



Candidate Survey Response

## AUSTIN BADON

Clerk of Orleans Parish Criminal  
District Court

### CANDIDATE SPOTLIGHT

I am just like you having been raised in our beloved City. I'm happily married to my wife of 26 years and we have one son being educated in public schools. I graduated from UNO in Political Science and I earned a Master's degree from Troy State in Human Resources Management. I served you well with honesty and integrity for 12 years in the Louisiana Legislature and I have served you well as Clerk of First City Court. I have made the office more accessible and efficient, decreasing fees, provided outreach to educate the public on services and been an advocate for housing rights. You also know my humanitarian work in the community by finding missing loved ones and vaccinating the homeless under the bridge. I'm number 8 on the ballot and I'm asking for your support. I've never lied to you and pledge to provide you with Good Government.

### SURVEY TOPICS

PROCEDURAL



JURY POOLS



PROVIDING ADEQUATE REPRESENTATION



RECORD EXPUNGEMENT



COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS AND POLICY

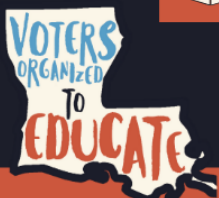
DRUG TESTING AND ACCURACY



VOTER REGISTRATION



ENDING DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES



# PROCEDURAL

## KNOW YOUR VOTE

Would you keep the Clerk's office open until 5pm, rather than the current 3pm closure?

YES

When do you expect the Court to move to an e-filing option, in an integrated case management system, to make the court far more efficient and covid-friendly?

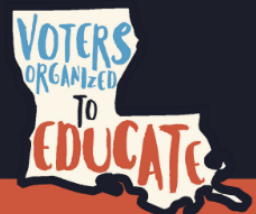
I absolutely would move to an e-filing system as I am already doing at First City Court. We need to make our Court system more efficient and accessible to all people who are trying to gain more access and to make it easier on people who need to do business within the Court.

Will you change the Clerk's website regarding the ineligibility based on felony convictions?

YES

Please elaborate, including specific actions you will take if elected to office

As a former legislator who voted numerous times to expand the rights of the formerly incarcerated, I would promote more laws to give access to juries for those convicted of felonies but I would go one step forward; I believe that when someone has served their debt to society they should have all rights reinstated and not have to wait 5 years. My plan is to educate the formerly incarcerated on their rights and to promote more involvement in the reform of the criminal justice system.



# JURY POOLS

KNOW YOUR VOTE

Would you expand the jury pool by pulling names of residents over 18 from the Office of Motor Vehicles?

YES

Please elaborate, including specific actions you will take if elected to office

We need to diversify those serving on juries in order to make juries more reflective of the community in which they serve. Defendants are afforded the presumption of innocence until proven guilty. However, juries must reflect people from the same neighborhoods and communities from which the defendants live. We need people to serve on juries who have no bias.

How often, and when, will you enter new names into the jury pool?

I believe that it is necessary to enter new names into the jury pool on a quarterly basis. This will provide for a larger pool of people to serve and to have an opportunity for more diverse juries. I believe that there are people in the community like myself who would want to serve but have not been asked. I believe that we need to get more young people involved in the process. I will also promote more access to those with disabilities in order to provide them with easier access to the jury process.





# PROVIDING ADEQUATE REPRESENTATION

## KNOW YOUR VOTE

YES

Will you provide assistance to pro se petitioners, particularly those who are incarcerated, consistent with the American Bar Association Standard 3.5 regarding Assistance to Pro Se Litigants, to ensure technical errors and procedural mistakes do not deny people their 5th Amendment access to the courts?

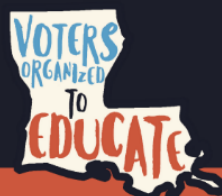
Please elaborate, including specific actions you will take if elected to office:

I strongly believe that all people are deserving of justice regardless of whether they can afford or not. Everyone is innocent until proven guilty and how much money you have should never be an obstacle to proper representation.

## RECORD EXPUNGEMENT

Considering how complex it is for eligible people to obtain an expungement from the court, what would you do to help simplify and streamline this process?

I have made everyone within my current office task specific. I will pledge to you that I will dedicate someone in my office to streamline the process and to reach out to those eligible for an expungement to insure that they know this is available to them. I don't believe that old nonviolent charges should hinder someone's future prospects because of a mistake that was made in the past. Also, an expungement should be affordable. I will seek out grants and to partner with non-profit organizations to provide funds for people who seek an expungement but can't afford it.



# COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS AND POLICY

KNOW YOUR VOTE

YES

Do you believe the CDC has the pandemic under control in the building? If not, what procedures or changes would you implement to make it a safer place for the people?

I would ask that all employees be vaccinated and to provide as much protection as possible. I would make vaccines available to all who would want them and to make sure that all litigants have access to a vaccine before entering the building. But I believe that education is the best tool that we have against this virus. As I currently do, I encourage my staff not to come into work if they are not feeling well however since a lot of the new cases are asymptomatic, I believe that quick response testing should be on site. The building needs to be cleansed on a daily basis.

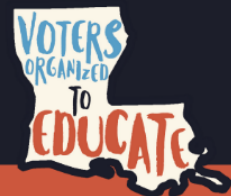
Please elaborate, including specific actions you will take if elected to office

The Clerk of Court has several collections agents. Considering the economic crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, does the court now, or can you foresee in the future, a moratorium (or forgiveness) on collecting fines and fees of the court?

YES

My current office has been the epicenter for the rental moratorium set up through the CDC. Our citizens have been negatively impacted by the pandemic in multiple ways. I have been an outspoken critic of fee increases and I have even dropped certain fees in my office. I believe that certain fees should not increase or there should be a roll back of these fees and that for those who are in need, the debt should be forgiven.

Please elaborate, including specific actions you will take if elected to office



# DRUG TESTING AND ACCURACY

## KNOW YOUR VOTE

How would you select your drug testing vendor, and how would you monitor their performance?

I believe in a strong process of Chain of Custody. I would solicit affordable bids from companies who have a proven track record of providing quality service without cases of mistaken identity or samples being compromised. I have on hand experience with drug screening therefore I am keenly aware of the importance to insuring that samples are not compromised.

Please elaborate, including specific actions you will take if elected to office:

I am an analytical person therefore I would require consistent reporting on the number, frequency and quality of samples taken. These reports would then be made available to the public for thorough analysis.

# VOTER REGISTRATION

Are you fully versed in the laws regarding people registering and voting with a past felony conviction, whether on probation or parole, whether a sentence is currently active or completed?

I Would Like to Learn

The laws change from each legislative session. I am certainly open to learning about and implementing the new laws that come out. I think that it's important to educate the public on their rights especially when they pertain to our brothers and sisters with prior convictions.

Please elaborate with any additional comments?





# VOTER REGISTRATION (CONTINUED)

## KNOW YOUR VOTE

Considering that many registration issues do not arise until someone is at the polls and trying to vote, will you ensure that all people in the Clerk's Elections Division, including all commissioners and poll workers, are fully trained on the details of voter registration by people with felony convictions?

YES

I will use the most updated technology to address these issues before they cause an obstacle and embarrassment at the polls. I will pledge to you that my staff will have to pass rigorous testing to insure that they are capable of serving people at the polls and that they knowledgeable of current laws.

Please elaborate, including specific actions you will take if elected to office:

# ENDING DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES

As a public official, will you commit to publicly supporting efforts that end discrimination against people with criminal records?

YES

I strongly believe that once someone has paid their debt to society, it's over and done. They should not continue to suffer because of a judgement that has been fulfilled. It not right or lawful. I totally against any discriminatory behavior. People should not have to carry that burden into their future.

Please elaborate, including specific actions you will take if elected to office

