

# Wisconsin Muslim Civic Alliance Endorsement Process

## What is WMCA ENDORSEMENT

- WMCA only endorses candidates who meet the criteria in this document. We do not endorse based solely on faith or religious background. An endorsement is a political investment—both for the candidate and the endorsing organization. It involves strategic considerations, fairness, and clear criteria and may include funding and field support to enhance credibility for both the candidate and WMCA.

## Why does WMCA have Candidate Endorsements?

Endorsements by WMCA serve several purposes during election cycles, including:

- **Building relationships with candidates and elected officials** to facilitate effective co-governance.
- **Implementing targeted GOTV** (Get Out The Vote) efforts and fieldwork based on Muslim voter data and research.
- **Strengthening the Muslim voter base** through voter registration and mobilization
- **Influencing the political landscape** by associating a candidate's stance with issues important to WMCA and the Wisconsin Muslim community

## Overview of Endorsement Process

1. Select districts and races to endorse in (see “Process for Selecting Races” below)
2. The WMCA Team develops the candidate questionnaire for each election cycle with input and suggestions from the WMCA Board.
3. Email candidate questionnaires to all candidates in races identified as priorities for the election cycle.
4. *Optional*: Invite selected candidates to an in-person interview attended by members of the Strategy Committee, staff, and/or WMCA board
5. The WMCA Team reviews all questionnaire responses and compiles a formal candidate recommendation document, including:
  - a. Candidate names and races
  - b. Links to all candidate responses
6. The Strategy Committee reviews the recommendations and provides feedback or challenges endorsements within the 3-day window.
7. The WMCA Team considers all feedback and updates endorsements if necessary. Note: *Disagreement from a committee member does not automatically result in a change*

8. Once responses are submitted, the WMCA Team will review and provide formal recommendations for the WMCA Board of Directors to endorse, recommend, or neither.
9. The WMCA Board will vote to ratify or veto the committee's recommendations within a 3-day window.
10. Once Endorsements are finalized, WMCA may:
  - a. Share the candidate's donation link with WMCA members
  - b. Publish the candidate's information on the WMCA website, social media, and newsletter
  - c. Voter Engagement Support - phone banking, door knocking, mailers, and other opportunities to engage with voters in the candidate's district.

### **Process for Selecting Races**

WMCA will consider the following when selecting races to endorse in:

- Is this a district where we have civic influence and/or want to build more influence?
- Will the race's outcome impact an issue that WMCA cares deeply about or that we are already working on?
- What are the political risks of making or not making an Endorsement in this race? For example, is there a risk of splitting our base or an opportunity to grow it? Is there a risk of alienating allies, or will we attract new allies?
- Are our partners and members genuinely excited to support a race with their time, money, and credibility?

### **Recommendation Criteria for Candidates**

The criteria below provide a framework for discussing candidates. Not every item on the list is a yes/no question—a candidate's lack of one criterion does not necessarily disqualify them from a WMCA Endorsement.

WMCA does not automatically endorse Muslim candidates - we endorse candidates who meet our core values and mission.

- **Candidate Story**
  - History of involvement in local community/neighborhood
  - Demonstrated leadership/impact on community issues, inclusion, social justice
- **Platform/Issues**
  - Candidate's stance on various issues outlined in the WMCA questionnaire
- **Relationships**
  - Relationships with partner orgs, ally orgs, divergent orgs, local orgs
  - Significant Endorsement, donors, affiliations with/ other orgs/individuals
- **Campaign Path to Victory**
  - Must have field plan

- Demonstrated ability to raise funds to compete
- Assess campaign narrative/communications
- **WMCA Capacity**
  - Our capacity to offer support, fieldwork, and financial contributions to the race
  - Can we make a difference with our support?

### **Rescinding an Endorsement**

If, upon further review or actions by a candidate that WMCA deems against our mission and values, the board may rescind the Endorsement or Recommendation of a candidate/official. WMCA staff will take appropriate action to communicate the rescinding of the endorsement.