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**2024 Pierce County Democrats Endorsement Questionnaire**

**-Attorney General-**

Candidate Name: \_\_Nick Brown\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position sought: \_\_\_Attorney General\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

For judicial endorsements, the Pierce County Democratic Central Committee (PCDCC) seeks to endorse well-qualified candidates with the education, experience, ability, and temperament to reach just decisions in the cases brought before them, who will also work to make the justice system more understandable, accessible, and equitable for all. The Endorsements Committee screens candidates and then makes endorsement recommendations to the PCDCC.

The PCDCC may withdraw endorsement of any candidate if they determine the candidate has acted in conflict with the answers provided during the screening.

\*You may respond N/A (not applicable) if appropriate. Expand or decrease space as needed.

Questions

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

I was raised in Pierce County and taught by my dad, an Army veteran who came of age in the Civil Rights Movement, and my mom, a nurse and healthcare administrator, the importance of being involved, pursuing justice, and making a difference. I’ve spent my life and career trying to live up to that – as a prosecutor and defense attorney, as General Counsel to Governor Inslee, and most recently as U.S. Attorney for Western Washington.

Stepping down as U.S. Attorney was the hardest professional decision I’ve ever had to make, but the job of Attorney General is incredibly important, and I knew I wanted to continue my work in that role, on behalf of all Washingtonians.

I’m running for Attorney General because I believe every Washingtonian has a right to be safe, no matter their age, race, gender, who they love, or where they live. My career to date shows my commitment to standing up for the people of Washington, and as Attorney General that is what I’ll keep doing.

1. **What are your qualifications for seeking this office, and what was the nature of your legal background and experience?**

My work history and leadership experience provide the foundation of my qualifications to be Washington’s next Attorney General.

I joined ROTC to help pay for college, graduated from Morehouse College and got a law degree from Harvard. I then began my service in the Army where I served as a Judge Advocate General, protecting our soldiers from fraud and defending their liberties in court.

When I came home from Iraq, I finished my Army service as a prosecutor at JBLM. I then worked in the U.S. Attorney’s Office, and was subsequently appointed as General Counsel for Governor Jay Inslee. In my years with Gov. Inslee, we stood up to Donald Trump and his hateful Muslim ban, and sought to create a more just system by ending the death penalty in our state.

In 2021, I was appointed by President Biden to be the U.S. Attorney for Western Washington, where I focused on fighting drug cartels and sex trafficking, addressing the fentanyl crisis, and partnering with the community to reduce violent crime. But perhaps my proudest accomplishments in that office were working to keep every Washingtonian safe by defending their civil rights, preventing and prosecuting hate crimes, and protecting the most vulnerable and members of marginalized communities.

1. **If your past legal practice emphasized one area of law, how will you prepare to argue other areas of dispute?**

I’ve served as both a prosecutor and criminal defense attorney, representing both my government and individuals. I’ve represented public sector clients and non-profit organizations in complex civil litigation. I’ve tried multiple jury trials and briefed and argued cases in federal and state courts of appeals. I’ve served as the chief legal advisor to the Governor of Washington state, a Special Assistant Attorney General, and the U.S. Attorney for Western Washington. I believe that gives me the broadest legal experience of anyone in this race.

But I am not an expert on all matters of the law. And of the most important skills the Attorney General must have is the ability to build a good team, hear from those with expertise in other areas of the law, and evaluate the legal issues presented. I believe that the wisest voice in a room is often the quietest and have learned how to discern complex legal issues by relying on the expertise of others and my own varied experiences.

1. What are the most important issues you see facing you as Attorney General?

Every Washingtonian wants to feel safe, no matter their age, their race, their gender, where they live, or who they love - safe from crime, safe from gun violence, and safe from discrimination. As Attorney General, I’ll crack down on gun violence, reject hate, protect our democracy, work to combat climate change and always stand up for abortion access in Washington. The Attorney General’s office touches on all these issues and more.

1. **Why should the Pierce County Democratic Party support you for this position?**

I would be honored to have the support of the Pierce County Democratic Party. An Attorney General must have a strong sense of justice, the drive to make a difference, and the leadership and executive skills to run the largest legal organization in the state. I believe I bring those attributes, and more, to the job. Throughout my career, I’ve worked to ensure that the law is used as a tool for justice and to improve people’s lives, to protect them and to keep their communities safe and I hope to continue that approach as Attorney General.

1. **How have you demonstrated Democratic Party values?**

Newish but mostly reused language.
While many of the positions I have held to date have not been explicitly partisan, I have worked to advance Democratic values in all my work. I’ve strived to build a more just legal system, help stop the use of the death penalty in Washington state, fought Trump’s Muslim ban, worked to prevent and prosecute hate crimes, expanded protections for immigrants, and defended Washington’s gun-safety laws in court.

Most recently, as U.S. Attorney of Western Washington, to help address discrimination, I was proud to chair a national committee on civil rights, where I led a group of U.S. Attorneys from across the county to improve training and best practices to protect civil rights across the country. I brought that lens to all our work in Western Washington, and perhaps my proudest accomplishments in that office were working to keep every Washingtonian safe by preventing and prosecuting hate crimes and protecting the most vulnerable and members of marginalized communities. I will continue this focus and work as Attorney General, to protect all people no matter their zip code, race, gender, age, or who they love.

1. **Please list your key endorsements:**

I have been endorsed by Governor Jay Inslee, former Attorney General and Governor Christine Gregoire, Congressman Derek Kilmer, Congresswoman Marilyn Strickland, Mayor Victoria Woodard, Speaker of the House Laurie Jinkins, VoteVets, 10 of our tribal nations (including the Puyallup Tribe), several Democratic County & LD Organizations, LiUNA NW, the Washington Council of Machinists, Pierce County Councilmembers Ryan Mello, Marty Campbell, Jani Hitchen, and Robyn Denson, and many others [who can be found online here](https://nickbrownforag.com/endorsements/).

I would be honored to earn the support of the Pierce County Democrats. I hope you will consider joining those supporting my campaign to be Washington’s next Attorney General.

1. **Provide ratings from any Bar Associations, either in this election or a prior one.**

N/A

1. **Has any professional or disciplinary body made a finding that you violated any rule or code of professional conduct? If so, please provide a full explanation.**

No

1. **To what Bar groups or sections do you belong now or have belonged to in the past?**

Washington State Bar Association
Federal Bar Association
Loren Miller Bar Association

1. **How have you supported pro bono or low-cost legal services?**

I served on the Board of Directors for the Campaign for Equal Justice, an organization which supports the thousands of families in Washington every year who need civil legal aid. This legal aid helps families access critical safety net benefits, fight an eviction, secure a domestic violence protection order, help immigrants gain asylum, and fight workplace discrimination to provide security and a pathway out of poverty. I had to resign from the board when I became U.S. Attorney, which forbade any charitable board memberships.

1. **Do you have a legal philosophy? If so, please describe:**

Throughout my career, I have worked to ensure that the law is used as a tool for justice, to improve lives, to lift people up, and stand up to oppression. Together we need to create a legal system that’s truly just and truly fair. A system that doesn’t put the rights of the wealthy or the well-connected ahead of the rights of workers and working families.

1. **How will be Attorney General be different than being an attorney?**

The Attorney General is both a leader and a lawyer. Broad legal experience is necessary to understand the array of legal issues the office faces and effectively represent the people of Washington state. Much of the actual legal work of the AG and the AGs office will be similar to work I have done in the past and I believe my professional experience gives me a great understanding of legal challenges ahead.

But perhaps the most important responsibility of the Attorney General is to build and communicate a vision for what is possible through the AG’s office, and to then lead the team of over 800 lawyers and 700 staff in the office to execute on that vision. That is what I did as U.S. Attorney. I know what it is like to build a team, develop a strategic plan, and set a vision for attorneys and staff alike. I look forward to being able to have an impact at that scale for the state and that’s a large part of why I’m running.

**IF ELECTED TO THIS POSITION…..**

1. **How would you educate and inform the public about the justice system?**

Iam committed to transparency in my office. While working for Governor Inslee, I served on the State’s sunshine committee and made sure that the Governor’s Office never used executive privilege to exempt public records and will bring that same openness to the Attorney General’s Office.

The Attorney General must act as a watchdog for the people of Washington state and be the people’s lawyer. It is important that Washingtonians know that the office can help them, and trust that we can bring justice for those who are harmed by deceptive practices. This can be accomplished by consistently communicating to the public about the major cases and legal issues facing the state, as well as how decisions are being made in the office.

As Attorney General, you are the people’s lawyer, and it is essential we let people know how we are working for them and impacting their lives through consumer protection, veterans outreach, and defending worker rights.

1. **What is your knowledge of the citizens and departments you represent?**

I have worked closely with the Attorney General’s Office in the past, both as General Counsel to Governor Inslee and when I’ve served as a Special Assistant Attorney General in the office. As General Counsel, I worked closely with the AG’s office and have an intimate understanding of the agencies that the AG’s office serves.

As Attorney General you represent everyone in Washington as the people’s lawyer. One of the priorities for me on this campaign is to get across the state to hear from people about what they need. We’ve been from Bingen to Neah Bay listening to folks all over the State.

1. **Do you believe the justice system produces different results for different demographics? If so, what would you do to remedy that problem?**

Yes.

There are no easy answers here but there are many things we can do. We need to encourage and support transparency throughout the legal system, so people have a fuller understanding of how decisions are being made. We need to improve access to justice across the system, so the public’s ability to have their rights protected does not depend on their socioeconomic status, race, gender, or national origin.

We need to appoint and elect judicial and legal officials from a broader array of personal and professional backgrounds. We need to support law enforcement officers and make sure they’re able to do their jobs well to keep people safe but hold officers accountable when they violate the law or individual rights. This is the type of work I have done throughout my career and am committed to doing as Attorney General.

My first week working for Governor Inslee, I initiated the effort to enact a moratorium on the death penalty in Washington. When I researched how the death penalty was applied in our state, I saw that it was not equally administered. I conducted outreach to those who would be impacted by a moratorium including state employees, families of victims, community leaders, legislators, and advocates. I knew the fair and just action to take was to end the use of the death penalty and worked with Governor Inslee to establish a moratorium. This effectively ended its use in Washington.

Most recently, as U.S. Attorney of Western Washington, I was proud to chair a national committee on civil rights, where I led a group of U.S. Attorneys from across the county to improve training and best practices to protect civil rights across the country. I brought that lens to all our work in Western Washington, and perhaps my proudest accomplishments in that office were working to keep every Washingtonian safe by preventing and prosecuting hate crimes and protecting the most vulnerable and members of marginalized communities.

1. **How would you approach any caseload or court congestion issues?**

Building a good team is crucial to preventing any caseload or congestion issues for the office. As U.S. Attorney I built a leadership team that effectively managed workload for our staff attorneys and handled the transition back from remote to in-office work as pandemic restrictions ended. It’s important for an executive to remain active and listen to their team to ensure caseload issues don’t cause problems or mistakes.

The Attorney General’s Office can help with court congestion, and caseload issues, by reaching out to County and Municipal Courts and Prosecutors to see where the office can assist. As the largest public law firm in the State, AG’s can do more where needed to ease the pressure on our stressed justice system.

1. **Is there anything else you would like to share with the Committee?**

I want to thank the Committee for the opportunity to meet with them and discuss my vision for Washington and the Attorney General’s office. I am always available to talk further about these and any other questions you have. I am a Pierce County native, and humbly request the endorsement of the Pierce County Democrats.

Thank you for your consideration.