I am the only candidate still raising a family, also being a union construction worker my ability to provide for my family is at stake. I feel that I have the most to lose if us Democrats do not send strong candidates to Jefferson City to advocate for this next generation and that is why I have dedicated myself to this campaign.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

My three top issues are vocational/technical training, protecting seniors rights, and cleaning up the dark money that has taken over our state. Vocational training I feel is an underutilized option for people looking to start a career, and I want to help direct people towards a career where they can grow and provide for themselves and their families. With the cuts to the circuit breaker tax seniors and people with disabilities are finding it harder to stay in their homes. I do not want to see our elders forced from their homes because our legislature is cutting their funds. The dark money and shady politics are ruining this state. We deserve to know who is behind the funding of our state politics.

#### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

We will have to work until we are no longer the minority to ensure that our agenda will effectively move forward. Until then I will not stop fighting for what I feel is right for our

state. I will always fight for raising wages, bettering education, and the rights of everyone.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I am committed to having an open door policy. I will be most effective in the legislature if I know all aspects of the issues and how they will affect everyday people.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

The state should not have involved itself in the policies that were voted on and approved by the residents of the city of St. Louis. As lawmakers they should respect the wishes of the voters and if elected I will do just that.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **DAMON HAYMER, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 76**

#### **About Damon**

I have spent my entire adult life fighting for the rights of others, beginning with my service in the United States Army as a combat engineer, being deployed to Bosnia, Kuwait and Iraq. I have lived in the 76th District for approximately 10 years, where I live with my wife Brittney and 3 year old daughter, Hillary. I have been employed as a Business Analyst for approximately 7 years at United Healthcare, seeing first-hand how important it is to provide all Missourians with affordable quality health care. I believe strong, intelligent, passionate leadership is needed to render positive results in Jefferson City. I believe bringing back and/or creating necessary resources to the community will help bring progress and change to the 76th District. I'm active on the Walnut Park East Neighborhood Association and a member of the Executive Board for NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri, and a member of the Missouri Democratic Party, Mobilize Missouri, St. Louis Young Democrats, ReCast, and the St. Louis Workers' Education Society.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I'm seeking the endorsement from the Young Democrats because I feel I best represent their progressive agenda. As a state legislator I will fight to raise the minimum wage to \$15. I will continue to fight for Common Sense Gun legislation, fight with the labor unions to protect union wages and working conditions. I will fight to expand Medicaid because all Missourians deserve affordable health care. I share the same issues and concerns as the St. Louis Young Democrats and I'm going to Jefferson City to represent our interest.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I feel that my campaign differentiates from my opponents in several areas. Our campaign has a better laid out platform. For the past year I have been listening to the concerns of our community and my platform is extremely community driven. That is the reason why we are gaining more support than my opponents. Representing the people of the 76th District is not about going to Jefferson City to push my own agenda. It's about pushing our agenda and being the voice of our community. I feel this separates me from my opponents because I have taken that time to include everyone's voice in our campaign. Our campaign is the only campaign pushing a progressive agenda platform to try to bring the progress and change that we desperately need in the 76th District.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

The three most important issues to my candidacy are reducing gun violence in Missouri, ensuring that every child in Missouri has access to a great quality education and providing access to quality affordable health care to all Missourians. The St. Louis area had 201

homicides and 138 of those were in the 76th District in 2017. Once in office, I will file Common Sense Gun legislation that will require a background check on all gun sales. I will also file legislation requiring all gun owners to be accountable for their firearm and make it mandatory to make a report if the firearm has been stolen. All Missouri students deserve a great quality education. I will fight to ensure that the K-12 program will be fully funded. I will also fight to increase funds for the early childhood education program and for transportation for public schools. We must also fight to stop the budget cuts in higher education. Providing access to quality affordable healthcare is an important issue in our state.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

When you are in the super minority the best way to move forward a progressive agenda and best advocate for our region is by communicating and relating to other members of the General Assembly. First you have to have the ability to communicate to others who might have different agendas than ours. We have Democrats all over the state, we must unite on our agenda as a party and find how to best package that agenda to gain support within our own communities. Then I feel we can change the narrative and best advocate for our community. We must file progressive legislation and include progressive amendments on all legislation heard and voted upon. We have the duty to voice our agenda and fight for our region and we must continue to fight even in the super minority.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I believe it is very important to listen to everyone's issues and concerns. I have attended ward meetings, neighborhood association and block unit meetings to listen to the voices of our constituents. I have held listening sessions throughout the district, where the constituents can voice their concerns to me directly. I have held listening sessions in several businesses and churches in the district. I will continue to do our listening sessions after November and I plan to partner with other Democratic elected officials to do the same throughout St. Louis.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

I believe that the city of St. Louis should have the control to govern our area and legislate for our citizens. If raising minimum wage is a priority of our region then we should have the ability to govern to the needs of the people. The state should not be able to supersede local control especially when the people of that city have voted and passed that piece of

legislation. As a member of the minority party, I will advocate for the progressive legislation passed on the local level at the state level.

### STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

#### **CYDNEY E. JOHNSON, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 76**

##### **About Cydney**

I am a third generation business owner of Dorothy's Cleaners in Hamilton Heights in the 22nd ward. Living in Walnut Park for the majority of my life. I am a product of the desegregation program, I attended schools in the Rockwood School District. I graduated from Jennings Senior High then went on to Kansas State University. I am to former co-chair of the Democratic Socialist of America St. Louis Local.

##### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

Having been in a leadership position in a progressive organization, I believe that as a candidate my goals in Jefferson City will align with the mission of the Young Dems. My campaign is centered around the youth of our city having proper representation. I know that I will be that voice in Jefferson City.

##### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I have proven myself to be a successful organizer who can work with anyone in the city\state. This is proof in the sustained membership of the DSA and its rapidly growing membership. My mission in the DSA is solely to reach the poor and disenfranchised as we are always left as an after thought in political circles as well as Jefferson City.

##### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Mass Incarceration, Education, Minimum Wage Increase.

##### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

I plan to identify any similarities with the people of my district and the people of a republicans district in order to submit legislation that will work for everyone across the state.

##### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I currently live in Baden, Walnut Park is my home, the Hamilton heights neighborhood is where I do business and I have a host of family live in the wells\goodfellow neighborhood. I say this to say that I am a product of the district and my daily travels are throughout the district. Sending me to Jefferson City allows those voices to be heard.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

I will work tirelessly to ensure that St. Louis will be protected from any further atrocities. As for any legislation moving the city of St. Louis forward will move the state forward. I believe that I will have to fight this very topic head on as I have the workhouse in my district so I will have similar issues myself trying to get the state to intervene but I do plan on leading the fight to protect St. Louisans in the statehouse.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **KIMBERLY-ANN COLLINS, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 77**

#### **About Kimberly-Ann**

I am Kimberly-Ann Collins and I am a 25 year old African-American female running for office. I have lived in the 77th district all of my life. 5 years of my life, I attended the University of Missouri-Kansas City where I obtained a bachelors of arts in chemistry and a bachelors of Sciences in public health sciences. I chose the political path to run for office because I want to continue to be apart of a positive contribution to my community. While understanding that being a local community advocate is a wonderful thing, I also believe that representing my community on the state level is just as important because policies affect our everyday lives.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I am seeing an endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrat because I understand that this organization is made up of a large growing group of young democrats who are working to provide the necessary tools and resources to include everyone in the political process by creating and promoting an equitable city. The St. Louis Young Dems play a great role in the city and I believe that my vision to move St. Louis into a Healthier direction really aligns to the work done by this organization. I would love an endorsement from this organization to help bring out younger and bolder participation that will help the enhancement of this campaign to ultimately fulfill the goal of getting into office to be an advocate to increase the quality of life for all residents.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

There are a couple of things that differentiate my opponent and I. We come from very different backgrounds. At a very early age, I learned the importance of doing ground work in the community. I grew up in a high poverty area and I have continued to live in the same high poverty area that I grew up in. I grew up seeing the crisis of the community everyday. At a very young age I understood what it was like to not grow up with birth parents and to make weekly trips down to Potosi Correctional Center just to have a relationship with my father. I understood the consequences of not having a birth mother in my life as a young girl and even as a young woman today. At a young age I understood that the St. Louis Public School system had not been and still is not treated fairly.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Three issues most important to my candidacy are living wages for all families, promoting inclusive solutions to addressing homelessness, and smart crime reduction strategies for safer neighborhoods.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain**

**the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

I understand that democrats have a super minority in the state legislature. If elected into the minority I plan to build relationships across the party line. I believe that building bridges to create political progress will enable other legislatures to listen closely and better understand community perspectives.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

Within this campaign we are working to engage everyone to be apart. To ensure that voice are heard we have been including not only registered voters but those residents who are not registered voters. Of course we are encouraging those who are not registered to vote to register, if they can, but for those who face the challenge of not being able to register to vote due to certain circumstance, we are involving them to be apart of the campaign to still have a voice. We are reaching are most vulnerable population, which is our unhoused residents and we are engaging them in the campaign as much as possible. I plan to continue to be an advocate for all voices even after the general election in November by being a voice on the issues that the people care about and issues that are affecting our lives day and night. Understanding, accepting, and including are three main things I feel are important when seeking to represent the community.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

The Supremacy Clause of the United States Constitution Trumps (no pun intended) State Law where there's a conflict of interest, just like the State of Missouri Constitution supersedes Local (City) laws, where there is an conflict with State Law and as an Elected Official of the State of Missouri sworn to uphold and adhere to the Laws of the State of Missouri, I would have to concede to the courts of the state of Missouri to clarify if in fact a Local law is in direct conflict with existing State law. However, if that law is having an adverse affect on my constituents and their quality of life, it would be my duty to introduce legislation to correct that conflict and lobby on behalf of that Legislation.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **STEVEN ROBERTS, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 77**

#### **About Steven**

Representative Steven Roberts is a fourth generation St. Louis native; he holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Communication Studies from the University of Miami and received his law degree from Pepperdine University. His experiences included: working in the U.S. Congress as a legislative intern, a certified law clerk with the District Attorney's Office in the City of Compton, California, and assisting the Counsel to Secure Justice in New Delhi, India, to help victims of violent sexual assault. Elected to the House in 2016, he serves on the following committees: Ranking Member on the Committee for Workforce Development, Utilities, Judiciary, and the Special Committee on Litigation Reform.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

The St. Louis Young Democrats is a progressive movement which shares my values towards women's rights, LGBT issues, and the problems of voter suppression in our city, among others. I am seeking the endorsement of the St. Louis Young Democrats because I recognize the importance and necessity of having other young people involved in politics. When I was first elected to the Missouri House of Representatives at the age of twenty-eight, I was the youngest member of the democratic party. What I lacked in experience, I made up for with passion, enthusiasm and hard work. It is for these reasons that House leadership and the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus selected me for leadership roles within the party. It is my hope to work with the St. Louis Young Democrats to move the progressive agenda forward and prevent further civil rights abuses in our city and state.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

Although young, I have a wealth of experience I am able to draw on to shape and accomplish my legislative priorities. From my prior experience as a prosecutor, I observed a pattern of defendants who failed to graduate high school. In further examining this problem, I discovered that over 500,000 Missourians over the age of 21 did not possess a high school diploma. This led me to co-sponsor House Bill 93, legislation that would create four adult high schools across Missouri, one of which, will be in the city of St. Louis. This legislation was subsequently signed into law on July 5th, 2017. I have been able to draw on my life experiences and dedication to public service to successfully navigate a republican controlled legislature.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

The three most important issues to me as an elected official are criminal justice reform, workforce development and healthcare. I sponsored House Bill 1996 to ease tensions between my community and law enforcement. HB 1996 requires the POST Commission to

integrate racial and gender bias training in addition to basic training for law enforcement officers and establish a Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board. The objectives of the board includes maintaining policies prohibiting racial bias or identity profiling, identifying key cultural and ethnic perspectives throughout respective communities. In addition to my efforts to expand access to STEM fields, I co-sponsored and worked with colleagues from the republican party to pass an adult high school bill, which will be focused on helping adults obtain a high school education. This session I proposed an amendment on the House floor that would allow a tax credit for low-income individuals with a disability to make renovations to their home to accommodate a disability.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

One of the most difficult aspects of being a member of the super minority is maintaining the balance of being an ardent advocate for my community, while simultaneously fostering a relationship of mutual respect. My experience has taught me that my republican colleagues and I share similar goals, we merely have a different viewpoint as to how to accomplish those goals. An example of this was when my amendment was accepted on the House floor last week to fix a piece of legislation that would have made it more difficult for ballot initiatives across the state. In its original form, the bill would have required circulators to pay nearly a dollar to the Secretary of State for each signature they collect. Creating a fee for every signature would have made it more difficult for petitions to be circulated and harder for signatures to be collected. I expressed how we must encourage people to participate in our democracy rather than create restrictions.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

Since winning my election for state representative, I have continued to maintain an active presence within my community, while seeking out my constituents to educate and continue to learn about the issues they face. To do this, every week I put together a capitol report which is sent by e-mail to every constituent who has contacted my office or otherwise signed up for the newsletter. In the weekly report, I detail my accomplishments and projects in the House, proposed legislation that I've analyzed as to how it may affect them, as well as job resources and other information useful to any city resident. I have hosted various town hall meetings across the district and regularly attend Ward and committee meetings through the city. I have spoken at middle school graduations to develop relationships with parents and students alike. After speaking with parents at Yeatman-Liddell Middle School, I learned how students struggled to obtain basic school supplies – something I took for granted as a child.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your**

**view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

It is hypocritical for the majority party to claim that it is for less governmental interference while at the same time overriding the minimum wage ordinances passed in St. Louis and Kansas City. One of the most difficult battles I faced last year was against Senate Bill 43 which made Missouri one of the most difficult states to prevail in a discrimination lawsuit. I worked closely with the NAACP, community leaders, and other advocacy groups to raise national awareness of the dangers proposed by the legislation. Republicans claimed that SB 43 merely brought Missouri in line with federal standards. Last summer, we were informed that the state would lose over \$500,000 in federal funds because the bill violated federal law. This session, on the House floor, I was able to share the letter and submit an amendment that would correct a portion of SB 43 and bring our state back in line with federal protections for housing discrimination cases.

## STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

### **LAKEYSHA FRAZIER-BOSLEY, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 79**

#### **About Lakeysha**

I grew up and currently live in the Hyde Park neighborhood in North St. Louis, where I also received my education. I have a degree in business administration and I am currently in school for nursing at STLCC. I have been in public service my whole and I want to continue that legacy of fighting for the people. I believe that serving the people of this great city, by serving them in the capitol would be a great honor where I could apply the lessons that I learned through my life.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I am a member of a family of long line of Democrats and community activist in the City of St. Louis. My experiences growing up in a household of elected officials and activist helped frame and prepare me for public service. I want to combine those experiences with my degree in business and my pursuit

of a degree in healthcare so that I can help develop meaningful strategies to improve the quality of life and welfare for those in my district and the region.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I do have several primary opponent and the biggest difference between us is that I have a record of working for the people in our community. I have stood side by side since my earliest memories of fighting for to improve our community, improving education, improving education and housing and reducing crime.

My opponent has no such record.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

I will focus on three core issues: Improving access to and the quality of healthcare; Reducing crime by attracting more and better paying jobs to the district; and Improving the quality of our education system to produce better prepared students.

#### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

As part of the minority party, we must find strategic opportunities to identify and pass effective legislation. As a party we must find ways to be more inclusive and ways to attract more voters. Most important, we must challenge the extreme agenda of Governor Greitens and the Republic Party.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

Those of us that represent the more progressive wing of the party must be willing to challenge the status quo. We have to look for opportunities for attract more voters and voices. All too often Party leadership is inclusive during general elections but employ divisive and hurtful practices during primary elections that amounts to voter suppression and exclusion. This is particularly true in the way the Party attracts talent and the utilization of minority and women owned businesses. This has to stop if we are truly going to grow the party.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

We must find ways to reverse the control that Jefferson City exercises over our local rights. The only real way to curtail these onerous practices is to recapture control of the statewide offices (Gov., Lt. Gov. etc.) and to increase our numbers in the House and Senate. We must challenge the extreme gerrymandering and be prepared to do so in the courts. Lastly, the Democratic Party has to be more inclusive with the goal of increasing turnout.

## STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

### **J.P. JOHNSON, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 79**

#### **About J.P.**

J.P. Johnson is a former Special Assistant to Mayor Francis G. Slay, serving as Liaison to the Board of Alderpersons & LGBT Liaison for his native City of St. Louis. Prior to serving in the Slay Administration, J.P. was a field organizer for the Missouri Democratic Party, working on behalf of the Nixon for Governor & Obama for America campaigns. J.P. also interned for Congressman Clay and field organized for Congressman Carnahan. Born into difficult circumstances and enduring economic hardships as a youth, J.P. persevered through the village that raised him, and the Jesuit principles fostered through his tenure at St. Louis University High School & St. Louis University. Because of the good fortune of opportunity and lived experiences, J.P. has a visceral understanding and appreciation of the benefits of education, positive role models, social service programs, and intentional community outreach.

**Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

As a member of the St. Louis Young Democrats, I am keenly aware of the importance of an organization's existence for the purpose of engaging in intentional debate about solutions that aim to redress the social ailments that affect us collectively. I run to make a material difference in the lives of people who lack access, or voices stunted by a system that is increasingly functioning as a siloed echochamber. Few organizations have real credibility with members of the community they represent. Being that the St. Louis Young Democrats' presence and role is to represent an emerging generation of democratic leadership, being affirmed as one is important to this campaign.

### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I find LaKeysha Frazier Bosely to be as kind and engaging, as she is sweet and earnest. I believe Reign Harris is a woman of incredible strength and courage, running for office in the name of her son gone too soon due to gun violence. Maxine Johnson is one of the most energetic and passionate persons running, and has a unique ability to turn any platform into a pulpit. I often remind folks that we are not running against each other. I'd hope each of our presences in this race makes us all better people, and thus better servants. We are not adversarial. We are simply running for the same office, but we are all in this together. I believe my credentials, years of legislative and governmental relations experience, and relationships uniquely distinguish my candidacy without diminishing others

### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Every candidate running often has some version of their platform being expanding access to healthcare, better educating our children, reforming the criminal justice system, etc. I'm no different from most democrats that care about leaving the next generation an existence better than the one we inherited. But what's truly important for me is targeting that which leads to the symptomatic social diagnosis. A rural white Missourian is as mistrustful of government, as a black city resident is of the police. It behooves us to extol virtues that bind us, rather than be blinded and led astray by the differences that make us all the equal individuals we are. The more we place value on the positively affirmed relationship with build with one another, including our governing apparatus, the better we can advance solutions to the causes we all care about.

### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

Those of us represented by past and current leadership in Jefferson City have been understandably disappointed. Being in the minority doesn't mean you relegate yourself to the benches. We hear passion from our leaders; we see them walk the streets with those who feel marching and chanting is their only form of amelioration. What we don't feel is legislative policies that lift us up or prevent us from falling behind. Part of that is our inability to communicate with the party in leadership. It's an unfortunate reality, but one that requires intentional and persistent relationship building, that leads to common understanding on

common issues, and gets us closer to solutions that positively affect as many people as possible. We also need to unify as a party that can ardently disagree with each other, but understand we are not disagreeable in our mission to make our communities a better place.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

We must remember that diversity is more than demographics. It's also thought and experiences. Just because someone looks or speaks like you, doesn't mean they think or believe like you. We have to foster those differences as acceptable to who we are as individuals, but engage each other in the things we have commonality on. As someone who worked for or on behalf of established public servants in this state, I've also worked with emerging and progressive organizations like New Leadership Council, NARAL & ESOP. We all can be a part of the solution. We are all a work in progress, but we should strive everyday to better ourselves - it's the only way we perfect our union. This is why this campaign is led by women, and we are working to open a medium that invites more voices to help shape what their future, and our shared future looks like.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

Relationships matter. It's one of the first things we are cognizant of as youth. Without some village structure, we can't do for ourselves because we can't solely depend on ourselves for survival. This principle isn't unique to existing, rather it permeates our everyday lives. This belief - that we are all in this together; that we are our brother's keeper and our sister's keeper - may be pollyanna, but it isn't naive or soft. Before we reflect on notions of federalism, or local control, let us understand those who promote or pervert dissension comprehend the hypocrisy. It's our inability to respect and value each other's humanity that it requires to truly come together and work together. I will employ every procedure possible & wisely utilize relationships I've built over time to protect the rights of each of us - whether that's an individual or municipality - based on this principle.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **TRAVIS ESTES, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 81**

#### **About Travis**

A life-long Democrat born and raised in Missouri, Travis Estes has spent his professional life in communications and the arts. He's currently Director of Digital Strategy for the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and serves as Vice-President of the Marine Villa Neighborhood where he has lived for the past 14 years. Travis has an incurable curiosity that has led him into many interests and makes him a perfect trivia partner. He seeks to understand as much as to be understood. A tendency that has been beneficial in his life helping him bridge divides and find creative solutions. He's pro-labor, a member in good standing of AFTRA/SAG, an AFL-CIO union, and is unapologetically progressive in his views.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

As a member of the St. Louis Young Democrats, I have attended meetings primarily to observe. And as a candidate I've been officially introduced to the current membership on several occasions. The members, both on the Board and in general membership that I've talked to reflect my passion to move not only Missouri, but the Democratic party to a much-needed progressive platform. I'm passionate about equity in all things. My most sacred belief is that no human has lesser, or greater, value than any other. The St. Louis Young Democrats are the future of the Democratic Party and it's important to me to not only be recognized by them but to have an open channel of communication to keep myself informed of their priorities.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

My primary opponent is Steve Butz. He ran and lost against the current State Representative, Fred Wessels, in a race that included Adam Kustra. Butz has a documented record of donating to and supporting conservative causes. This is easiest to see in his Pro-Life stance whereas I'm a vigilant supporter of a woman's right to choose, NARAL and Planned Parenthood. I have to-date received endorsements from Representatives Stacey Newman, Bruce Franks Jr. and Fred Wessels as well as union endorsements by IATSE Local 6 and CWA Local 6300. These endorsements also speak to the differences between us as candidates.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Employment: I am pro-Union, anti-Prop A and a staunch believer that we need to raise the minimum wage. The fact that we have the poverty-levels we do in Missouri while corporations show record profits indicates a failure in government.

## ST. LOUIS YOUNG DEMOCRATS – CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT GUIDE

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**Education:** All children deserve access to a quality, free, public education. As a legislator I believe my job is to fund the schools, not to dictate how or what they teach children.

**Equity:** The inequality of rights faced by so many communities whether by race, gender, sexuality or belief system is the primary motivation in my fight for equity in all things—for all Missourians. I cannot stress enough how this is the basis in every decision, for every vote I'll make be it on criminal justice reform, firearm violence prevention, healthcare for all, etc.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

It's going to take time and much work. Patience is good, but it requires perseverance. As a caucus we need to focus our goals and work together. As far as the majority party, we need to force them to see the people that make up their constituency, working with the proper organizations that will continue to educate voters, moving hearts and minds until the opposition either has to work with us, or be replaced.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I listen. When knocking on doors I ask, rather than tell. I'm looking at ways to use my digital campaign to encourage voter registration, a topic I speak about publicly. But in all honesty, this is difficult to answer. I attend forums, belong to groups, plan open hours for direct contact, make myself accessible by phone, social media and email. But I know that's not enough. I'm open to suggestions on how to not only be available to listen, but to encourage the conversation from the other side.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

What has been done in recent years by the state legislature is wrong. We ask the people to vote, we ask for people's voices and then turn around with a mighty hand—one that's meant to uphold and protect those voices—and directly opposed the will of the people. I cannot abide this practice. As a legislator I will stand on the floor as long as needed to fight for these voices and uphold the votes of the people of St. Louis. Even as a minority party, we can work to disband state preemption laws that allow the state to override municipalities in this way.

## STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

### **DONNA M.C. BARINGER, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 82**

#### **About Donna**

Donna became the 82nd District Missouri State Representative in 2017. She serves on three house committees: Local Government, Crime & Public Safety and Government Efficiency as well as the Joint Committee on Legislation. She advocated for passage out of her committee and on the house floor for the Missouri REAL ID. Without this legislation, the MO driver's license would not be compliant and citizens would need a passport to board a plane. Donna served as the 16th ward alderman in the city of St. Louis for almost 14 years. Here she received national recognition in 2011 for her passage of "scrap metal" legislation which saved the city of St. Louis two million dollars the first year it was in effect. Other city-wide legislation successfully passed: limiting minor's access to graffiti tools, preventing pedophiles from running a child based business and restrictions on gold buyers when melting metals. In her ward she brought economic development; successfully addressed speeding, upgraded problem properties, reduced crime, and continuously promotes sustainable initiatives.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I am seeking the Young Democrats endorsement because I had belonged to the organization until I aged out but still support the mission and am appreciative of their efforts. Its important to cultivate and engage voters of all ages to keep the party strong.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

The biggest difference between my opponent and myself is that I have the expertise and experience in municipal government that I have successfully applied to protect the best interests of the city in my first term at the state level.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

The three top categories of concern that came directly from the constituents of the 82nd are first and foremost Crime & Public safety by a very large margin. Secondly was health in the manner of Medicare expansion, senior citizens, opioid addiction, and help for the mentally ill. Third was utilizing my proven strength of keeping the best interest of growing our city at the forefront.

#### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

There are 163 members of the House of Representatives, 47 are democrats and it takes 82

votes to pass a bill off the floor. As a first year freshman I was the only democrat to pass my own legislation that became law. This was achieved by my relationship building skills and known work ethic at the Capitol. Implementing this at the committee level has allowed me to prevent legislation that would adversely impact the city of St. Louis from getting out or getting it amended so it would do less harm.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

Listening to the voices of the citizens of the 82nd district is what I do frequently. The 82nd district is one of the highest voter turnout districts and they are very engaged. From them I receive e-mails on where they stand on any legislation they are aware of and from my weekly blast they receive information on what is happening. A yearly in-depth survey is mailed, a weekly blast during session, and many social media alerts keeps anyone who wants to follow me up to date and in touch.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

Being on the executive board of the Missouri Municipal League for 6 years during my 14 years as a city of St. Louis Alderman could not have better prepared me for understanding when state laws can have adverse effects on local government. For this reason, I serve on the Local Government Committee where many of these types of bills are heard. The bills heard are not the high profile ones that garner media attention like the more high profile legislation people are aware of. Luckily most are amended or killed in committee so you don't know of them. Last year a bill that would have undermined all of the city of St. Louis building inspection ordinances was introduced. I called the Mayor, city building division and alderman to alert them and if needed have them testify in Jefferson city, luckily the bill died.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **BRAD BAKKER, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 84**

#### **About Brad**

I first moved to St. Louis in 2000 to attend St. Louis University as a Presidential Scholar. After graduating from law school at New York University, I worked as a judicial clerk for the federal courts, drafting court decisions with Judge William J. Haynes, Jr. In my private practice I've organized and managed a legal clinic for the homeless to provide attorneys and legal advice for those unable to afford legal services. I have also worked with the Midwest Innocence Project and other public interest organizations to file briefs in the U.S. Supreme Court and Missouri Supreme Court on behalf of the wrongfully convicted and in support of reforming the Missouri criminal justice system. My wife Kate and I live in the 26th Ward, and I have been a member of the St. Louis Young Democrats for many years and worked on behalf of many great candidates in our community.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I am seeking the endorsement of the St. Louis Young Democrats because I have been a proud member for many years now, and I have watched as we have become a strong organizing force in St. Louis politics. I believe that I can best represent the new ideas, energy, and progressive ideals that we have pushed for in our region. My campaign has sought to involve young volunteers to push a grassroots movement for change in St. Louis, and I would greatly appreciate the support of the St. Louis Young Democrats to continue those efforts.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I believe I bring the needed experience and policy background to quickly make an impact in Jefferson City. Having worked to reform the criminal justice system already, I have the knowledge and familiarity to identify short-comings in current law and address needed reforms. I also have experience drafting and interpreting legislation so that I can hit the ground running upon taking office.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

My major focus in the campaign has been on criminal justice reform. Given my experience in my legal career, I want to focus on fixing our legal system to be more just and more efficient. We need more accountability in how our tax dollars and public safety resources are allocated, and push for cash bail reform to close the Workhouse. I'll also sponsor bills to provide incentives to police departments that implement better training programs, especially implicit bias and de-escalation training, and support juvenile justice reform that provides educational opportunities to reduce crime by providing better opportunities.

I also want to push for equitable economic development in our community, providing better resources and micro-finance opportunities so we can grow wealth within our own communities. Finally, I am strongly pushing ethics reforms in the state legislature to end lobbyist gifts and the corrosive effects of dark money.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

While it will certainly be difficult to move progressive legislation even if Democrats are able to make substantial gains this fall, I believe I will still be able to achieve results in Jefferson City. Although the Republican agenda is largely antithetical to our values, I believe there is a strong possibility of significant bi-partisan criminal justice reform, as evidenced by a number of Republican bills currently moving through the legislature (such as the Raise the Age bill). Conservatives are skeptical of expanding the Department of Corrections, which will provide opportunities to push spending for mental health and substance abuse treatment rather than incarceration.

Further, given my understanding of the committee and legal process, I can work to prevent bad Republican bills from coming out of committee, or offer key amendments that will push otherwise bad policy in a more equitable direction.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

From the start of my campaign, I have emphasized the need to represent all parts of my diverse district. I make it a point to attend meetings in all of the wards in the district and specifically ask voters what issues they want to see addressed in Jefferson City. I have promised voters that I will continue to attend community meetings to hear concerns and stay connected with the issues affecting all neighborhoods in the 84th District.

I have also made a strong effort to recruit a diverse staff and volunteer team that includes different ideas and strong viewpoints. If elected, I plan to continue those efforts of inclusive hiring in Jefferson City.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

The state legislature has specifically targeted St. Louis with legislation, and as long as Republicans maintain their majority and continue to take a hostile approach to our progressive efforts here, it will be difficult to stop. However, one of the key things

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Democrats can do is establish a good legislative record in committee and on the House floor that the legislation unfairly targets St. Louis City. Because the Missouri Supreme Court has previously ruled that Missouri statutes cannot specially target parts of the state (as with the law to control unfair policing and revenues in St. Louis County a few years ago), if we ask the right questions of Republican legislators to reveal their true motives, it can help build a record to potentially invalidate certain statutes in the courts in at least certain instances.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **KEVIN WINDHAM, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 85**

#### **About Kevin**

Born and raised in the 85th district, Kevin Windham lives in his childhood home in Hillsdale, Missouri. His father, stepmother, and younger brothers live in Northwoods, Missouri - also in the 85th district. Kevin studied corporate communication at Southeast Missouri State University, where he served as a member of The President's Task Force on Diversity Education, FOCUS St. Louis Impact Fellows, and the Senior Senator for the College of Liberal Arts in Student Government Association. After college Kevin served as a congressional staffer for US Senator Claire McCaskill. Kevin is currently engaged with the Neighborhood Leadership Fellows, works as an Education Policy intern with the Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis, and serves as the Director of Finance with Kiwanis Club in University City.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I am seeking the endorsement of the St. Louis Young Democrats because I understand how vital this office is for our community and state at this time. I have a huge stake in this race as my family has been in the community for nearly fifty years and I have a two year old brother who will grow up in this same community. Moreover, working families, students, and seniors are under attack by legislators in Jefferson City. I believe that we are at a fork in the road and that a political youthquake has shaken St. Louis City, but St. Louis County has not yet seen the same success. Thus, I hope to join the ranks as an elected official to help defend and protect those under same groups who are under attack.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I am the youngest and most progressive candidate on the ballot to represent Missouri's 85th House District. As a FOCUS St. Louis Impact Fellow, I participated in the cohort that brought the Ferguson Commission Report to life, creating tangible projects and outcomes for the St. Louis region. I have experience working in federal and state government, non-profits, large corporations, and higher education. Moreover, my campaign has been supported by the collective community including over one hundred and fifty individual donations to date and endorsements from the Organization for Black Struggle and Run For Something.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Equitable community revitalization, increasing access to higher education and the skilled trades, and criminal justice reform are my top three priorities.

The 85th District is home to one of the most important thoroughfares in the state, Natural Bridge Road, it is one of four roads in the district maintained by the Missouri Department of Transportation. Natural Bridge extends from Lambert Airport to St. Louis city, but in

## ST. LOUIS YOUNG DEMOCRATS – CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT GUIDE

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portions of the 85th District the road is in disrepair. We must pressure the state to properly maintain Natural Bridge Road.

Increasing access in to higher education and the skilled trades is essential to economic mobility in our district and state.

Missouri's criminal justice system is broken. We must stop charging every 17 year old as an adult, must properly fund our public defenders, and reform the cash bail system in order to begin in dismantling the prison industrial complex.

### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

I am open to working across the aisle to advance common issues for my constituents both while in Jefferson City as well as in the 85th District. With experience in urban, suburban, and rural environments I plan to aid in bridging the urban-rural divide by advocating for Missourians statewide, reactivating rural Democrats and recruiting candidates which will bring Democrats back to a majority in Jefferson City. As I build strong relationships with my colleagues I plan to advocate for a progressive agenda that will benefit St. Louis as well as the state.

### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

My campaign is rooted in a belief of grassroots organizing; therefore, voices, opinions, and support have come from citizens of all backgrounds. Since filing I have welcomed and engaged with friends and neighbors who have challenged me to always be reflective of every community member within the 85th District regardless of their race, sex, income level, education status, sexual orientation, etc. I am running a campaign based on the issues to move the 85th District forward which can only happen by ensuring all voices are heard, acknowledged, and respected. I look forward to bringing all voices to the decision making table.

### **In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

Ideally the state of Missouri and its many cities should have a symbiotic relationship in which the state supports initiatives of local governments and vice versa. I believe that it is important for Missouri's state government to support local efforts unless they harm the state. I will always be a vocal advocate for the St. Louis region both in Jefferson City and St. Louis by explaining the importance of a vibrant St. Louis region for the future of the

state.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **FARRAKHAN SHEGOG, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 86**

#### **About Farrakhan**

Farrakhan began to walk into that path that God had ordered for him at an early age. He began various community activities and engagements that were steered to uplifting, motivating, and inspiring many young people of the community. With a heart of understanding, Farrakhan garnered the love and respect of the people, thus motivating him to further bring economic, political and social development to his community. After completion of high school in 2010, Farrakhan was recruited to attend Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology. Farrakhan graduated with his Bachelors of Science in Business Administration degree in Aviation and Technology Management. He currently is utilizing his specialized training doing inspections, testing, and consulting to various industries such as Aerospace, Manufacturing, Automotive, and Oil & Gas fields.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

Due to the challenges that we face with business, health care, education, and justice system sectors, I am actively involved in advocating for the people that have been adversely affected by them. By being your next state representative, I intend to use every inch of legislative power and influence to benefit the people of the 86th district.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I am from the community, I am young seeking to be a change agent, I have done much community grassroots organizing, lived, shopped, and played in the neighborhood I am seeking to represent.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Education, Health Care, and Job Growth/Creation

#### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

As a young man (26 yo), I have always wanted what was best for my community members of all generations and backgrounds. I come from a hard-working family of faith, respect and integrity. I will take those values with me and try my very best to work with the other party members to see eye to eye on issues to get solutions and results.

#### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices.**

**What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I am actively reaching out to the various ethnicities, races, ages, and classes of people within the district. I am actively listening to their concerns and inviting them to be part of the campaign to help bring their issues to the forefront so opposing sides can have better understanding.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

I will work with the bloc of legislatures from the area to present a united front on the issue. I will try my very best to curtail and prevent ant legislation aimed at hurting local ordinances that are being put in place due to lack of action from the state. I will support any and all legislation aimed at improving the quality of life of the community. As a member of the minority party, I will absolutely try to convince other colleagues of the graves mistakes and implications it may have to not support local efforts to improve quality of life for its citizens.

## STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

### **SAM GLADNEY, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 87**

#### **About Sam**

Public service has been the cornerstone of my life. When I was in law school, I helped to organize fast food workers and fought for a 15 dollar per hour minimum wage. I am currently a union side labor lawyer, so much of my day to day work consists of representing working people. Prior to attending law school, I served as an Army officer, deploying twice to Iraq. I've worked on multiple campaigns to include Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown's reelection in 2012, and Chris Koster's race for Governor in 2016.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

The St. Louis Young Democrats represent much of the energy and excitement that we are seeing in the progressive movement. It seems that the attendance grows with each meeting. People know our State is heading in the wrong direction, and the St. Louis Young Democrats are committed to progressive change.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

The difference is the ability to accomplish a progressive agenda. We have to boldly assert our vision without demonizing our opponents, or assuming that we cannot find common ground. I have done this throughout my life. If we want to produce results for working people we have to get beyond the divisions that plagued our parents generation.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

The three issues most important to my campaign are a woman's right to choose, gun violence reform, and justice reform, but there is so much more. The efforts to curb collective bargaining rights in this state must stopped. Furthermore, it is past time that we implement early vote so everyone has access to the polls.

#### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

A good progressive in the State House has to know when to make a stand, even when we know we will lose the vote, and when to compromise. I will always stand for a woman's right to choose- there is no negotiation on that issue. I will stand to expand opportunity to those who have been shut out from the process. However, I do think we can make progress with Republicans to pass comprehensive justice reform and to finally pass the Missouri Non-Discrimination Act. It is a delicate balance, and we need legislators who are capable of standing up for our values while also producing results.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

In order to make sure we include all voices our campaign is spending the overwhelming majority of our time and resources knocking on doors. We have held meet and greets in every corner of the district. My personal cellphone number is on our literature as well as my email to increase accessibility. Our campaign incorporated conversations from the doors into our platform. Additionally, I am committed to diversity in the staff hiring process.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

Someone recently said, “Republicans love local control until they don’t like what the local governments are doing.” That sums up the Republican position. We have a right to set our wage rates and to protect reproductive rights. If they don’t like us raising the minimum wage on our own, then they should support the statewide efforts to raise the minimum wage through Raise Up Missouri. We know our community better than Jefferson City does. We know that the current minimum wage is not acceptable. I would fight efforts to take away local control on those issues.

## STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

### **IAN MACKEY, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 87**

#### **About Ian**

I grew up in the southern Missouri Ozarks as the son of two public school teachers. My undergraduate degree is in early childhood education from Westminster College and my law degree is from Suffolk University in Boston. I’ve managed campaigns and worked for a variety of candidates and officeholders, including the prior campaigns of 87th district incumbent Rep. Stacey Newman. I met my husband, Stephen Eisele, at the 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver. He was serving as a delegate for Barack Obama. I was a delegate for Hillary Clinton. We currently live in Richmond Heights with our rescue dog, Remy.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I’ve been impressed with the growth and energy of the St. Louis Young Democrats leading up to and following the 2016 election. Particularly, the mayor’s forum and subsequent speaker series were productive and engaging. Voters respect the endorsement of the Young Democrats as an indication of the candidate with the most forward-thinking message. I’m also a young person myself, and I’m in touch with the issues many other

young Missourians are concerned about. I grew up in the Columbine era. I feel the sting of student loans daily, and understand the crisis of soaring educational costs combined with stagnant wages, and the effect that has on a person's decision to buy a home and start a family.

### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

The most significant difference from my perspective is where and how we grew up. According to my opponent he grew up in an affluent family in Brentwood and Clayton. I grew up poor in the Southern Missouri Ozarks. When it comes to forming relationships, working with, and understanding the rural conservative Missourians in Jefferson City I am best equipped, having spent my entire life doing just that. In terms of issues, I notice my opponent often highlighting his opposition to right to work and union/labor issues as the hallmark of his campaign. I agree with him on those issues, but my hallmarks tend to be education, and criminal justice reform. I think we both place a heavy emphasis on gun violence prevention. I also place a significant importance on women's access to abortion, and have testified on this in front of a House Committee.

### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Education – specifically access to early education – which was highlighted significantly in the Ferguson Commission Report as a necessity for achieving racial equality. As a former early educator I intend to introduce a bill that will lower Missouri's compulsory school age from 7 to 5 years old.

Criminal Justice Reform – I went to law school because I wanted to contribute to reforming our criminal justice system. My top priority in this area is eliminating mandatory minimum sentences in the justice system and making our system of incarceration more rehabilitative.

Reducing gun violence - Our cities are plagued with a gun violence epidemic, yet the majority of our legislators insist that St. Louis maintain the same wild west legal framework as our state's most rural counties. St. Louis, like other cities in rural states have done, should not be hindered from enacting local policy to address this issue.

### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

If elected, I will start from the standpoint of having a shared experience with the majority of our state legislature. The first 20 years of my life look significantly similar, for example, to the chair of the budget committee, Rep. Fitzpatrick, who currently serves as my parents state rep in Barry County. Or, our Lt. Governor (maybe soon governor) Mike Parson, who lives 30 minutes from our family farm and has several friends in common with me and my relatives. This disposition of understanding and good will helps tremendously in starting conversations on issues where we may disagree. My opinions on issues are not personal to the representatives who present them, and the issues I present are fortified from my rural

Missouri upbringing and my concern for how they will effect folks like my parents and other family members who still reside in rural Missouri.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

In 1999 when we had a Democratic governor who vetoed a “partial-birth abortion ban” passed by the conservative Democratic legislature, and later overridden. I’ve worked for pro-life Democrats, and I understand in some districts there is no pro-choice alternative. But from a statewide perspective, we’ve got to be bolder on this issue.

I will also hold my elected officials’ feet to the fire, and expect the same from my constituents. When Sen. McCaskill voted against cloture on the DREAM Act in 2007, and my friend Marie Gonzalez faced deportation back to Costa Rica, we organized an effort, as Claire supporters, to convince her to change her mind. It worked.

Legislating and governing as a progressive in a conservative-trending state doesn’t require sacrificing principles and core beliefs. It requires exposure to various ways of life, respect for others’ points of view, and informed, candid presentation of your own fundamental values.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

When Governor Greitens called a special last summer to rescind the nondiscrimination ordinance I traveled to Jefferson City and testified against the measure. I asked the committee to follow their own advice and not “tread on” St. Louis, as they claimed Washington DC was doing to them when many of them were elected in 2010. I chatted with the chair, and with Rep. Mike Moon about the proper role of our two governments. We discussed the doctrine of preemption and I argued that because the ordinance in St. Louis was not in conflict with state law, or either constitution when it passed, that it ought be let alone – particularly considering that their proclaimed approach to government was that local government knows best. The emergency clause to the minimum wage repeal was narrowly defeated in the House, because Democrats successfully argued the purpose of this clause in our state constitution.

### STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

#### **KEVIN FITZGERALD, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 89**

##### **About Kevin**

I am a 64 year old, retired union construction workers. I lost my wife, to suicide, 18 years ago. Having been a completely single parent, doing my best to raise two very young daughters on my own, has given me a, somewhat, unique, perspective for a man. That the situation involved mental illness has brought about a bit of insight into that condition/environment, as well. All of this has illuminated the intersections of single parenthood, mental illness, the challenges of how our society views, treats, those of us with challenges due to biases....racial, gender, economic. I've been very active in working towards justice in our system/society. From visiting Northern Ireland 20 years ago up until today, being among the oppressed, the opposed, I've been there. Involved.

##### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I am seeking the endorsements of any, and all, organizations that align with my beliefs, and goals. As with all organizations, and people....I look for a symbiotic relationship. I try to not only "ask", but to learn. With any organization that I'm involved with, {and there are many, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Jobs With Justice, Coalition of Labor Union Women, Industrial Workers of the World, Pres. of Missouri River Dem Township, West County Democrats, Workers Education Society, and more}, I try to learn their concerns, goals, work. I like to think that I demonstrate my commitment, alliance towards them to the extent that they will support my individual efforts.

##### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

I have no primary opponent. The incumbent, Dean Plocher, is very conservative. He cosponsored the bill that rescinded the minimum wage hike in the city.

##### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Breaking the Republican Super Majority Trifecta. Currently there are, basically, 3 republican legislators to each Democratic legislator. In both the House, and the Senate....3 to 1. With a republican Governor.....a republican, Super Majority Trifecta....{and.....a republican Lt. Gov}. Equal civil rights.....are extremely important to me. Hard for me to designate a numerical importance to them, because I see a complete intersection within racial, women's, labor's, LGBTQ rights. All of these subcultures depend on one, another to secure equality, purpose for each.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

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I visit our state house often. Actually being there, and seeing the attitude that the republican super majority has towards the Democratic legislators, actually seeing the effects of these attitudes, has steeled me. The Super Majority Trifecta that exists is a prime motivating factor in my decision to run, in my very, very challenging area. Solidarity. Solidarity is what first comes to mind in answering this question. I would, first, stand with my fellow Democrats. No surprises on my end. {and we have had a few suprising Dem legislators.....}

### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

At this point in time.....my campaign is being run entirely by women.....4 women. I am, {as I have long before I ever even thought about being involved in a candidacy}, reaching out to the Black, LGBTQ, and Islamic communities for both advice, and involvement. I've spoken at a recent CAIR, {Council of American/Islamic Relations}, banquet, and have visited the mosque quite a few times. As stated above....if elected, I would fight against any, and all legislative efforts that in any way, suppressed, oppressed the rights, conditions, social/economic progress of any minority.

### **In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

I would work, as I've already worked in the past!!?? I've marched, worked petitions, canvassed, donated time, money, effort to the movement to raise the wage in St. Louis City. I've done all of the above in an effort to raise the minimum wage to 15 dollars an hour nationally. I believe in local control.....I believe that a city, town, etc....should be able to ban plastic bags if they choose to do so, that a city, town should be able to enact their own minimum wage, if they choose to do so. I would vote against measures/bills that would attempt to go against a democratically enacted local law. If elected, I will NOT abandon my activism. I will still march, work petitions, canvass. Attaining a legislative position does not negate civil activism.

## STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

### **JEAN PRETTO, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 94**

#### **About Jean**

Jean Pretto was born and raised in South St. Louis County and has lived in Oakville her entire life. Her father worked at Anheuser-Busch and was a member of the Teamsters. Her future husband Joe returned from Vietnam in 1971 and the couple were married soon after. Joe is a retired Teamster. The couple have been happily married for 46 years. Together they raised two wonderful daughters and are the proud grandparents of nine. Both daughters graduated from Oakville High School. Jean is a lifelong educator. Because of her love of education, and wanting to serve our community and young people, ran for and was elected to the Mehlville School Board in 2014. In April of that year, she was awarded the Advanced Board Member Certification from the Missouri School Board Association, and in April of 2017 she earned her Master's Certification. She still serves on the School Board.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I believe that youth are the future and am inspired by their increased involvement in the political process. While on the Mehlville Board of Education, I initiated the "Student On Board" advisory position. Current students have a voice on all matters that come before the board. Although they are not yet able to vote, their voice is heard. It is the only program in the St. Louis Region that prioritizes a student's perspective.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Worker's Rights (Repealing Right to Work, Minimum Wage increase, Prevailing Wage, restoring Unemployment Benefits)

Women's Rights

Education Issues

#### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

Through conversations both on and off the floor in an effort to find common ground.

#### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

The first job of being a representative is to listen. By listening to all individuals and remembering what I hear, I will be an effective advocate for others in the State House.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

Local legislators and State legislators need to work together for the common good.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **ERICA HOFFMAN, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 96**

#### **About Erica**

I've lived in South County for most of the past 18 years with my husband Bob & my two children, Miles, who attends Sperreng Middle School in the Lindbergh School District, and Brook, who preschool at St. Lucas United Church of Christ.

I have a Master's Degree in History and am education certified. I formerly taught in the Fox School District as a High School History & Government Teacher. I helped coach tennis at MICDS. I was formerly a member of the NEA. I left teaching to become a stay at home mom. I currently serving as PTO president at Sperreng Middle School. I was asked to run for office by other like-minded parents in my school district and am committed to running for the Missouri House of Representatives. I am looking forward to increasing my service to the constituents in the 96th District through serving in the Missouri Legislature.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

Young Democrats are the next generation of leaders and I want to hear and carry your concerns in Jefferson City. I want to know how I can support you all and work together to get issues important to us passed.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

David Gregory has been absent in the community since his election. He has failed our neighborhoods and communities by taking money from big corporate and voted to support their interests. He disappeared from our communities and at times has disappeared while votes are taking place on the floor.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Education, Working Families, and Gun Reform

#### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

We have to be smart about the amendment process and working within our caucus to get bills to get support on the floor. I think about the way that Peter Meredith was able to get support for use of Medical Marijuana through the amendment process the other night.

#### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

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We are focused on talking to everyone in the district, and hearing all voices. I am working and listening to dissenting opinions and engaging a broad kitchen cabinet of people to get those voices.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

I am opposed to the preemption laws that the state has passed. I believe in a balance between the two but there are issues that should be handled locally and by those impacted NOT by the representatives from elsewhere across the state. I will be a voice in Jefferson City to stand up against any future attempts at preemption.

## STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

### **MIKE LABOZZETTA, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 99**

#### **About Mike**

I am an attorney who works with entrepreneurs, business owners, and nonprofits to help start and run small businesses. I have run my own solo law practice for a year and a half and would not change it for the world. My clients come from all backgrounds, and serve as the perfect example of why diversity creates a strong economy and a resilient society. I have never run for any political position or helped on any campaign in the past, but with the 2016 election and the toxic political environment, it is time for a change and I am trying to be part of that change.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I see what people can build with a little support and want to bring that idea to Jefferson City. I am appalled by the rhetoric coming from the Republican leadership, both at the federal and state levels, and want to be a voice and advocate for all in Jefferson City. I have seen the work done by the St. Louis Young Democrats and the energy you have brought to the local political scene. It would be an honor to be part of that energy.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

I want to invest in Missouri citizens' education, their health, and creating a diverse economy that creates opportunity for all. I am for worker protections such as repealing right to work and raising the minimum wage. I am for expanding healthcare programs like Medicaid and Medicare to cover more (ideally all) people and give them affordable access to quality healthcare. I am for increased spending on schools, especially funding programs that support working families like before- and after-school care and school meals.

#### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

I know there has been growing awareness of a need for increased coordination among Democrats, but, if elected, I would seek to sit on as many committees as possible to allow my voice to be heard as widely as possible. With so few Democrats currently sitting in the Missouri legislature, it is important to make sure our voice is heard in as many arenas as possible.

#### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

I have been working with advisors with significant ties to minority communities and look to have events that include those voices. This is an area that is particularly important to me

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and my district. Even though the district is in west St. Louis county, the district is home to Daar-ul Islam and a significant Muslim population. I want to make sure everyone feels part of this community.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

I believe that federal laws serve as the legislative floor for the United States, but that states are free to create legal structures that "go farther" in protecting their citizens, particularly from discrimination. I believe the same relationship should exist between the state and the local legal systems; state law should be the "floor" in that state. If elected, I would work to repeal those state overrides and give such decisions back over to local control. I believe this is a message that would play well with Republicans and it would be one of my goals to discuss and advocate this position with colleagues from across the aisle.

## STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

### **HELENA WEBB, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 100**

#### **About Helena**

Helena Webb is a working mother who moved to Ballwin, MO a decade ago. Her father is a fine artist and her mother is a retired professor of comparative religion. Helena attended public school and graduated with a B.A. from Goucher College. She has worked in a variety of industries including theatre, retail, restaurants, and accounting, and for the last 13 years has produced corporate presentations and sales workshops as a consultant.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

We are running a grassroots campaign, and we will depend on the physical and virtual support of a small army of volunteers and endorsers in order to flip District 100 blue. Many of our current volunteers are parents and grandparents. However, I believe it is vital to the success of any movement or campaign - and to fully represent the needs of my community - to have the support and input of the next generation of leaders.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

I want to restore and fight for 1) robust public school and public university funding, 2) healthcare access for low-income families including increased pre-natal and maternal care, and 3) good jobs/increased wages for working families.

#### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

I am willing to reach across the aisle to find allies, but at the end of the day I plan to support Democratic initiatives, propose progressive legislation, and give a voice to and fight for democratic values and the Missourians left behind by Republican policies. Having never been involved in politics before, I will have to find out how best to advocate for our shared values once I am elected.

#### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

So far I have reached out to CAIR Missouri to discuss Muslim concerns, met with friends and other members of the Indian community to listen to their concerns, been in communication with WeCAN regarding African American/BLM needs and concerns, met with PROMO for information and advice on LGBTQ issues, and am listening to the voters who attend my meet and greets. I am a staunch advocate for the equality of all human beings, and one of the reasons I am running is that we need more representatives who care about social justice.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

I believe that local elected governments should be able to enact local laws they believe would be beneficial to their communities because they are closest to those communities, unless those laws are unconstitutional or violate federal law. There are times when reviewing local laws, the state should use a broader lens, considering the overall needs of the state. However, through its actions, the State has demonstrated that it wishes to preempt all local, Democratic measures. I will lobby with Republicans for respect for local government as much as possible.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **GARY WESTER, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 102**

#### **About Gary**

I was raised in South St. Louis; an Eagle Scout; earned a bachelor degree in wildlife management from the University of Missouri; and as a non-traditional student, I earned two additional degrees a bachelors and master's in chemistry. Most of my working career has been in private industry as a chemist. My wife and I have been living in O'Fallon, Missouri for the past eleven years, and in May, we will celebrate 44 years of marriage. We have two children and two grandchildren. In my spare time, I volunteer with the Missouri Master Naturalists, Missouri Steam Team, and the Climate Reality Leadership Corps. Recently, I was endorsed as a candidate by 314 Action, a nonprofit political action committee that seeks to elect scientists in the United States.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I witnessed what youth can do when they unite. The movements we are witnessing today are reminiscent of the late 60's and 70's. I am seeking endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats because I feel that the youth in this country are an important an integral part of the future of the Democratic Party and our nation as a whole. The intelligence, endurance and passion of the young Democrats will be a vital tool and asset to the upcoming election. Voices in this state must change. We have seen what the youth in Parkland Florida have done and will continue to do to change the narrative regarding gun violence, and the St. Louis Young Democrats can also be an important part of changing the narrative in the State of Missouri.

#### **If you have a primary opponent, what differentiates you from them?**

Unfortunately, I know very little about my opponent, John Foster. He has not been active with St Charles County Democratic groups. He came to a couple of events after he signed up as a candidate in Jefferson City on the opening day of registration, and created a campaign committee in April. I took steps to get known within the State Democratic Party and the St Charles Central Committee. When I decided to run, I talked with John Callahan, Cheryl Hibbeler, Bill Otto, Peter Meredith and Doug Beck and other candidates in St Charles County to get an understanding of what is involved in a political campaign.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Missouri must support, fund and invest in public education, pre-school to postsecondary, because an investment in our children is an investment in our future. As an environmentalist, I am deeply concerned about the changes in the EPA at a federal level. Therefore, it is imperative for those in Missouri to keep a watchful eye on what is happening at the state level. The state of Missouri is blessed with a multitude of waterways, however, this will ultimately be a curse if we do not protect our natural

resources. An increase in employment opportunities such as green jobs and infrastructure will help give the Missouri economy the boost it needs to attract others to live and work in our state. I also defend our labor unions and must defeat the Right to Work laws that were recently passed by the Missouri legislature.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

The super majority is a big ‘ship’ that will be difficult to “turn on a dime.” However, we must start changing the narrative in Jefferson City so that we can begin to change the direction of this state. This means not only advocating for Education, Environment, and Employment, but we must also fight to protect health care issues, equality, women’s issues, the disenfranchised, our seniors, and issues of gun violence. I believe that I am a person who can talk with just about anyone on both sides of the aisle, and will do all that I can to start changing the direction so that we are on our way to make this state a better place to live, work and play.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

Equality is an important issue for me, and has been my entire life, not just as a candidate. Since starting my campaign, I have been in contact with and have often attended meetings and/or events for Planned Parenthood, Promo, Tri-County Labor Union and other Union leaders, young democrats, Mom Demand Action Against Gun Violence, and the NAACP. I will continue reaching out to these and other groups, as an advocate for them during my campaign. As a member of the House of Representatives in Jefferson City, issues of equality will be an important part of my legislative agenda. Once again, my focus will be to reach out other Democrats and GOP legislators to bring forth legislation that will not only improve the lives of minorities, but for all citizens of this state.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

I definitely do not advocate the state involving itself in local politics. Localities must be allowed to pass legislation that applies to the needs of its citizenry, as long as it is constitutionally allowed. As a minority, I will be persistent introducing resolutions, working across the aisle to obtain co-sponsors for bills, and communicate the importance of this legislation with constituents.

## STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES

### **JIM KLENC, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 103**

#### **About Jim**

In May 2017, my son Aidan was diagnosed with a glioblastoma brain tumor. As a small business owner, my family receives our health insurance through the Affordable Care Act, or what is commonly referred to as Obamacare. Without the protections of the ACA, this type of diagnosis would have most certainly bankrupted me, and it's highly possible my son would not have received quality care without it. Healthcare is a very personal issue for me and my family. Fighting for my son's health care was the motivating factor in my decision to run for political office.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

I am a lifelong Democrat, and son of a union member. I believe in the values of the Democratic Party, including access to affordable healthcare; a strong union representation; a good public education system; and equity for all people.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

Access to affordable healthcare is my number one priority. As the father of a child with terminal cancer, I want to ensure that all Missourians receive the best possible care, without going into debt. I also believe a quality public education is essential to a vibrant workforce. Union representation is necessary for fair and equitable wages and working conditions. I will fight for workers' rights, and oppose Right to Work in Missouri.

#### **Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

It is essential to reach across the aisle, and work on bi-partisan legislation. We may not agree with each other, but we must all work for the greater good. I will push to work with my Republican colleagues, and bring a common sense approach to Jefferson City. The only way to get legislation passed is to work together.

#### **The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

In Missouri, union workers are not necessarily Democratic voters. I think my opposition to Right to Work helps include all voices; Democrat and Republican, as well different socioeconomic classes. In my District, the Republican has run unopposed for too long. I plan on canvassing every household, in order to give people a choice.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

As long as the city government is not creating discriminatory laws, then the state government should uphold the decisions made within that township. If a town violates the state or federal constitution, then the state should step in and amend those laws. Also, if the law does not negatively affect the majority of the populace, then the law should be able to stand as written.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE CANDIDATES**

### **SCOTT CERNICEK, MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DISTRICT 105**

#### **About Scott**

Scott Cernicek is a Democrat running for State Representative of District 105 in St. Peters. A chef by trade, Scott obtained his culinary arts degree by age 20, and by 25 he had earned the title of Executive Sous Chef at one of the largest hotels in St. Louis. Scott is a Francis Howell North graduate and lifelong resident of district 105, where he now owns a home with his wife and 3 year old son Eli. Scott is a homegrown champion for public education, affordable healthcare, and worker's rights. His goal is to be a true representative for his district, not another politician.

#### **Why are you seeking the endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats?**

Short Answer: I need your help. Long Answer: The St. Charles Democratic Party has withered on the vine for too long, so I am working hard to build a coalition of volunteers to help flip this seat in what should be a battleground district. Your endorsement will help attract volunteers to my race, who can help me do the extensive field work it will take to win this election.

#### **If you have a primary opponents, what differentiates you from them?**

My primary opponent is an older gentleman named Denny Braun who told me he is only running for office because he wants to see his name on a ballot. He has no interest in raising money, knocking doors, or doing any of the work it would take to win this race. While I fully support his right to put himself on the ballot, it pains me to know that someone would hinder our chance at flipping a seat and making a difference in Missouri just to pamper their own ego. So the difference between us is that I possess the commitment, drive, and wherewithal to win this race.

#### **What are the three issues most important to you and your candidacy?**

1) Budget. The number one problem we need to fix in our state is the Republican budget plan of cutting social programs to fund tax cuts for corporations. Before we can start improving our state with new ideas and programs, we need to reclaim tax revenue from the corporations that haven't paid their share in years.

2) Education. As the parent of a young child, education is very important to me personally. The reckless cuts to public school transportation have left 15 school districts with no option but to stop holding class on Fridays. I refuse to let our state move backwards on education; our children deserve at least as great an education as we received.

3) Workers Rights. As a chef, I worked with low income employees from diverse backgrounds. I've seen employers use every dirty trick to try and abuse a class of people

who were never taught their rights.

**Democrats currently have a super minority in the state legislature, and may remain the minority party after November. If elected into the minority, how would you work to move forward a progressive agenda and advocate for the St. Louis region?**

The most effective thing our Democratic legislators have done this session, and something I intend to emulate, is increasing community awareness of what is happening in Jefferson City. When you don't have the votes, you slow things to a crawl. When you can't do that alone, you spark the fire within your community to make calls, letters, demonstrations. Mobilizing the community is responsible for stopping HB1936, the "Guns Everywhere" bill that would have made our state less safe.

**The Democratic Party is often criticized for not doing enough to include all voices. What are you doing in your campaign to ensure that those voices are heard and how do you plan to advocate for them after November 2018?**

When it comes to voices within my community, opinions and philosophies can vary greatly from door to door. A big part of my platform is being a true community representative, and that starts with listening. I have my personal phone number on my walk pieces and encourage people to call me anytime with questions. I don't just knock doors within my strategic universe, I reach out to people who I know will disagree with me, because I believe we all have something to learn from each other. A big part of letting voices be heard is through fair and open elections, and programs like automatic voter registration will go a long way towards making sure everyone has a say in our government.

**In recent years, the state legislature has passed laws directly aimed at preempting local St. Louis ordinances. Examples include reversing a minimum wage increase and overriding reproductive rights nondiscrimination protections. What is your view of the proper state-local relationship and local control? How would you work as a member of the minority party to ensure the rights of St. Louisans are not inappropriately curtailed?**

The citizens within a political subdivision have the right to create laws for their municipality as they see fit, within the bounds of the Missouri Constitution. It is not the place of the state government to overrule the will of the people, and a senator from SW Missouri should not have input into the decisions made by St. Louisans that only affect St. Louis. As a representative, I will stand up for the rights of cities to enact local laws without interference from the State. I will work to remind the majority, and our constituents, of the inherent hypocrisy in preaching "small government" while they try to bully Democratic leaning cities.

### OUR ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

An endorsement from the St. Louis Young Democrats indicates that a candidate's record, performance in office, or promise of future relations meets the standards set forth by the St. Louis Young Democrats. An endorsement makes resources available to a candidate or campaign, including but not limited to a press release announcing the endorsement, an email to the St. Louis Young Democrats' 1000+ person email list encouraging them to vote for the endorsed candidate, and publicizing campaign volunteer opportunities and events with St. Louis Young Democrats members. Additionally, an endorsement allows a candidate or campaign to inform voters of the support of the St. Louis Young Democrats.

Endorsements are determined by a majority vote of dues-paying members who are in good standing before April 18, 2018. Our organization recognizes the importance of assessing the ability of a candidate to run a winning campaign, in order to avoid spending valuable time, money and volunteers on non-contenders. Members review all pertinent information regarding a candidate's capability, including evaluation of questionnaire responses, research of news media and social media, past political performance, voting record, and campaign promise.

It is incumbent upon each member of the Executive Board to maintain impartiality. Executive Board members shall disqualify themselves from the participation in the screening/endorsement process where such endorsement poses a conflict of interest with the board member's elective or appointed political office.



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