

# **Endorsement Procedures of the 5th District Democrats**

## **(Adopted January X, 2021)**

### **Preamble**

Endorsements are a public declaration of support by the 5th District Democrats (“5th LD”) on behalf of a candidate for public office, a person seeking appointment to a public position of responsibility, or in favor of or opposition of a ballot measure. They represent a determination by the membership that election/appointment of the candidate, or approval/defeat of the ballot measure, will further our Democratic values and ideals.

### **Article I: Purpose**

Section 1: These procedures are standing rules for endorsements as per Article X of the Bylaws of the 5<sup>th</sup> District Democrats (“Bylaws”) and for the Endorsements Committee.

### **Article II: Endorsements Committee**

Section 1: The Endorsements Committee (“Committee”) shall consist of a minimum of six voting members of the 5<sup>th</sup> LD.

Section 2: The District Chair shall appoint the Endorsements Committee Chair with the approval of the Executive Board and a majority of those members present and voting at a membership meeting.

Section 3: Additional committee members shall be appointed by the Endorsements Committee Chair with concurrence by the District Chair. Appointment of committee members shall seek to reflect the district’s diverse geographical areas, cities and towns and give preference to persons from groups historically marginalized based on gender, race, age, religion, sexual orientation, economic status and ethnic origin. One or more members may serve as Committee Vice-Chairs.

Section 4: The Committee Chair may remove committee members with three or more unexcused absences at their discretion with concurrence by the District Chair.

Section 5: Committee appointments are until the next reorganization meeting.

### **Article III: Responsibilities of the Endorsements Committee**

Section 1: The Committee is responsible for reviewing the qualifications of candidates and making a recommendation to the membership on which candidates to endorse (for nominations, elected office, or appointed positions) and which ballot measures to support or oppose.

Section 2: Committee members are expected to participate throughout the year. Committee members are responsible for researching candidates and ballot measures prior to drafting recommendations.

Section 3: The Committee may, at its discretion, produce its own questionnaires, hold its own candidate and ballot issue interviews, or schedule discussions between rival candidates or ballot issue viewpoints seeking endorsement.

Section 4: The Committee should encourage endorsement requests from candidates and ballot measures for which at least one registered voter in the 5<sup>th</sup> LD is entitled to vote.

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Section 5: The Committee should recommend candidates that reflect the Democratic values and ideals of the 5<sup>th</sup> LD's membership, and should strive in each race to recommend the single candidate that best reflects those values and ideals.

Section 6: Deliberations by the Committee are confidential, including interviews with candidates, any designated representatives of candidates, and those seeking endorsements for or against ballot measures.

### **Article IV: Significance of endorsements**

Section 1: Endorsements represent a directive by the 5th LD's membership to its Executive Board and other committees to make every reasonable effort to support the election effort of the endorsed candidate or furtherance of the ballot proposal position.

Section 2: Endorsed candidates and ballot measures are entitled to all services the 5<sup>th</sup> LD provides to candidates; this, for example, includes access to databases and lists, ability to promote events through the 5th LD's calendar, and the right to list the 5th LD as an endorser in campaign materials.

Section 3: Candidates and ballot measure campaigns may not receive any financial support from the 5th LD unless they have received an endorsement.

Section 4: The 5th LD shall only promote the circulation of petitions for ballot measures it has endorsed.

Section 5: Candidates and ballot measures may not claim to have the support of the 5<sup>th</sup> LD – or imply the same – unless they have actually been endorsed for that specific term and position, or that specific ballot measure.

### **Article V: Timeframe and criteria for endorsements**

Section 1: Every candidate endorsement shall be for a specific candidate, office and term.

Section 2: Endorsements may be considered for any candidate or ballot measure for which at least one registered voter in the 5th LD is entitled to vote.

Section 3: Early endorsements are made before the end of any filing period for a regular election.

Section 4: Regular endorsements are made after the end of filing but before the primary election, or as part of the necessary business of a nominating convention

Section 5: Late endorsements are made after the primary election, even if candidates are not required to run in the primary.

Section 6: Endorsements for any candidate or ballot measure may not be considered within one month of the election where such race or ballot measure will appear on the ballot.

Section 7: For special elections, endorsements cannot be made earlier than six months prior to those elections. The concepts of early, regular, and late endorsements shall not pertain to special elections.

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### **Article VI: Eligibility for endorsement**

Section 1: Candidates must request endorsement to be considered. Completion of a candidate questionnaire submitted to either the King County Democrats or the Committee constitutes a request.

Section 2: Candidates must show support of Democratic values and ideals. Candidates can demonstrate this support by stating that they prefer the Democratic Party when filing and running in partisan elections.

Section 3: Endorsements for or against ballot measures (such as for initiatives, constitutional amendments, referendums, or local levies or bonds) can be considered without a request from the campaign or having a completed questionnaire.

### **Article VII: Evaluation of endorsement requests**

Section 1: Endorsement requests, whether for candidates or for positions on ballot measures, should generally be directed to the Committee for review prior to consideration by the membership.

Section 2: If the Committee is evaluating a race in which there are multiple candidates eligible for endorsement as specified in Article VI, and one or more have not completed the necessary questionnaire or been interviewed by the Committee, it may choose to defer a recommendation in that race in order to give fair consideration to all eligible candidates.

### **Article VIII: Endorsement motions; process for approving at membership meetings**

Section 1: The Committee is encouraged to prepare materials for presentation at membership meetings where it anticipates releasing recommendations. For instance, the Committee may distribute printed handouts or make use of audiovisual equipment to explain its research and rationale.

Section 2: Endorsement requests shall be considered at every regular membership meeting between the close of filing and the general election. No special notice is required for regular and late endorsements at these meetings. For all early endorsements, the membership must be notified at least seven days in advance of all endorsement requests that will be considered at the next membership meeting.

Section 3: The Endorsements Committee must present its recommendations before any endorsement motions from the floor can be considered by the membership. Motions to endorse that are offered prior to this presentation shall be out of order. A recommendation by the Endorsements Committee in favor of endorsing a candidate or in support or opposition to a ballot measure constitutes an endorsement motion and second.

Section 4: Approval of motions for endorsement, whether for a candidate or a ballot measure, requires a two-thirds vote of members present and voting at a membership meeting to be approved. Motions to rescind an endorsement require the same standard. Voting eligibility requirements are set forth in Article III of the Bylaws.

Section 5: A motion to endorse a candidate from the floor is only in order if not an early endorsement and the candidate is eligible for endorsement as specified in article VI of these procedures.

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Section 6: Combinations of candidates and positions may be considered in a single motion. For example, a motion to endorse all unopposed Democratic candidates or a motion to endorse several candidates for the same office may be considered.

Section 7: The Chair may choose to limit debate to no more than a fixed number of statements of a limited time for and against each motion, such as two statements for and against of no more than two minutes each, and appoint a timekeeper to enforce the rules. When such debate limitation is in place, any motion to terminate debate by “calling the question” shall be out of order.

Section 8: When a vote on an endorsement motion is held, the Secretary or Acting Secretary shall record the number of ayes, the number of nays, and number of abstentions on the motion immediately after the chair or acting chair has tallied or accepted a tally for each.

### **Article IX: Endorsements for candidates**

Section 1: Any candidate nominated by the Washington State Democratic Party shall be considered endorsed by the 5<sup>th</sup> LD, and endorsements for any other candidates for the same office shall immediately lapse.

Section 2: Motions to endorse a candidate seeking the Democratic Party nomination for the offices of President or Vice-President of the United States of America shall never be in order. The candidate nominated for the offices of President and Vice-President of the United States by the Democratic Party at the Democratic National Convention shall be considered endorsed by the 5<sup>th</sup> LD.

### **Article X: Endorsement resolutions**

Section 1: Resolutions whose whereas clauses include support or opposition to any candidate or ballot measure are endorsements and subject to all the requirements and restrictions of these endorsement rules, including any eligibility restrictions and adoption thresholds.

Section 2: Endorsement resolutions are a way of formally combining the rationale for an endorsement with the endorsement itself.

### **Article XI: Endorsements for leadership positions in the Democratic Party**

Section 1: Individuals seeking a position of responsibility in another Democratic Party organization that geographically overlaps with the 5th LD may request an endorsement, such as KCDCC officers. Such requests shall be evaluated by the Committee.

Section 2: Motions to endorse an individual for a position of responsibility within the 5th LD, such as District officers, shall never be in order. Individuals interested in seeking and holding leadership positions should make their intentions known to the Recruiting Committee, or to the Executive Board if there is no Recruiting Committee organized.

### **Article XII: Amendment of these Endorsement Procedures**

Section 1: These procedures are special rules of order and may be suspended or amended only by either the same requirements for amending the 5<sup>th</sup> LD bylaws, or by a two-thirds majority vote of the entire voting membership providing notice has been published to the membership at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

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Section 2: The membership may choose to refer consideration of any changes to the Endorsements Committee for review and recommendation.