

Alaska Women for Political Action

Endorsement Policies and Procedures

2011

1. General

- 1.** It shall be the policy of the AWPA to encourage pro-choice women candidates and to adopt endorsement criteria and procedures that protect the multi-partisan make-up of the AWPA.
- 2.** **Offices considered for endorsement are those of the U.S. Congress, Governor, Alaska Senate, Alaska House of Representatives, Mayor, Assembly or City Council, and School Board. For Legislative, Gubernatorial, and Congressional races, there is no endorsement for the Primary election since those are partisan races. If AWPA desires to endorse a candidate before the Primary election, procedures are provided in Section II.F. Early Endorsement.**
- 3.** **There can only be one candidate endorsed or supported in each race.** This policy can only be changed at the annual meeting, as it is part of the Endorsement Policies and Procedures included in the Bylaws.
- 4.** Endorsement of a woman precludes support of a man in the same race.
- 5.** Permitted actions for each candidate are:
 - 5.** “Endorsement” of a female candidate: The woman could receive direct financial contributions, assistance and support, and have independent expenditures made on her behalf.
 - 2.** “Support” of a male candidate: The man would not receive direct financial contributions, but he could receive assistance and support and have independent expenditures made on his behalf. He would not have to be interviewed unless he is running against a woman candidate.
 - 3.** “Candidate signed the baseline”: This is used for men and women who are not endorsed or supported or cautioned about - #4 below.
 - 4.** “Interviewed the candidate, but do not endorse or support” This is a negative statement used to caution others away from voting for this candidate.
 - 5.** “Candidate did not sign the baseline.”
- 6.** In the event that candidates for Governor and Lt. Governor are of mixed genders, the criteria in Section II have to be considered for each candidate.

2. Eligibility and Criteria for Endorsement or Support

- 2.** To qualify for consideration by AWPA for endorsement or support in any election, the candidate must sign and return AWPA’s current baseline statement that indicates that the candidate:

2. Supports the proposition that no rights or privileges of any person shall be denied on the basis of gender.
 2. Supports a female's right to reproductive freedom, meaning that the female, not the government, holds the right to choose whether or not to continue a pregnancy. We further support public funding for low-income females for adequate access family planning services and supplies, including abortion-related services.
 3. Supports child and dependent care programs, through local, state, and federal government funding and efforts to increase the availability of quality child and dependent care services.
2. The baseline statement will include a notice to the candidate that AWPA reserves the right to publicly distribute signed statements.
 3. **All candidates will be sent the baseline statement. The Chair of the Endorsement Committee shall attempt to ensure that all the candidates have received this mailing.**
 4. **All candidates who have returned the signed baseline must be interviewed. Exceptions to an interview may be granted at the discretion of the Endorsement Committee if:**
 4. The candidate is an incumbent or prior candidate or elected official who has been previously endorsed or supported by the AWPA. This exception cannot be used if a prior supported male candidate is running against a female candidate, and
 2. The candidate's record justifies continued AWPA support.
 5. Endorsements or support will be made on the basis of information derived from the signed baseline, the interview, personal history, voting record, if applicable, and other information available to the AWPA. If two or more candidates indicate similar levels of commitment to AWPA goals and purposes, specific consideration shall be given to:
 5. Candidates who are women;
 6. Public officeholders with records of support for AWPA issues;
 7. Candidates who have been active AWPA members for six or more months prior to the filing date;
 8. Commitment to affirmative action;
 9. Viability of the candidate's campaign;
 10. The suitability of the candidate to the office being sought;
 11. The effect of an AWPA endorsement on the candidate's campaign;
 12. Whether the candidate's campaign publicly advocates the baseline issues;
 13. The level of activity or effort on issues of importance to AWPA, including membership in related organizations.
 6. **Early Endorsement**
 6. Recommendations for an endorsement of an outstanding female candidate prior to the regularly scheduled endorsement meeting may be made at the discretion of the Endorsement Committee.
 7. The Committee must find good cause for seeking an early endorsement, such

as:

6. The candidate is running against a candidate whom AWPAs desires to defeat;
7. The candidate is an AWPAs supported incumbent.
8. The known opponents in that race must be contacted to determine their interest in AWPAs endorsement or signing the baseline before any endorsement is considered.
9. The candidate(s) must sign the baseline. Unless the candidate is an AWPAs endorsed incumbent, she must be interviewed.

3. Endorsement Procedures

3. The Endorsement Committee

3. The Endorsement Committee will be composed of AWPAs members in good standing and should be multi-partisan in make-up.
2. No member of the Endorsement Committee shall be a candidate in the upcoming election.
3. The Chair of the Endorsement Committee shall not be a candidate or serve as the candidate's staff member, campaign manager, or treasurer during the term of office.
4. A staff member, campaign manager, or treasurer may not participate in the interview process for the race in which that candidate is running.
5. A member of the Endorsement Committee who is working in a candidate's campaign, has endorsed a candidate, permitted the use of her/his name in the candidate's campaign, or has contributed money to a candidate is required to disclose this activity to the Endorsement Committee Chair prior to participating in the endorsement process. The Endorsement Committee shall decide if there is a conflict of interest and, if there is, excuse that member from the interviews in that race.
6. Prior to joining the committee and prior to the interview process for any election, every member of the committee shall disclose to the Endorsement Committee Chair any commitments that may interfere with the committee's work, including any actual or potential conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety.

2. The Endorsement Time Line

The Chair of the Endorsement Committee shall be responsible for preparing a detailed time-line that encompasses all the significant steps in the endorsement procedure and shall provide a copy to the Board and the Endorsement Committee.

C. The Baseline

2. The baseline will be mailed to all candidates as soon as possible after the filing deadline or as soon as their candidacy is announced for a Congressional office. A cover letter will accompany the baseline informing candidates of what they can or cannot expect from AWPAs as a result of an endorsement or support. This can be done electronically if there is confirmation the candidate

has received the mailing.

2. If a candidate's response to the baseline indicates support of AWPAs baseline issues and if the candidate desires AWPAs endorsement, the candidate will be scheduled for a personal interview.

D. Interview Questions

The Endorsement Committee will prepare the interview questions that expand on the baseline issues for AWPAs and ask about their campaign. The interview questions will be provided to the Board president before the interviews begin.

E. The Interview

2. A minimum of three members of the Endorsement Committee shall participate in each interview. The same members shall interview all candidates for the same race.
3. The Endorsement Committee will provide direction to candidates regarding the attendance of their campaign managers, family, and other supporters at the interview.
4. The interview will center on the candidate's responses to the baseline and the interview questions.
5. As soon as possible after all candidates for a race are interviewed, the members of the Endorsement Committee shall evaluate the information known about each candidate and vote on an endorsement action. A two-thirds (2/3) vote is required. All those members voting shall sign the endorsement action of the Committee, noting their concurrence with the action or their difference with the action. This signed statement becomes part of the permanent record of the Committee and AWPAs.

F. Report of the Endorsement Committee

The Chair of the Endorsement Committee shall deliver a written report to the President as soon as possible prior to the general membership meeting. If in the case of a local race outside of Anchorage when the report misses the membership meeting and the election is before the next meeting, the Board is authorized to consider and vote on the recommendations. The president will report on the action at the next membership meeting.

1. The report shall include a recommendation for one of the following actions for each race and also include a statement of the reasons for each action recommended:
 - a. Do endorse the specified female candidate;
 - b. Do support the specified male candidate;
 - c. No recommendation for the race;
 - d. Do not endorse or support any candidate in the race.

2. The report shall include, for each race:

- a. Which candidate(s) signed the baseline;
- b. Which candidate(s) were interviewed;
- c. Which candidate(s) did not sign baseline.

G. Endorsement Meeting

- 2. Quorum: Ten percent (10%) of the members in good standing and eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum at an endorsement meeting.
- 3. Eligibility to Vote: Eligibility to vote shall be determined by the Bylaws.
- 4. Candidate Speeches: Each candidate who has signed the baseline shall be given three (3) minutes to address the meeting attendees. Candidates will be encouraged to concentrate their comments on the questions on the questionnaire. As much as possible, candidates for the same seat shall speak consecutively. Candidates who cannot attend are allowed to send a spokesperson.
- 5. Closed Meeting: The meeting shall then be closed to non-members.
- 6. Committee Recommendation: The Endorsement Committee shall present its recommendations to the membership for ratification. An oral and written report shall be made to the membership.
- 7. Debate: The AWPAC chair shall call on members to speak. Any member shall identify herself or himself and the source of the information when speaking about a candidate's qualifications.
- 8. Ratification of Committee Recommendation: A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and eligible to vote shall be required in order to ratify a recommendation of the Endorsement Committee for a candidate in a general election.
- 9. Early Endorsement: A three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members present and eligible to vote is needed to ratify a recommendation for early endorsement
- 10. Other Endorsements: In the event that the membership does not ratify the Committee's recommendation, any member in good standing and qualified to vote may move to modify the recommendation for a race. Such a motion shall require a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members present and eligible to vote to be adopted.
- 11. Secret Ballot: At the request of any member eligible to vote, the vote on any recommendation or motion shall be by secret ballot.

H. The Endorsement and Cash Contributions

- 2. The Chair of the Endorsement Committee shall write, sign, and send letters to all interviewed candidates within one week of the official vote of the membership, indicating whether or not AWPAC has agreed to endorse or support their candidacy.
- 3. The Chair of the Endorsement Committee will direct the Political Action Committee (PAC) to publicize the endorsed and supported candidates and the candidates who signed the baseline with a press release, newspaper ad, mailing to the AWPAC membership, or other means.
- 4. Monetary contributions may be made to endorsed women at the discretion of

the PAC.

5. The PAC is allowed and encouraged to give variable amounts to endorsed women candidates, based on viability of the candidate, competitiveness of the race, past election results, and other factors.
6. The PAC shall send letters of congratulations or condolences to all the endorsed and supported candidates shortly after the election.

Appendix A: Baseline Statement 2010