

APANO Political Program FAQ

Updated 1.7.19

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In March 2017, The Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon, a statewide Asian and Pacific Islander political advocacy organization, became a nonprofit 501(c)(4), allowing the organization to become involved in electoral organizing for political candidates at the state and local level (city, county, school board). This 501c4 designation also allowed for expanded capacity for local and statewide ballot measure organizing and policy lobbying, two aspects of advocacy which APANO had previously engaged. APANO Communities United 501(c)(3) arm of the organization was retained as well.

What is an APANO political endorsement?

A political endorsement is an official statement of support from APANO for a particular candidate. It means the candidate's record, performance in office or promise of future relations align greatly with APANO's mission and values to better serve the Asian Pacific Islander community.

Why is APANO endorsing political races?

Embarking on a full cycle candidate endorsement process is the next bold step for building Asian Pacific Islander (API) political power in Oregon. We envision this as an important step for us to more fully achieve our mission of uniting Asian and Pacific Islanders for social justice. In March 2017, APANO Oregon's oldest and largest Asian and Pacific Islander advocacy organization, announced its expansion as a nonprofit 501(c)(4), which positioned us to be a bolder and more active voice in Oregon politics.

APANO's political program is community-based, multi-issue and guided by APANO's mission, vision and values. Our endorsement process reflects our work and priorities in local, state and national politics, and is non-partisan. Our goals are to:

1. Strengthen future elected officials relationship with APANO members, board and staff
2. Educate elected officials and candidates on the issues APANO members are facing
3. Expand opportunities for Asian and Pacific Islander political engagement

Is this election the first time APANO has endorsed candidates for local races?

We've done this three times now! In May 2017, APANO engaged in small-scale pilot run of School Board endorsements in 3 Portland area school districts -- David Douglas School District, Portland Public Schools, and the Multnomah Education Service District -- with success. In May 2018, APANO made its first individual candidate endorsements at the city and county, and in November 2018 at the State level.

How is APANO funding this electoral work? ([Donate Here!](#))

APANO raises funds from individual donors, secures direct foundation grants, as well as funding in partnership with other progressive racial justice and immigrant rights organizations. We welcome and encourage [donations to APANO](#), a 501(c)4 non-profit. Donations are not tax deductible.

How can I get involved with APANO's electoral organizing?

[Sign up to get involved!](#) You can also contact our Political Team at robin@apano.org -- they can connect you with opportunities to learn more about the political process and sharpen your campaigning skills.

How did APANO determine which races to make endorsements in? Why are the selected races only within the Portland metro area?

APANO is a member-driven organization, and members are consistently engaged in determining the organization's electoral fights through surveys, conversations, events, and partner interest. APANO

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considers which electoral races to work in (“Priority Races”) by using certain selection criteria. They include:

- Elected Position purview and potential ability to impact or influence API lives
- APANO Members in district, concentration of Asian and Pacific Islanders, and opportunity to grow base
- APANO issue campaign or concerns (including national) at stake in district
- Asian and Pacific Islander and People of Color candidates in district
- APANO can make a difference in the race, it is a close, competitive race, opportunity for APIs to work on campaigns
- Strengthens APANO’s long-term capacity and growth

Based off our assessment, APANO felt it was most effective to activate the current existing base in Portland & Multnomah County first before embarking on other statewide ventures. APANO expects to be more heavily involved in races outside of the City of Portland and Multnomah County going forward, particularly in Washington, Marion, and Clackamas Counties.

How does APANO determine its endorsement? What criteria do they use to assess candidates?

To earn APANO’s endorsement, candidates are asked to complete 2 steps:

- 1) Answering an APANO Questionnaire covering issues and concepts that APANO work frequently encounters
- 2) Participating in an in-person interview with an Endorsement Committee made up of APANO staff, board, and members

Candidate’s policy vision and platform, questionnaire responses, interview and interaction with APANO members & staff, understanding of APANO’s mission, and voting record (or professional record if not they have not held elected office) are considerations in our endorsement. Endorsement Committees will recommend a candidate(s) to the APANO C4 Board, who will ultimately decide APANO candidate endorsements by majority-vote.

The evaluation is a holistic process. However, APANO’s evaluation strongly emphasizes the following 5 key points of focus, in no particular order: Equity Analysis, Gender/LGBTQ Analysis, Candidate Voting/Professional Track Record, Knowledge of and Commitment to Oregon’s Asian and Pacific Islander communities, Equity in Political Representation

What does an “APANO Endorsement” mean to candidates? What is a “green light”?

An APANO endorsement for a candidate means the candidate can tell voters they have the visible support and backing of the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon. An APANO endorsement may also include additional financial, communication and field resources, including but not limited to financial contributions, social media outreach, mailing, phone banks, and campaign volunteers.

A “green light” indicates that this candidate’s platform aligns with APANO’s mission and values and would also be worthy of a vote, but APANO’s organizational resources will not be put towards campaigning for this candidate. In this election cycle, APANO did not elect to use the “green light” designation in any race.

Is APANO making endorsements for the upcoming Special Elections in May 2019?

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Yes! We [announced our current cycle](#) of candidate endorsements on January 17, 2019, and we are prepared to do our part to elect champions for AAPIs in the state.