



Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your commitment to Public Service by choosing to run for office at such a crucial time in our State. AFSCME Council 25's Political Action Committee **PEOPLE** (Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality) and AFSCME leaders from across the state of Michigan have begun our 2018 endorsement process.

If you are seeking the endorsement of AFSCME Council 25's 50,000 active and retired members and their families across the State, please fill out the attached questionnaire and return it as soon as possible to be considered.

Please send the completed forms to Steven Rzeppa, Political Director, via mail to AFSCME Council 25 Headquarters, 1034 N Washington Ave, Lansing, MI 48906 or via email at srzeppa@miafscme.org. Attach any additional documents or responses as needed and please be sure to sign at the end of the document to ensure validity.

Your campaign will be contacted with next steps upon receipt and review of the questionnaire. We look forward to your responses.

In Solidarity,

Lawrence A. Roehrig
President, AFSCME Council 25

CC: Robyn C Price, Secretary Treasurer
Council 25 Executive Board
Lorna Davison, Statewide PEOPLE Chair
Brian Weeks, International Political Director
Mike Dillion, Area Director



2018 AFSCME Council 25 Endorsement Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Tom Choske

Office Sought, Jurisdiction, and Party Affiliation: Michigan State House of Representatives – District 6 - Democrat

Campaign Mailing Address: 1538 Centre St, Apt 605, Detroit MI 48226

Campaign Manager Name: Washington Youson, Jr

Campaign Phone: 313-288-8662

Campaign Email: Tom@VoteChoske.com

Incumbent? No

Previous elected offices held (years and title):

N/A

If applicable, list some of your notable accomplishments while holding these elected offices:

N/A

Community organizations you are a part of:

I'm a member or board member of:

- Precinct Delegate, Precinct 157, Detroit
- PartnershipUs (board member)
- Detroit Economic Club
- Detroit Young Professionals
- 13th Congressional District Democratic Party
- Young Democrats of Michigan
- Michigan Democratic Party
- Michigan State University Alumni Association
- James Madison College Alumni Association
- Transportation Riders United (TRU)
- Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan
- DetroitersVote PAC (board member)
- NAACP
- Detroit RiverFront Conservancy and Riv28
- Sierra Club
- American Civil Liberties Union



What experience do you have working with current elected officials in your jurisdiction?

I have extensive experience working with elected officials in my jurisdiction. I served as an intern and, later, as a Legislative Aide for State Senator Hansen Clarke when he represented a large portion of the current 6th State House District. I also served as a legislative staffer in the district office of Congressman Clarke for the 13th Congressional district, which also covered the 6th State House District. I've been a loyal Democratic Party member for years, serving within the 13th Congressional District Democratic Party in various capacities and also as a precinct delegate.

Why are you running for this office? 200 words or less

Serving our community has been my lifelong dream. I've strived to live up to President Kennedy's famous quote, "to whom much is given, much will be required." Growing up in a union household, my parents, both public school employees, taught me the value of hard work.

I've been honored to fight as a staffer in the State Legislature, US House of Representatives, and as a board member of PartnershipUs to make our community better. In my time working with great leaders like former Congressman Hansen Clarke, I helped fight against polluters who are destroying our neighborhoods and health, against Republicans who wanted to bust unions and give handouts to big corporations, and against the scourge of illiteracy in our communities. My experience on the front-lines of the biggest battles in Lansing and Washington DC have prepared me to skillfully serve our community as State Representative.

Every single day I see the fantastic strength, resilience, and vibrancy of our community. I'm running to use my skills and expertise to serve and strengthen our community.

Do you support or oppose privatization and/or outsourcing of any public services? 200 words or less

I oppose privatizing public services. The private sector can do many things well, but when it comes to keeping our communities going, protecting our people, and ensuring our children receive the best education possible, there is no better provider than a government that is directly accountable to its people.

What steps would you take to solve the municipal finance and OPEB liability crisis in Michigan? 200 words or less

My district has lost several hundred million in revenue sharing from Lansing, leading to a reduction in city services and layoffs for our first responders. This precipitated the current municipal financial crisis that is gripping our communities, and it has been exacerbated by Emergency Managers who have ruined city services and driven out residents. I support prioritizing local revenue sharing in budget discussions. We also must work to find certain revenue streams that can be dedicated solely to local revenue sharing and diverted from the General Fund.

I will encourage local units of government to work with their employee unions and other groups to consider alternative ways to fund their long-term obligations to retirees. I support all parties coming to



the table in the same way the UAW met with the Big Three to form the VEBA in 2010, rather than having an unelected official abrogate fairly negotiated contracts.

What steps would you take to balance the budget in your government body? 200 words or less

Even though Michigan is constitutionally-mandated to balance its budget every year, the way that the Republicans have been doing it has been irresponsible, using one-time money to plug holes without consideration for the future. I will work to end the corporate welfare that Gov. Snyder and the Republicans have been giving out to the millionaires and billionaires in our state. These tax breaks and preferential treatments are costing us billions of dollars that could be put to use improving our infrastructure and helping to educate our kids. I also support moving Michigan towards a progressive income tax to make the wealthy pay their fair share, and I will work to free up funds from the Corrections department (which accounts for approximately \$2 billion per year – the largest line item in the General Fund) by fighting mass incarceration (decriminalizing marijuana, supporting diversionary programs to prevent nonviolent drug offenders and the mentally-ill from entering the prison system) and reducing recidivism (restoring and properly funding the Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative and implementing Ban The Box legislation).

Would you support or oppose repeal of Michigan’s Right to Work legislation? Also, would you support or oppose legislation that would require fair share cost fees?

So-called “Right-to-Work” laws are really “Right-to-Work-for-Less” and have hurt Michigan’s families. I will be the strongest fighter in Lansing working to repeal this legislation. I support fair share cost fees so that unions, who have to cover all workers in a facility regardless of whether they’re a dues-paying member individually, are fairly compensated for their efforts.

Do you support or oppose prevailing wage laws in Michigan?

Prevailing wage is a key safeguard for the public, making sure that their tax dollars are being spent on the best contractor and not just the one who can get their employees to work for the lowest wage possible. I will do everything in my power to fight against Republican attacks on our workers and make sure that any legislation that harms prevailing wage never makes it out of the House.

Would you support or oppose the repeal of Emergency Manager laws in Michigan?

The Emergency Manager Law is horrible - it has destroyed our community and I will continue to fight to ensure the people’s voice is heard and the law immediately repealed.

Would you support or oppose legislation to restore collective bargaining rights in health care and other matters that have been limited in recent years?

I strongly support collective bargaining rights and will be a staunch advocate for restoring those rights in health care and other employment matters.



Do you support or oppose transitioning away from defined benefit retirement plans and in to defined contribution retirement plans?

Workers earn their pensions, and efforts to strip those pensions and replace them with 401k-style 'defined contribution' plans are just another money-grab for the private sector. While I am supportive of the reform within the Legislative Retirement System for State Representative and Senators that moved them to defined contribution systems years ago, regular municipal, county, state, and other local employees deserve pensions. I will fight to protect defined benefits for all our current workers.

How many doors does your campaign need to knock to win?

Our district has a large number of people in gated communities and unknockable apartment buildings; therefore, we only have a couple thousand doors to reach.

How many doors has your campaign knocked so far?

We're commencing a focused knocking effort once the weather breaks going throughout the rest of the Primary season.

How much money do you need to raise for your campaign?

We're looking to grow our fundraising base going into the rest of the Primary season, and we're on-pace to get the resources we need to execute our campaign as effectively as possible.

How much money has your campaign raised so far?

We're just shy of \$30k so far, and are on pace to hit our fundraising targets.

Please give us a rough breakdown of your campaign budget (i.e. how much will be spent on staff, field, media, communications, admin, etc.):

The team has been able to take advantage of a strong base of dedicated volunteers and my digital marketing skills to be very efficient with money. We're putting the vast majority of our budget into outreach (mail, digital, etc), with only about 15% going to other areas of the campaign.

Please list all endorsements you have received thus far (labor, elected officials, etc.):

We're just entering the heart of endorsement season, and so far our campaign has won the support of the Michigan Democratic Party Progressive caucus in addition to supporters from throughout the district.

Please list any other pertinent portions of your campaign plan that would be helpful for AFSCME members to know for the endorsement process:

Our campaign is scrappy – I myself have managed and worked on over 10 separate campaigns from local, to state, to federal office over the past decade. I've also gained prodigious insights into how to market products, ranging from shelving to automobiles, in the new digital ecosystem. This has allowed our team to save money compared to other first-time candidates and better focus where to put our resources. This allows us to make a bigger impact with less money than the opposition.



If you receive the endorsement of AFSCME Council 25, what do you expect AFSCME to do to assist your campaign?

I'm most interested in how I can help AFSCME. A public endorsement and press release/statement would be great, as well as inclusion on any literature mailed or handed out to members. 2018 is a critical year, where we have many districts in play that can determine the balance of the House, so I would not request a financial contribution. Instead, I'd look to partner with AFSCME on GOTV operations in and around the area so we can ensure a labor-friendly legislature and governor in November.

Additional comments, include additional pages if necessary:

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas Choske", written over a horizontal line.

Thomas Choske

Date: 2/19/2018