



Candidate Questionnaire

CleanSlateNow Action is committed to eliminating the corrupting influence of special interest money in politics. We believe candidates best represent the public interest by choosing to accept contributions only from individuals. We encourage candidates to reject contributions from political action committees, special interest groups, and corporations. *We are active in Denver, throughout Colorado, and across the country.*

The questions below are meant to provide information to voters about the kind of campaign contributions you are taking in your pursuit of public office and the kind of legislation you would support and propose if you take office. Your answers will also help us when considering if we will endorse a candidate in your race. Though we publicize the names of candidates who do not take PAC and special interest group money, no question is meant to serve as a litmus test. We seek to inform, educate, and engage you, other candidates, elected officials, and the public about issues surrounding campaign finance reform, and we hope the information you provide will help voters make up their own minds about the candidates. **Please complete and return the questionnaire by February 15, 2018**, if possible, or as soon as you can to be of use to voters.

Thank you for your participation, and good luck in your campaign!

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My answers are in red and underlined.

1. If elected, will you actively seek to enact meaningful campaign finance reform of the following forms?
 - a. Support overturning *Citizens United*? **Yes** No
 - b. Ban contributions in local elections from corporations, unions, and other organizations banned from donating to state office campaigns? **Yes** No
 - c. Limit special interest group contributions? **Yes** No

d. Incentivize small-dollar contributions (\$150 or less) from individuals with matching funds? **Yes** No

e. Enact public financing of elections? **Yes** No

Are there other reforms you would propose?

Limit use of PAC money that pretends to be an information service but is really trying to support a candidate or partisan issue. Make true information ads reveal their source of funding

2. Will you accept, or have you accepted contributions from special interest groups or organizations, including political committees, political action committees, or small donor committees? *(This does not include political party contributions.)*

Yes No

In Colorado, the amount permitted from small donor committees is \$2,425 for the primary and the same for the general. This small amount should not corrupt the process, but it does permit those without large funds to investigate more candidates than individuals can do on their own. The following are not allowed in Colorado:

- Corporations (profit or non-profit)
- Foreign citizens, corporations, or governments
- Another candidate committee (local, state, or federal)
- Lobbyists, principals of lobbyists, or political committees who retain a lobbyist, when the General Assembly is in session (applies to member of or candidates for the General Assembly or Executive Office)
- Anonymous contributions of \$20 or more
- Limited Liability Companies (LLCs), *if* any of the LLC members are a:
 - Corporation or labor organization
 - Natural person who is not a U.S. Citizen
 - Foreign government ® Professional or volunteer lobbyists, or a principal of a lobbyist prohibited from contributing by 1-45-105.5(1), C.R.S. Note: See definition of LLC in 1-45- 103.7(8), C.R.S.
- LLCs that the IRS treats as corporations, and from LLCs with publicly traded shares

I think these are wise restrictions.

3. Will you accept, or have you accepted contributions from Leadership PACs (a committee an elected official uses to donate to other candidates and elected officials, separate from their candidate committee)?

Yes **No**

My interpretation is that would not be legal in Colorado, and I approve of that.

4. Will you establish, or have you established your own Leadership PAC?

Yes **No**

5. Will you accept, or have you already accepted contributions from large corporations (i.e., offices in more than one locality, or based out of your state with a regional or national focus)?

Yes ☒ No ☐

6. Will you accept, or have you already accepted contributions from small corporations (presence in only one locality, i.e., "Mom-and-Pop Shop")?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Within the provisions of Colorado law:

- Colorado law permits LLC contributions subject to the following requirements:
 - LLC contributions are attributed to the members of that LLC and if the members are natural persons, the amount contributed as a member of the LLC counts towards aggregate contribution limits for that person. w
 - The LLC must provide the candidate or committee with a written statement affirming the permissibility of the contribution.

If a small mom and pop shop is treated like an individual and is not trying to skirt donation limits, I would accept their funds. But I don't know why anyone would go to that extra trouble ...

7. Will you accept, or have you already accepted money from lobbyists?

Yes ☒ No ☐

8. Will you accept, or have you already accepted money from unions?

Yes ☒ No ☐

9. Do you support **The Democracy for The People Initiative**, which is on the November 2018 ballot and requires the **disclosure of dark money** in Denver elections, **the banning of corporations from making direct contributions** to Denver municipal candidates, the **lowering of Denver's relatively high campaign contribution limits** to be on a scale with the limits for state offices, and the **establishment of a public financing system for elections**, providing matching funds for small-dollar donations (\$50 and less) to candidates who opt not to accept special interest money? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Denver municipal offices are not covered by the state law I cited above. However, it makes sense that candidates in local elections should not be outspending candidates for state office.

May we list you as an endorser? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Would you work to bring a similar reform to your community? ☒ Yes ☐ No

10. Please use as much additional space as you'd like to share any thoughts about campaign finance reform and the role of special interest money vs. contributions from individuals in political campaigns.

I have observed since the 90's that the infusion of money into elections by those with great wealth, whether individuals or corporations, have redefined the nature of constituency. When a campaign is funded by many many small donations, the politician has to be responsive to many, many constituents with diverse interests and priorities. However, with the bulk of a campaign financed by single individuals, corporations or groups, constituency becomes defined as those with the large dollars. Often those interests are not diverse, the priorities are not spread over many issues, and the focus becomes narrow. Poor and middle class constituents issues take a back seat to the interests of those with great assets. However, the number of people of the poor and middle class is exponentially higher than the wealthy. Thus, the vast majority of the population cease to be represented.

I would also like to again challenge the notion that corporations are people. It appears that corporations are people when it benefits them and not people when being people is of no benefit to them. Corporations should not have a voice in the running of our democracy.

I have accepted voluntary spending limits for my race. I think it would be obscene to spend more than the limits set for those accepting limits.

Julia F. Vannell-Sargeant
Signature

Feb 2, 2018
Date

Completed questionnaires may be scanned and emailed to Owen@CleanSlateNowAction.org or mailed to CleanSlateNow Action at P.O. Box 100093, Denver, Colorado 80250.