

South Lyon Area Democrats: Candidate Endorsement Questionnaire

*Application for recommendation by the SLAD to voters in support of your campaign.*

*City of South Lyon, Lyon Township, and Green Oak Township.*

*Please email to SLAD candidate endorsement committee: matthew.kardel@gmail.com*

Candidate Name (as it will appear on the ballot): **Robert Wittenberg**

Office/Position running for (including district number of applicable): **Oakland County Treasurer**

Date of submission: **9/28/20**

Please share a brief biography and personal background and qualifications for running (include previous appointed or elected public office positions and short resume):

**I currently serve as a third term state representative in southern Oakland County, representing the same communities in which I grew up. I've also worked as a licensed life and health insurance agent for 15 years helping thousands of individuals and businesses navigate their insurance and employee benefits. In the legislature, I served as the top-ranking Democrat on the Financial Liability Reform Committee, the Insurance Committee and on the House Tax Policy and the Financial Services Committees. I've always been up to the challenge in Lansing, taking on big issues such as:**

- Pushing for tax fairness in Michigan**
- Creating a new state retirement savings program**
- Working with our local and county officials to make sure our residents' needs are met**

**I love helping people, and that is why I am in public service. My professional and legislative experiences helped me develop the skills needed to serve as Treasurer. My wife and I grew up in Oakland County, and we're raising our family here because we love this community and want to ensure that Oakland County remains a place where everyone can be proud to live. I graduated from Berkley High School and have a Business Management degree from Indiana University.**

List requirements you have completed for the office (# signatures collected, date filed, fees paid): **I filed the paperwork for my committee to run for Treasurer on 7/24/19 and have been working hard ever since. I paid a \$100 filing fee to get on the ballot.**

Amount of money raised as of date of submission: **\$132,000**

Principal duties of the office you are running for:

**The County Treasurer is an office created by the Michigan Constitution to serve as banker of a county. The functions of the Office of the Treasurer are authorized and**

governed by the Michigan Constitution, Michigan statutes, administrative regulations and the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

As the banker for the county, the Oakland County Treasurer is the custodian of all county funds and collector and distributor of all revenues. As revenues come into the Treasurer's Office from many different local, state and federal sources, the Treasurer disburses those dollars in a timely fashion to ensure the efficient administration of county government. These disbursements include paychecks for county employees, funding for road projects and other county functions.

Top priorities once elected:

- **Fighting for the financial security & well-being of every resident in the county - For most people, their home is the largest investment they will make. I will ensure that people are able to stay & thrive in our neighborhoods. I believe an effective public servant should be both fiscally responsible & socially conscious. That is why I'll be a compassionate steward of resources for all residents across the county. I will actively engage with residents facing financial challenges to help address their needs & set them up with plans to prevent foreclosure.**
- **Helping to recruit new businesses while supporting existing ones - I will lead on innovative policy solutions to boost our local businesses. I'd leverage the county's relationships in the private sector to implement public-private partnerships creating small business/homeowner relief funds that will address the lasting impact of COVID-19.**
- **Maintaining our AAA bond rating - Our taxpayers work hard for the money they earn; we want our county dollars to be invested wisely & we want the best rates on public bonds. Our communities & school districts benefit from our rating, directly contributing to our strong quality of life.**

Plans for communicating with constituents once elected:

**I will continue to engage constituents in as many ways as possible, including via phone, email, social media, traditional mail, town halls and door-to-door.**

What are your primary sources for information/news?

**I read the Detroit Free Press, Detroit News, New York Times and listen to NPR radio as well as watch and listen to local news and radio stations. Additionally, as a State Representative, I have access to the Legislative Service Bureau in Lansing and rely on them for a lot of great research.**

## **Local Issues**

*Indicate your position on the following topics, including solutions. A response is needed only if applicable to your prospective office*

City / Township / County's Master Plan: **As Treasurer, I will work closely with our County Executive, other countywide elected officials, and the Board of Commissioners on general issues impacting the county.**

Tax Abatement & Business Development: **Taxes serve a very important role in society, and I firmly believe that people and businesses should pay their fair share. I have been the lead sponsor of a graduated income tax proposal in Michigan during all three of my terms in the State House.**

Local Environmental Policies: **I strongly believe we need to do everything we can to address climate change, and I believe local communities should have a say in their policies. I have introduced many bills attempting to protect the environment, including HB 4500 which would let local communities decide if/how they want to regulate plastic bags and single use containers.**

Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services: **These are all valuable services that make a geographic area a community. I will do everything I can to make sure we support these resources.**

What do you see as the role of the city / township / county in the school system? **There isn't a big role for the Treasurer's office, but the ISD (Oakland Schools) is obviously very influential and I will be a vocal advocate of public education.**

Public Safety: **I think we need to reimagine how public safety is approached by prioritizing and focusing on community programs, making systemic changes and updating outdated statutes and practices.**

Public Transportation: **I am a big proponent of public transportation and will do everything I can to help implement a robust, regional transit system in Oakland County, in collaboration with the surrounding counties.**

Which planks of the Michigan Democratic Party do you feel most strongly about on a local level (select all that apply)? **Not sure I could narrow this list down. These are all very important topics, hence why I am proud to be a Democrat.**

1. Education: Improving Public Education for Children and Adults
2. Economy: Using Aggressive & Comprehensive Economic Development Policies
3. Job Training: Improving the Skills of our Workforce
4. Trade: Using an Approach Based on a Level Playing Field
5. Economic Development: Improving Depressed Communities
6. Agriculture: Protecting our Farms and Rural Communities
7. Transportation: Providing Access to Opportunities
8. Information Technology: Expanding Access to Information
9. Small Business: Nurturing Entrepreneurship and Self-employment
10. Income: Rewarding Work
11. Taxes: Providing a Sufficient, Stable and Fair Tax System
12. Health Care: Providing Health Security for Families and Individuals
13. Children and Families: Providing Help for Working Parents with Children
14. Coping With Misfortune: Bankruptcy, Foreclosure and Homelessness
15. The Environment: Protecting Our Land, Water, Air and Open Space
16. Social Justice: Achieving Equal and Humane Treatment Under the Law
17. Women: Protecting the Rights of Women
18. Veterans: Respect and Help for Those Who Serve Our Country
19. Youth: Building Citizens Who Will Brighten our Future
20. Seniors: Providing Retirement Security and Needed Services
21. Voting: Nurturing Democracy and Promoting Civic Participation
22. Faith: Connecting Our Party with People of Faith
23. Public Safety: Creating Safer Communities for All
24. Energy: Providing Power to the People
25. Judicial System: Serving the People, not Special Interests
26. Government: Freeing Politics from Money Influence and Special Interests
27. Corporations: Insisting on Corporate Accountability
28. Consumer Protection: Protecting People in the Marketplace
29. Financial Services: Protecting People in Credit and Banking Transactions
30. Providing Proper Oversight of Our Financial System
31. Local Government: Defending Our Democracy

### **Contact Information**

**\*\*Candidate preferred email address: [VoteWittenberg@gmail.com](mailto:VoteWittenberg@gmail.com)**

**\*\*Candidate preferred phone number: 248-270-7166**

**\*\*Candidate home address (where you live) street address, city, state, zip: 13302 Borgman Ave., Huntington Woods, MI 48070**

Campaign mailing address (if applicable): **Same**

Campaign website: **[www.RobertWittenberg.com](http://www.RobertWittenberg.com)**

Campaign social media (identify platform, i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.):

**Facebook: [www.facebook.com/WittenbergForTreasurer](http://www.facebook.com/WittenbergForTreasurer)**

**Twitter: <https://twitter.com/votewittenberg>**

Campaign hashtags: **#VoteWittenberg**

Campaign contact name and title (manager / assistant): **Manager, Michael McGuinness**

Campaign contact preferred phone number: **248-410-0702**

Campaign contact preferred email address: **Michael.I.Mcguinness@gmail.com**

Other contact & media info: **N/A**

**Thank you for submitting your candidate info to SLAD. By submitting this information, you agree that all information submitted, except for the \*\*starred items (candidate preferred email address, phone number, and street address), can be made public and shared on SLAD online platforms and physical documents.**