



U.S. Senate and House of Representatives Candidate Questionnaire

Dear Candidate:

The Cleveland Heights Democrats will hold its endorsement meeting at 7 PM on April 7, 2022 via Zoom. We invite you to participate in our endorsement process.

Prerequisites for participation:

- (1) The candidate must be a registered Democrat.
- (2) Per our Bylaws, the candidate must confirm agreement with the "purpose statement/conditions to endorsement" set out below.
- (3) **Deadline: The candidate must submit a completed copy of this questionnaire not later than 5 PM on Saturday, March 26 by email to president@clevelandheightsdems@gmail.com.** Receipt of your questionnaire will be acknowledged; if you do not receive an acknowledgment promptly, please text Linda Striefsky at 216-533-6941.

This is a Word Document, and we request that you insert responses in the appropriate spaces in the questionnaire. (The document will allow you to expand the space if needed.) In addition to your contact information, you also may provide a telephone number or email for a staff member, but we will need your email address for purposes of sending you a link to participate in the endorsement meeting. Candidates' answers to the questionnaire will be shared with our members prior to the meeting.

You are encouraged to attend the virtual endorsement meeting on Thursday, April 7 at 7 PM via Zoom, but attendance is *not* mandatory for endorsement. If you choose to attend, you will be given an opportunity to speak to the Club for 2 minutes prior to the endorsement vote. Each candidate also will be given 5 minutes to respond to questions from the Zoom audience.

With respect to the endorsement meeting, only Club members in good standing and on the official membership roster for thirty or more consecutive days prior to April 7 may vote on the endorsements. **An endorsement requires the vote of 60% of those members in good standing present and voting.**

Name: Morgan Harper

Running as a candidate for: U.S. Senate U.S. House of Representatives

Candidate Mobile Tel: 614-600-8710

Candidate Email: morgan@morganharper.org

Optional - Mobile Tel and Email for staff: cade@morganharper.org, 717-778-7690

Purpose statement/conditions to endorsement: By completing and returning this Candidate Questionnaire, I affirm the following:

- A. I am a registered Democrat.
 Yes No
- B. I agree to comply with the purpose of the Club as stated in Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution, that is:
- The purpose of this organization shall be to provide a means by which residents of Cleveland Heights can organize to promote and develop the highest principles of the Democratic Party, to improve the administration of government, and to work for the good of all citizens. This organization shall endorse and support for public office all candidates whose election will, in the judgment of the membership, best advance the Purpose. In pursuing its Purpose, this organization may also cooperate with the National, State, and County Democratic Committees, and pursue other programs of benefit to the community.
- Yes No
- C. I agree not to openly oppose any Democratic nominee in a general partisan election.
 Yes No
- D. I agree not to openly support any opponent of a Democratic nominee in a general partisan election.
 Yes No
- E. I have not violated the above A through and including D during the past five (5) years.
 Yes No

If you cannot affirm as to items B, C and D above, please explain your reasoning here:

Per the Club Bylaws, the Screening Committee may require candidates to sign an agreement to comply with those conditions during the candidate's term in the office for which the endorsement is given.

Please answer each of the following questions. Some require only a 'Yes' or 'No' answer. For others, you may take a few sentences to express your response. Out of respect for your time, we are not asking for lengthy answers.

1. Briefly describe the major reasons why you would be of value as a member of the U.S. Congress representing the Congressional District in which Cleveland Heights is located or as a member of the U.S. Senate, as applicable.

I'm running because we need to win. Ohio can't afford to have another 20 years like the past 20 years. Wages aren't keeping up with the cost of living. Healthcare costs threaten many families' bottom lines, and we continue to battle the opioid and fentanyl epidemics. Part of my platform is the Ohio Opportunity Guarantee – which includes policies that ensure that everyone in this state can live out their potential. The Opportunity Guarantee will create family-sustaining union jobs for people with high school degrees. This includes jobs in the renewable energy sector, in electric car manufacturing, and other clean energy jobs, because Ohio must be a state of the future. And the policies I'm putting forth will make sure that we can provide healthcare for everyone, address the opioid epidemic, provide mental healthcare, and end this pandemic. I will fight every day for the people of Ohio to get these things done, and my background taking on Big Banks and Big Tech and my personal story of overcoming obstacles will connect with the voters who we need to turn out. Given the high level of political disillusionment among the general population, we need to have a nominee who excites voters and who does not represent the status quo. Voters are looking for change, and I am offering a new path forward.

2. List your top three priorities for bringing **federal assistance to the 11th Congressional District**, whether in the form of federal funding for local needs or other legislative solutions to local needs.

First, I strongly support universal healthcare/Medicare for All. Our current healthcare system is crushing small businesses and families by requiring employers and employees to pay ever-increasing healthcare costs. Universal healthcare is a legislative solution to a local need – it would put more money back in the pockets of small businesses and everyday working people, and enable more people to start their own small businesses, choose their own career paths, and provide for their families – without worrying about the cost of healthcare.

And I support creating up to 600K jobs over ten years in Ohio in the clean energy economy. Protecting the future is one of the greatest challenges facing our generation, and Ohio can be a leader in getting us there. These jobs will be stable, union jobs that pay living wages – and they'll be for people with high school degrees. And they'll be right here in Ohio, where we've been losing population for years from people leaving to find opportunity elsewhere.

I also support raising the minimum wage. Like I said, wages haven't kept up with the cost of living, and it has meant that more and more people are struggling to put food on the table across Ohio. By raising the minimum wage to at least \$15/hr, we can make sure that people are able to support their families and do more than just survive.

3. **Education -**

Do you support changing federal education law to eliminate high stakes testing?

Yes No

- A. Do you support increased federal funding for public schools, and elimination of federal funding for all privately operated charter schools and all other private schools – religious or not - and any other measures that divert public money away from public schools and/or contribute to public school resegregation?

Yes No

4. **Filibuster - What is your opinion on ending the filibuster? Please explain.**

We must abolish the filibuster. Arcane Senate rules like the filibuster cannot stand between our people and their rights. Prior to the 1960s, the filibuster was used rarely, and the only bills defeated by a supermajority threshold were civil rights bills. Without the filibuster, our system of government will still have more checks and balances than any other modern democracy. The filibuster is the problem, not the solution.

5. **Racial Justice -**

People of color across this country are the targets of escalating levels of racially motivated threats and violence. What would you do as a member of Congress to address this?

Right now, there are no Black women serving in the U.S. Senate. I'm running to change that, because we need real representation to fight for our communities.

It's important to me that we remember that Ohio was a leader in the abolitionist and civil rights movements. Far-right extremists have tried to use racist distractions to turn Ohioans against one another, but I know that there are more of us than there are of them, and that we won't let them divide us. In the Senate, I'll pursue anti-racist policies, including fighting to put an end to violent policing, ending inequities in the criminal justice system, and making sure that Black and brown communities get the resources they deserve. True justice also requires closing the wealth gap with systemic reparations.

- A. If you win this seat, will you advocate for reparations for descendants of Black people who were enslaved in the U.S.?

Yes No

Please elaborate if you wish.

I have supported pursuing systemic reparations for the past few years. We have to remind people of federal policies that prevented the Black community from accumulating wealth and make amends for that discriminatory policy.

- B. Will you fight to ensure that school curricula include the accurate and honest teaching of the history of Black Americans and other American people of color

and that works by Black authors and other authors of color be made readily available to students?

Yes No

6. **Voting Rights –**

Do you support **HR 1**, the **For the People Act**, and the **John Lewis Voting Rights Act** of 2021?

Yes No

- A. If you don't support **HR 1** and/or the **John Lewis Voting Rights Act**, what measures for facilitating voter participation in elections do you support – same day registration and voting, expansion of early voting polling locations and hours, providing voters with absentee ballot applications, voting by mail in all states, and/or something else?

I support both of these measures.

7. **Healthcare –**

Do you believe it should be a priority for our government to assure that all Americans have access to affordable, quality health care?

Yes No

- A. If so, by what mechanism: Medicare for All, other single payer construct, expansion of the **Affordable Care Act**, or something else?

I support Medicare for All. America has the most expensive healthcare system in the world, yet delivers among the worst results. Insulin costs more here than anywhere else in the world. One million Ohioans lost their jobs during the pandemic, and as a result many lost their healthcare coverage as well. Another four million struggle to afford it. At any moment, an employer providing healthcare can change the terms. Rising costs make healthcare an economic burden on both small businesses and workers. To do something about this, we must be honest about the forces arrayed against change. Big Pharma and Big Insurance pay billions lobbying Congress to keep healthcare costs high and healthcare outcomes low. To ensure coverage and control costs, we must leverage the negotiating power of the federal government and implement universal health care through Medicare for All – including mental healthcare.

8. **Climate Change –**

What are your top three priorities for U.S. action to address and mitigate climate change?

- A. What are your top 3 priorities for transitioning the United States from reliance on fossil fuels to a more balanced energy program that includes more significant reliance on renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar?

1) Job creation in the clean energy economy – We must recognize that climate solutions will create well-paying union jobs for Ohioans. We need immediate federal investments to create as many as 600,000 clean energy jobs over the next ten years. Wind turbine technicians make, on average, \$52,000 per year, and represent one of the best maintenance and repair jobs in the country. Protecting the future is one of the greatest challenges of our generation, but it's also an opportunity – and Ohio can be a leader in getting us there. 2) Transportation – We also must vastly improve our transportation infrastructure so workers have a reliable and safe route to work, while cutting back on emissions. We must create incentives for electric vehicle (EV) ownership and rapidly invest in building out the infrastructure to support those vehicles. 3) Clean energy home retrofits – We can invest in making existing housing stock more energy efficient to address the climate crisis while also increasing housing supply.

And to stay committed to getting this done I have pledged to not accept money from the fossil fuel industry. I have also received the endorsement of Sunrise Columbus.

9. Would you oppose legislation that would weaken the **Endangered Species Act**?
 Yes No

10. **Campaign Finance Reform** –

Will you commit to campaign finance reforms to require timely disclosure by candidates of all sources of campaign contribution in any form?

Yes No

- A. What other campaign finance reforms do you support?

I vow to never take a dollar of corporate PAC money because to act in the best interest of Ohioans, I cannot be beholden to large corporations. I am also a firm supporter of Senator Ossoff's proposed legislation to ban members of Congress from trading stocks. Members of Congress should not be allowed to take corporate PAC money, and they should not be able to trade stocks. Bottom line, we should not be letting politicians profit from contributions from or insider information on the corporations they regulate.

- B. Do you confirm that you have not, and will not, accept financial support from any corporate PAC or the NRA?

Yes No

11. **Labor Rights** –

Do you support increasing the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour?

Yes No

If yes, in a single increment, or incrementally over what period of time?

I think the change should happen immediately for larger businesses that likely have the ability to absorb this change more quickly, but that we could phase in the policy for smaller businesses over a 5-year period.

A. Do you support the right of workers to collective bargaining and, in particular, the **PRO Act** (Protecting the Right to Organize Act of 2021)?

Yes No

12. **Child Care** - Lack of access to affordable childcare has become a crisis across our country. What do you believe the federal government could and should do to address this? For example, do you support increased federal funding for childcare subsidies for families with low and middle incomes and universal pre-school?

This is a critical issue. Each person in our state should have the opportunity to work and care for their families. Half a million working mothers in Ohio are parents to children under 6. Most cannot afford quality childcare. Universal pre-K for all children is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty in Ohio, and I do support increased federal funding for childcare subsidies for families with low and middle income as well.

Equality –

Do you oppose all discrimination on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity?

Yes No

A. Do you support the proposed federal **Equality Act**, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity in housing, employment, public accommodations, education, federally funded programs, credit and jury service?

Yes No

13. **Right to Make Healthcare Decisions –**

Do you believe everyone has the right to access abortion care legally in their community without regard to ability to pay, without stigma, shame, delay or medically unnecessary barriers?

Yes No

A. Do you support federal legislation to ensure that right?

Yes No

B. And if you previously held a different position on either of the preceding two questions, what caused you to change your mind?

I have never wavered in my support for abortion rights and access to reproductive healthcare.

C. Do you support repeal of the **Hyde Amendment**, which bans Medicaid funding for abortion services?

Yes No

14. **Gun Safety** - What reforms do you support to reduce the epidemic of gun violence in our country?

1) I support requiring universal background checks, – we need to close loopholes so that background checks are required on all gun sales, not just sales by licensed gun dealers. 2) I also support implementing extreme risk protection orders – also known as red flag laws, which allow for temporary confiscation of weapons if someone is a threat to themselves or others. 3) And I support restricting access for those who have a history of domestic violence – if we know that someone has a history of domestic violence, they shouldn't have access to guns, period.

We also need to address the root causes of some forms of gun violence – poverty, lack of mental health care, quality education, and I support having a holistic approach to ending gun violence that would include implementing policies in these other areas.

15. **Foreign Policy** - What are the top foreign policy challenges facing the U.S. that concern you the most, and what should be the role of our country in addressing these?

Given the heinous attacks on the people of Ukraine and Putin's nuclear capabilities, I support aggressive sanctions on Putin, his supporters, and the Russian government to protect global security and end this senseless violence. The growing alliance between Putin and the Chinese government is also a serious concern, as are North Korea's potential nuclear capabilities – I support continuing to strengthen our alliances with other nations worldwide so as to increase our national and economic security and overall global safety.

Moving forward, I also would like to see reductions in the defense budget that have enriched defense contractors in places like the suburbs of Washington, D.C. instead of investing in our communities across the state. We have had a series of endless wars during my adult lifetime that have been based on false information, and I think we need to be cautious before beginning any direct military intervention moving forward.

Additionally, there are things we need to do on the domestic front to strengthen our position globally. I support regulating the large, multinational corporations that have remained unchecked for decades. They consistently put profits over people, allowing our manufacturing jobs to be shipped overseas, inflicting the opioid and foreclosures crises, avoiding paying taxes, busting unions, and crushing small businesses and small towns all across our great state. I also support creating capacity for parts to be manufactured here in Ohio, and incentives for other actors on the supply chain to use parts manufactured here, so that we aren't reliant on other countries for things that we desperately need.

16. **International Trade** – Do you support a temporary waiver of some **Trade-Related Aspects of the WTO Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)** rules during the COVID-19 emergency in order to grant access to chemical structures and patent information held by "big Pharma" to countries capable of manufacturing COVID-19 vaccines themselves?
 Yes No

Please explain your reply.

Vaccine inequity is a result of politicians not standing up to the pharmaceutical industry and their multimillion-dollar lobby. Because of this, insufficient quantities of the vaccine have been produced to vaccinate other countries that don't have the same level of resources as the U.S. Without a concerted global effort to manufacture and distribute the vaccine, the pandemic will continue. Making the science behind the vaccine more generally available is necessary to end this pandemic once and for all. We need to increase population immunity globally, protect healthcare systems, enable economies to fully restart, and reduce the risk of new variants emerging.

17. **Immigration** – The immigration system in our country is terribly broken, underfunded and unjust in many aspects. What are some of the most urgently needed reforms you would want to see addressed by Congress?

I believe that we need to make sure we are preserving the ability for all of us to have the same immigrant story that my mother was able to have. My mom came to Shaker Heights in the 1960s from Trinidad, and she was able to work as a child care provider and pay her way through college to then get to the position of adopting me and my brother and enabling us to be strong members of our community. That's what we all care about as Ohioans – making sure people have access to opportunity. What is it going to take to make it possible for those types of stories to continue to happen? We need to ensure that we have comprehensive immigration reform, and create pathways to citizenship for new people coming, from a range of places, and those brought

here as children. We can't spend time trying to make it impossible for people to come or wasting money building walls that are political stunts. We need to stay focused on the reality of the situation. The reality is that America is a country made up of many immigrant communities and that is the opportunity that we need to be preserving.

18. **Democratic Solidarity** - If you are not the winner of the Democratic primary election, do you commit to supporting the winner and to urging your supporters to support the winner?

Yes No