



**CONSTITUTION
OF THE
MIDDLESEX COUNTY
DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATION**

ARTICLE I

Candidate Selection

1. Purpose and Objectives – Empowerment of County Committee Members

The purpose of this Constitution is to establish and maintain fundamental participatory democracy as the foundation for a strong Middlesex County Democratic Organization (hereafter also referred to as “MCDO” or the “Organization”) and, specifically, to empower the duly elected County Committee Members by endowing each with an equal vote in selecting candidates for endorsement for elective office.

2. Vote and Elected County Committee Members

A. Offices Having County-Wide Jurisdiction

The MCDO, by vote of the elected County Committee Members, shall select the appropriate number of candidates to run for election with the Organization’s endorsement for the office of County Commissioner whenever said office shall be up for election in any given year, and one (1) candidate each to run for election with the Organization’s endorsement for the office of Sheriff, County Clerk and Surrogate, whenever said office shall be up for election in any given year, all in the manner set forth below.

B. Offices with Districts Wholly or Partially Within Middlesex County

The MCDO, by a vote of the elected County Committee Members, shall select one (1) candidate to run for election with the Organization’s endorsement for the office of U.S. Representative and one (1) for State Senator, and two (2) candidates for the office of Assembly Representative in each legislative district wholly or partially within the county, in the manner set forth below when said offices shall be up for election.



3. Procedure for Selection

A. Candidates

- 1) At least 120 days prior to the Primary Election for the General Election in each year an office specified above shall be up for election, the Secretary of the Organization shall place a notice or press release on the MCDO website which shall solicit for consideration any registered Democrat wishing to seek the endorsement by the MCDO for election to office.
- 2) Any registered Democrat wishing to be considered for an office listed in Article I, Section 2 shall submit, at least 90 days prior to the Primary Election:
 - a. A letter of intent.
 - b. A resume setting forth their qualifications for elective office in general and for the office specifically desired. The resume shall include the prospective candidate's name, occupation, employer name, and candidate's email address. It shall not exceed two pages, front and back.
 - c. Proof of valid voter registration status from the County Clerk's Office in the County in which the candidate is registered to vote.
 - d. A nonrefundable application fee by certified check to cover the MCDO's expenses in mailing copies of the resumes to each Committee Member, Municipal Chairperson, and Vice Chairperson, if applicable. The amount of the fee shall be established each year and set forth in the notice or press release prescribed in Section 3 (A) (1) above. In no event may the fee exceed mailing costs.
 - e. A petition signed by 200 registered Democrats of Middlesex County in support of said person running for the office sought. In the event that the candidate is seeking endorsement for office with a Legislative or Congressional district partially within Middlesex County, the number of signatures shall be reduced by the percentage of registered Democrats within the district who are not residents of Middlesex County.

- 3) After receipt of the requisite resumes, certified checks, and petitions and at least 80 days before the Primary Election, the MCDO's Secretary shall send a copy of each qualifying prospective candidate's resume to every Committee Member, Municipal Chairperson, and Vice Chairperson using electronic mail or regular mail (if the Committeeperson does not have an email address on file). Each prospective candidate, upon fulfilling the obligations, may communicate and/or meet directly with County Committee Members, Municipal Chairpersons, and Vice Chairpersons and may appear at municipal committee meetings held for the purpose of candidate review in an effort to promote their candidacy.

B. Convention — Selection and Endorsement of Candidates

- 1) The Organization shall hold a Convention at least sixty (60) days before the Primary Election, which date is not later than six (6) days prior to the date established by law for the filing of petitions with the County Clerk for a person seeking elective office.
 - a. Ten (10) days prior to the Convention, a written notice shall be sent to County Committee Members, Municipal Chairpersons, Vice Chairpersons, and to each prospective candidate qualifying for consideration by the MCDO using electronic mail or regular mail (if the aforementioned persons do not have an email address on file). The notice shall specify the date, time, and place of the Convention as well as the candidates and offices under consideration
 - b. The Convention shall be open to all registered Democrats of Middlesex County who wish to participate in the Convention, with seating reserved for County Committee Members, Municipal Chairpersons, Vice Chairpersons, and the MCDO's Executive Board, if space allows.
 - c. At the Convention, the Organization shall select the candidate(s) to be endorsed by the MCDO in the upcoming Primary Election.
 - d. Prior to the selection itself, each prospective candidate for endorsement by the MCDO shall be permitted five (5) minutes to speak before those assembled at the Convention. Nominating speeches shall be allowed as per By-Laws. After all the qualified candidates for each elective office have spoken, the MCDO may conduct a question-and-answer period, at which time only County Committee Members shall be permitted to ask questions and



receive responses from the qualified candidates. It shall be at the discretion of the County Chair to determine the length of time for question and answer periods.

- e. Following the speeches and question and answer periods, the selection, if contested, shall be held by secret ballot or using voting machines. Only County Committee Members verified with the County Clerk's Office shall be permitted to vote. In the event of a selection of candidates for endorsement for an office partially within the county, only those County Committee Members living in the respective congressional or legislative district may vote for these candidates. If more than two candidates seek the endorsement by the Organization for a single office, a vote of fifty percent (50%) of those votes plus one shall be necessary to win the endorsement by the MCDO. If after any such balloting no candidate receives the requisite number of votes, then the candidate(s) receiving less than twenty percent (20%) of the total vote shall be removed from the ballot, and another balloting shall take place immediately. If, however, three (3) candidates are running for the MCDO's endorsement for a single office and none receives the requisite votes to win, then the candidate receiving the fewest votes shall be removed from the ballot, and another balloting shall take place immediately. If there are more than three (3) candidates and none of the candidates receive at least twenty percent of the vote on the first ballot, then all but the top three (3) vote-getters shall be dropped, and the balloting shall continue as prescribed herein. These procedures shall continue until a candidate receives the requisite number of votes. If only one (1) person seeks endorsement by the Organization for a single office, the selection may be by acclamation at the discretion of the County Chair.
- 1) Each candidate achieving the endorsement of the County Committee Members at the County Convention shall receive the MCDO's support for the forthcoming Primary Election. Regardless of whether a candidate received the MCDO's endorsement in the Primary, the candidate who wins the Primary Election for each elective office shall have the MCDO's endorsement and support in the General Election.
 - 2) In the event of a Special Election for any of the aforementioned offices, a candidate selection process shall be established at the discretion of the County Chair within the spirit of this Constitution and the MCDO By-Laws.