



## **State and National Political Candidate Endorsement Process & Funding for Political Activities**

### **UUP's role in endorsement of political candidates**

- UUP does not directly endorse candidates for political office at the state or national levels.
- UUP participates in the endorsement process conducted by its affiliate, New York State United Teachers (NYSUT).
- NYSUT represents more than 650,000 members across NYS (including P-12 faculty and professional staff, health care professionals, and higher education faculty and staff).
- UUP officially supports NYSUT-endorsed candidates.
- Individual UUP members may support non-endorsed candidates if they choose, but they cannot present themselves as representing UUP regarding non-endorsed candidates.

### **How the candidate endorsement process works**

- The NYSUT endorsement process takes place at a 2-day conference in August of each election year.
- Representatives from each NYSUT affiliate (union locals across NYS) can send representatives to the endorsement conference to review candidate records and to vote on who NYSUT will endorse.
- UUP's statewide officers and chapter presidents serve as representatives to the NYSUT endorsement conference.
- Chapter members are encouraged to communicate their views about candidates to their chapter presidents, so those views can be communicated during discussions.
- Endorsement conference attendees are divided up according to election districts. UUP's representatives participate in discussions about candidates from their home districts and have votes on endorsements in their districts.
- UUP's representatives also vote on whether to endorse state-level and federal candidates.

### **NO Member Dues is used to support UUP or NYSUT political activities**

- Union member dues is not used for union political activities, candidate support, or campaign committees.
- All funds used for political advocacy are from voluntary contributions to NYSUT's political fund-raising program called VOTE-COPE.
- VOTE-COPE is a non-partisan action fund that supports NYSUT-endorsed candidates and campaign committees that are pro-public education and pro-labor.
- NYSUT has endorsed Republicans, Democrats, and candidates not affiliated with either party.

### **VOTE-COPE Contributions**

- Last year union members collectively contributed over \$9 million to VOTE-COPE.
- VOTE-COPE funds are critical for the union's advocacy efforts, including UUP's work to support funding for SUNY campuses and hospitals and other state policies of importance to our members.

To learn more about and to donate to VOTE-COPE: <http://uupinfo.org/votecope/index.php>