

# How Endorsements are Made

The goal of any endorsement is to elect candidates who support NASW policy positions and increase visibility for NASW in the process. NASW also gains candidates' recognition, improves connections with elected officials, advances NASW's policy agenda, and builds respect for NASW as a powerful and committed activist organization.

NASW's policy positions are based on issues found in NASW's policy statements as outlined in *Social Work Speaks*. NASW members vote every three years on those policy statements at Delegate Assembly.

## **Authority**

Chapter PACE committees have the authority to endorse or make financial contributions to candidates for only state and local office. National PACE oversees federal races because of the national strategy that takes into consideration goals of the entire association.

## **Process**

- Staff consults with the respective chapter and compiles information about the candidate's viability and support for key issues of concern to the social work community.
- PACE interviews challenger candidates on the phone or in person.
- If the candidate has been elected before, PACE researches the candidate's voting record.
- The national PACE Board of Trustees endorses candidates for federal office after reviewing staff research and recommendations.
- Once the endorsement decision is complete, PACE communicates to members through the NASW NEWS and communicates to candidates in writing, and in person when possible.

## **Endorsement Criteria**

Endorsements of political candidates are done on the basis of several criteria, not by political party affiliation. Agreement with every NASW position is not required. Criteria may include

- issues that the candidate supports or opposes
- viability of the campaign, such as money raised and name recognition
- whether the current officeholder is seeking re-election
- specific assistance in achieving NASW's legislative goals
- building an electoral presence for future campaigns
- leadership position of the incumbent, such as committee assignments
- affirmative action considerations for candidates from underrepresented groups.

## **Levels of Endorsement**

PACE gives one of the following levels of support to each candidate:

- letter of endorsement
- financial contribution
- members to volunteer on campaign phone banks and distribute literature