

YOUNG DEMOCRATS OF MISSISSIPPI

Candidate Endorsement Process — Overview

Young Democrats of Mississippi (YDMS) mobilizes young people ages 15–36 to elect Democrats and build the next generation of party leadership across the state. This overview summarizes how YDMS chapters may consider, vote on, and announce candidate endorsements. It is a model process intended to guide chapters that have not yet adopted formal bylaws language and to be adapted into each chapter's governing documents.

WHO CAN BE ENDORSED

- **Eligibility:** Candidate must be a Democrat in good standing, running for local, state, or federal office in Mississippi.
- **Primaries — default neutral, narrow exception:** As a default, YDMS remains neutral between two or more Democrats competing for the same nomination. The Executive Committee may authorize a primary endorsement as an exception — most commonly when a young Democrat (36 or under) is on the ballot — but only on a two-thirds (66%) vote, a higher bar than the standard 60% used for general-election endorsements.
- **General elections:** Once a Democrat is the party's nominee, YDMS chapters may endorse or actively support that nominee in the general election.
- **Nonpartisan races:** YDMS may also consider endorsements in nonpartisan municipal or judicial races and on statewide ballot measures.

THE PROCESS

1	Application Candidate (or a member on their behalf) submits a short endorsement request/questionnaire to the chapter's Political or Endorsements Committee by the posted deadline.
2	Screening The committee reviews the candidate's record and platform, and may invite the candidate to a screening interview or candidate forum.
3	Committee Recommendation



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	The Executive Committee votes on whether to recommend endorsement. A recommendation requires an affirmative vote of at least 60% of members present and voting.
4	Membership Vote Therecommendation is presented to the general membership at a properly noticed meeting. Members may ratify the recommendation, decline to endorse, or — by a 60% vote — endorse a different Democrat in the race.
5	Announcement Approved endorsements are announced publicly and posted to the chapter's website/social media, and shared with the YDMS state board and YDA Southern Region as appropriate.

SAFEGUARDS

- **One endorsement per seat:** No chaptermay endorse more candidates than there are seats up for election in a given race.
- **Conflicts of interest:** Anyofficer or member with a personal, familial, or financial interest in a candidate must recuse from discussionandvotingonthat endorsement.
- **Revocation:** Anendorsement may be revoked at any time by a majority vote of the general membership.
- **Primary exception is narrow, not routine:** A primary endorsement may only be made where the endorsed candidate meets YDMS's age eligibility (36 or under) or where the Executive Committee finds by two-thirds vote that a clear organizational interest is at stake; the vote and rationale are recorded in the meeting minutes.
- **Use of the YDMS name:** “Endorsement” includes any use of YDMS's name, logo, mailing lists, or funds on a candidate's behalf — informal or individual support by a member does not speak for the chapter.

Adopt locally: *This model overview should be formally adopted (and adapted as needed) via each chapter's bylaws amendment process. Contact the YDMS State Board (ydms.org) with questions about implementation or to request a chapter endorsement toolkit.*

