



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: SLADemocrats@gmail.com

- Candidate Name (as it will appear on the ballot): Jason Morgan
- *Candidate* email address: votejasonmorgan@gmail.com
- *Candidate* phone number: (989) 751-6287
- *Campaign* mailing address (*if applicable*): PO Box 4297, Ann Arbor, MI 48106
- *Campaign* website: www.votejasonmorgan.com
- *Campaign* social media (identify platform, i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.):
 - Facebook: Jason Morgan for State Representative
 - Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/commissionermorgan/>
 - Twitter: <https://twitter.com/JasonMorganMI>
- *Campaign* contact name and title (manager / assistant): Jeremy Glick, Campaign Manager
- *Campaign* contact phone number: (734) 223-8419
- *Campaign* contact email address: jersglick@gmail.com

Office/Position running for (including district number of applicable): Michigan House of Representatives – District 23

Please answer the following to the best of your ability. Use as much space as necessary to provide your response:

Please share a brief biography and personal background:

The son of a commercial fisherman and school lunch aide, I was raised in Pinconning, Michigan. By working part-time and thanks to state and federal student aid, I worked my way through college as a first-generation college student, earning a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Northern Michigan University. I later earned a Master of Public Administration degree from the Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan.

Currently, I serve as a Washtenaw County Commissioner, representing central Ann Arbor. First elected in 2016 and re-elected twice with nearly 90% of the vote, I served as Chair of the Board in 2019, the county's first-ever LGBTQ chair.



I am a union educator at Washtenaw County Community College, where I strive each and every day to provide educational opportunities for all. In the past, I've been honored to work alongside Congressman John Dingell, Congresswoman Debbie Dingell, Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin, Congresswoman Haley Stevens, and Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson as a senior aide and advisor—all of whom have taught me what it takes to serve District 23, and Michigan as a whole.

Throughout my time on the board of commissioners, one of my top priorities has been advancing racial and economic equity, with a focus on supporting communities of color and marginalized populations. We were one of the first counties in the nation to establish an office of racial equity and I've been proud to be part of making that happen, along with continuing to expand that work to support our BIPOC residents.

I believe in a Michigan that protects our constitutional right to vote and serves as a model of democracy for others to follow. I believe in a Michigan that maintains access to clean air and safe drinking water. I believe in a Michigan that supports our students and teachers, from providing equitable K-12 funding to ensuring access to free community college. I believe in a Michigan that provides affordable and high-quality healthcare to all residents. I am running to not only represent Ann Arbor, but also Superior Township, Salem, South Lyon, Plymouth, and Northville. Each of these communities, and the residents who live there matter to me, and I hope to represent their values in Lansing.

What are your qualifications for running (i.e., previous appointed or elected public office positions personal/professional experience you can bring to the position)

My career has always been focused on public service, and on helping people. I currently serve as Commissioner for Washtenaw County's 8th District, a position I've held since 2016. From 2019 to 2021, I served as the first-ever LGBTQ+ Chair of the Commission and led Washtenaw County through the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, I was appointed by Governor Gretchen Whitmer to Northern Michigan University's Board of Trustees. Prior to holding elected office, I served as Constituent Services Director for Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, District Director for Congresswoman Debbie Dingell, Special Advisor for Congresswoman Haley Stevens, Transition Director for Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin, and aide to the late Congressman John Dingell. It is my hope that my experience working in Lansing, Washington, D.C., and throughout Michigan have prepared me to effectively serve as a state representative.

List requirements you have completed for the office (# signatures collected, date filed, fees paid): I officially filed on Wednesday, March 23, 2022, by paying the \$100 filing fee.

Amount of money raised as of date of submission: \$95,000

What do you consider the principal duties of the office you are running for?

The principal duty of a State Representative is to represent your constituents. A legislator's job is to serve your constituents and balance the needs of your district with the best interest of the state. This includes voting on legislation, engaging on community issues and opportunities whether they involve



the state directly or not, and constituent services, the true bread and butter of a good representative. Ultimately, the job comes down to public service, integrity, communication and showing up. Lastly, a representative's job is to work hard and fight hard for those you serve, to stand up for democratic values, and to stand up for democracy.

If elected (or re-elected), what will be your top priorities for this community?

Educational Opportunity for All

As a community college instructor, university trustee, and former college administrator, I have had the opportunity to see higher education from all sides. I have seen through my years of experience that we can absolutely do better. We must do better.

We have a choice when it comes to providing education for Michigan residents. We can choose to continue the decades of disinvestment in public education, or we can choose to prioritize students and teachers. I believe in a Michigan that provides equitable funding to K-12 schools, free community college, and that significantly greater investment in our world-class universities.

I look forward to having conversations with students, teachers, families, and our community over the course of this campaign to develop a comprehensive position on improving education in our state.

Protecting Michigan's Natural Resources - Ensuring Clean Air and Safe Drinking Water

I support investing in our infrastructure and neighborhoods to get us to carbon-neutral and ensure long-term resilience for Michigan. From cleaning up PFAS to the Gelman Dioxane Plume in Ann Arbor and addressing ongoing issues with Arbor Hills landfill, we have a lot of work to do here in our community and throughout the state. I was proud to help lead the Board of Commissioners in declaring an ambitious goal of achieving a carbon-neutral county by 2030 and establishing the first-ever Environmental Council to develop a Climate Action Plan to achieve that goal. Simply declaring a goal is not enough – we need bold plans to achieve our goals.

We must maintain our roads, sidewalks, and drainage systems while protecting our parks, water, and open spaces. Our community is enriched by the Huron River, a robust parks system, and beautiful natural spaces which provide for recreation and a healthier natural environment. We must maintain and invest in the health and sustainability of these resources.

Quality Healthcare for All

If elected, it will be my mission to ensure high quality and affordable healthcare access for all Michiganders. While we continue working toward universal access in the United States, we need, at the very least, a reliable public option. The State of Colorado showed us a model for making this possible just last year, in 2021. Ensuring healthcare is not an issue of whether it is possible, it is an issue of whether we are willing. We can lower costs for residents, businesses, and local governments while improving care and health outcomes.

Providing healthcare is not enough when it comes to protecting our health these days, with the coronavirus pandemic showing us how vital county public health departments are to our communities and state. I plan to work to dramatically increase state support for public health, mental health, and



other critically needed human services for our residents. We know too well here in Washtenaw, Wayne, and Oakland Counties how economic and racial inequality can lead to significant health disparities. I will seek to take meaningful action to reduce these inequities here in our community and across Michigan.

Protecting Worker Rights & Economic Justice

I will work to strengthen our local economy by creating livable wage jobs. We must support the growth of local businesses and attract new companies and employers. As a proud union member, I know that we must also support, strengthen, and partner with our labor unions to improve wages and working conditions. As part of this strategy, we must invest in education and job training. Working together through cooperative partnerships between government, businesses, labor, and nonprofits is key to ensuring the success of our region.

I will stand firm to protect the rights of working people and our rights to collective bargaining. As the son of a laborer and former union member, I know how important our unions are, not just to members but to all working people. I will also seek to work closely with and support our local labor unions, which serve a vital role in representing and advocating for workers and families throughout our community.

Advancing Social Justice

We have been making great strides under Governor Whitmer's leadership toward a more equitable and pro-equality future, but we have a long way to go. Legislatively, Michigan is decades behind when it comes to protections for our LGBTQ+ community, particularly our transgender residents, and reproductive rights. I've been very proud to help lead our county's effort to recognize Transgender Day of Visibility and Pride month each year, and to introduce the county's first-ever Equity and Inclusion Statement, and Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.

We've also barely scratched the surface in unraveling centuries of inequitable and in many cases racist policies in our state. Here in Washtenaw County, we've taken great care to establish an office of racial equity, gather data, and start ensuring a more equitable community. I plan to work with Representative Brabec to do just as we've done together here in Washtenaw County, and work to pass legislation to make our state a better place to live for all Michiganders, working to make our basic needs more equitable, from housing, employment, and more.

How will you communicate with constituents once elected?

My campaign is already focused on getting out and spending time in all parts of our district, through organized events, organic events, community activities, one-on-one meetings, and more. In addition, we will be knocking doors, phone-banking, and text-banking in all parts of the district throughout the campaign. This outreach would continue with legislative coffee hours and constituent issue canvassing and phone-banking, if elected. The best way to communicate with constituents is always just showing up, at events, throughout the community, and finding opportunities to meet people where they are.



What are your primary sources for information/news?

I watch, listen to, and read a variety of news sources – I believe that is the best way to receive well-rounded information. News sources include: CNN, MSNBC, New York Times, MLive, Detroit Free Press, BBC, NBC, and Washington Post. I also turn on Fox News regularly and listen for as long as I can without getting frustrated – I think it is important to understand the issues they are discussing and what absurd take they have on reality at any given moment in time.

Local Issues

Indicate your position on the following topics, including solutions. Please indicate “NA” for any issues which are applicable to your prospective office

City / Township / County’s Master Plan:

This question doesn’t necessarily relate to state government, but I do want to say that I believe strongly in supporting comprehensive master planning in our city and county governments as a matter of good government. When we conduct inclusive planning processes, we create opportunities for collaboration and long-term planning to strengthen our communities. Many communities gave up planning during the last recession and we are seeing the results of over a decade of less planning in some communities, particularly as it relates to affordable housing, planning, economic development and supporting strong and vibrant downtowns.

Tax Abatement & Business Development:

Issues of tax abatement and business development are quite nuanced – some actions are positive to both businesses and communities, such as Brownfield programs, while others can be devastating to local governments and schools, like “dark stores”. State government plays a pivotal role in this issue because they oversee policies related to abatement but often it is local governments who experience the effects, whether positive or negative.

In Lansing, I would support introducing a progressive state income tax to ensure the wealthy pay their fair share. It is also important that corporations are adequately taxed. However, working- and middle-class families ought not to see their tax burden raised, nor should small local businesses. I will support legislation that raises the burden for the very wealthy while allowing everyday Michiganders and local businesses to achieve development through increased state support.

I strongly support investing in our blighted and polluted sites through Brownfield Redevelopment projects which can turn undesirable pieces of land into valuable, taxable downtown gems. I served for several years on the Washtenaw County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority board and played a strong role in ensuring that projects were only approved if they demonstrated real community benefits, whether they be environmental, increased mobility and efficient use of land, downtown improvements, or increases in affordable housing, whenever possible.



Tax abatement can be devastating for local communities when they come in the form of something like the issue of “dark stores”, which is when big box stores such as Wal-Mart convince the Michigan Tax Tribunal to give them special treatment allowing them to reduce the value of their property resulting in significant lost property tax revenue. As an example, from the Michigan Municipal League, in Michigan, Lowes stores are assessed at \$22.10 per square foot, while the same stores are valued at \$79.08 per square foot in North Carolina. This is a prime example of bad policy from state government. It is also one that is easily remedied, and I would work to tackle issues like this in the legislature.

Local Environmental Policies:

I strongly support investing in clean energy infrastructure in order to get Michigan to carbon-neutral and ensure long-term resiliency for the state. Locally, this means first getting to work on cleaning up PFAS and the Gelman Dioxane Plume, as well as protecting our parks and green spaces. As County Commissioner, I was proud to help lead the charge in declaring Washtenaw County’s goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030, as well as helping establish the Environmental Council to develop a Climate Action Plan to support that carbon neutrality goal.

In Lansing, I will support legislation that protects green space both locally and statewide, as well as legislation that ensures pollution clean-up is paid for by polluters, not local residents. Additionally, I support the development of clean energy infrastructure, such as building more EV charging stations or improving public transportation. Michigan desperately needs to move away from fossil fuel energy, and I will support any efforts in the legislature to achieve this goal.

Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services:

One of my favorite parts about Southeast Michigan is our robust and well-maintained park system, and one of my favorite parts about Michigan is the state’s outdoor spaces, including the Great Lakes. It is vital that we protect our parks, lakes, and other outdoor areas. Additionally, it is important that Michigan be inclusive of all cultures and provide programming that educates the public on the merits of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Supporting arts and culture means supporting building strong and vibrant communities.

What do you see as the role of the city / township / county in the school system?

The quality, safety, and support of our schools extends to every part of our communities. It is the responsibility of state government to ensure proper funding for high quality schools and to support our teachers, to ensure that Lansing politics don’t interfere with our teachers being able to do their best work of serving our students, and to pass policies which protect our student’s freedom from discrimination or harm.

Public Safety:

I believe we should implement police reforms focused on community policing and safety, rather than the militarization of minority and low-income communities. The goal of law enforcement and criminal



justice should be rehabilitation and addressing root causes of justice involvement due to underfunding of social services. This goal should be reflected in the appropriations which are passed annually in Lansing, as well as in the way(s) we fund our police departments, locally.

Public Transportation:

I believe in providing a robust public transportation system for residents of Southeast Michigan. Simply put, public transportation helps improve equity, reduce emissions, reduce traffic and stress on our roads, and improve the livability of cities. In Lansing, I commit to supporting legislation that seeks to improve funding for public transportation as well as non-motorized transportation, such as bike lanes. Additionally, I support projects that seek to strengthen Michigan's EV infrastructure and other clean energy projects. Public transportation projects ought to be targeted most towards marginalized communities that have not had the infrastructure support they need to succeed.

Other comments:

The South Lyon Area Democrats are a passionate and active group, and I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work together for our communities in 2022. I'd love your support and partnership as we work to elect Democrats, together.

Which planks of the Michigan Democratic Party do you feel most strongly about on a local level (select all that apply)?

- Education: Improving Public Education for Children and Adults**
- Economy: Using Aggressive & Comprehensive Economic Development Policies**
- Job Training: Improving the Skills of our Workforce**
- Trade: Using an Approach Based on a Level Playing Field**
- Economic Development: Improving Depressed Communities**
- Agriculture: Protecting our Farms and Rural Communities**
- Transportation: Providing Access to Opportunities**
- Information Technology: Expanding Access to Information**
- Small Business: Nurturing Entrepreneurship and Self-employment**
- Income: Rewarding Work**
- Taxes: Providing a Sufficient, Stable and Fair Tax System**
- Health Care: Providing Health Security for Families and Individuals**
- Children and Families: Providing Help for Working Parents with Children**
- Coping With Misfortune: Bankruptcy, Foreclosure and Homelessness**
- The Environment: Protecting Our Land, Water, Air and Open Space**
- Social Justice: Achieving Equal and Humane Treatment Under the Law**
- Women: Protecting the Rights of Women**
- Veterans: Respect and Help for Those Who Serve Our Country**
- Youth: Building Citizens Who Will Brighten our Future**
- Seniors: Providing Retirement Security and Needed Services**
- Voting: Nurturing Democracy and Promoting Civic Participation**
- Faith: Connecting Our Party with People of Faith**



- Public Safety: Creating Safer Communities for All
- Energy: Providing Power to the People
- Judicial System: Serving the People, not Special Interests
- Government: Freeing Politics from Money Influence and Special Interests
- Corporations: Insisting on Corporate Accountability
- Consumer Protection: Protecting People in the Marketplace
- Financial Services: Protecting People in Credit and Banking Transactions
- Providing Proper Oversight of Our Financial System
- Local Government: Defending Our Democracy

*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.*