

# Dane Dems Endorsement Questionnaire

Thank you for seeking an endorsement from the Dane County Democratic Party. You do not need to answer all of the questions below, but please answer all of the ones you feel are pertinent to your campaign. We will ask more detailed questions and followups during our interview, if we choose to have one, so feel free to answer these questions as briefly or thoroughly as you desire. These answers will be shared in full with our membership before they vote on your endorsement.

Email \*

namato@cwag.org

Candidate name \*

Nino Amato

Position you are running for (include municipality) \*

City of Madison 9th Aldermanic District

Campaign website

AmatoForMadison.com

## Professional Experience \*

Multiple professional & leadership experience in government, nonprofit and private sector and currently am a UW Adjunct Professor teaching "Environmental and Economic Sustainability Policy and Climate Change Mitigation Policies & Practices;" \* An active and founding member of "We Are Many United Against Hate Advisory Board & Committee Chair on Public Policy Development; \* Member of the Voter Accessibility Advisory Committee for the Wisconsin State Elections Commission; \* Member of the WI. Alliance of Retired Americans Board of Directors for WI. Union Employees; Prior professional experience as the former Pres./CEO Coalition of Wisconsin Aging & Health Groups (CWAG founded in 1977), a statewide nonprofit legal & legislative advocacy organization that protects the rights of Wisconsin's 1.4 Million Elderly & People with Disabilities (2009-2021) and am currently the honorary chair on CWAG's Board of Directors; (2) Prior to CWAG, I held several senior executive positions in the nonprofit healthcare field and was a senior executive in the renewable energy and environmental remediation field.

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## Political/Service Experience \*

Co-Chair with Mark Pocan Special Task Force on the Unification of Dane Co. & Madison Public Health Departments; a former pres. of the Madison Equal Opportunities Commission; served on the UW Board of Regents and the UW-Hospital & Clinics Authority Board; a former president of the Wisconsin Technical College System Board of Directors; Member of Gov. Jim Doyle's Task Force on Energy Efficiency & Renewables; Co-Chair, WI. Urban Initiative (lowering K-6 classroom size to One Teacher to 15 Students); A Founding Charter Member of the NAACP of Dane County & Elected Vice Chair of NAACP of Dane County for two executive terms; Chair of Mayor Baumann's Task Force on Race Relations; Chair of Mayor Dave's Community Pool Site Selection Committee; and served on numerous city, county and state citizens committee, boards and commissions.

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### Why are you running for this seat? \*

I am running for the Madison Common Council to create a safer and more sustainable future for our neighborhoods and for all of Madison children and residents. My priorities for the 9th Aldermanic District & City of Madison are: (1) Create safer neighborhoods by investing in neighborhood policing & mental health interventions services (CARES intervention Program); (2) Listening to my residents' concerns on neighborhood & city issues & represent their voice on the Madison Common Council; (3) Provide the needed resources to guarantee safe drinking water in all drinking wells, by reducing PFAS toxins (forever man-made chemicals); (4) Protect city greenway forests, tree islands & street tree canopies, which reduces Co2 emissions, lowers urban heat & combats Climate Change; (5) Develop an environmental and economic sustainability future for Madison's children and all residents – through nature based de-carbonization programs, new energy-efficiency technology, and aggressive policy Climate Crisis goals, in achieving net-zero Co2 emission' goals by 2050; (6) develop new affordable multi-family housing opportunities and intergenerational housing for essential workers to live and work in Madison; (7) Re-exam the City and County systemic road blocks for citizens of color entering city and county government.

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### What are the three most important issues in your race? \*

(1) Climate Action on achieving Madison's carbon neutral sustainability targets and goals by 2030 & 2040; (2) Neighborhood Public Safety through increase funding for CARES mental health services and neighborhood policing; and (3) Removing the systemic racist barriers in city government by creating and building a new transparent local governance model, that will make the old systemic obsolete.

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### What are the largest environmental concerns you aim to deal with in office?

Three major concerns: (1) Protecting & preserving the 26.4 acres of Sauk Creek Woods natural habitat forest greenway from Madison's Engineering Department removal of over 4500 trees for stormwater management, without addressing the main source of flooding from big box stores parking lots on Madison's westside; (2) there is an urgency to Improve Safe Drinking Water in all of Madison's drinking wells, from the growing toxic levels of PFAS contaminations; and (3) Time is of the essence to hold City Dept. Heads accountable in achieving Madison's Sustainability Goals on reducing Greenhouse Gases and lowering our cities carbon footprint through Renewable Energy Resources and Management Practices.

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How will you use your position to create more equitable opportunities and help those living in poverty?

A major focus must be on creating living wage jobs through a public-private partnership with City-County Governments, UW-Madison, Madison College, the multi-cultural Chamber of Commerce Organizations and the top priority of creating a "Minority Enterprise Small Business Investment Company" (MESBIC) for new minority business start-up company's." I proposed this over 20 years ago and its time for the City of Madison "Walk Their Talk" on developing the urgent need for start up capital by creating Madison's own MESBIC.

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What will you do to address racial inequality?

Contrary to popular belief, the City of Madison and Dane County has some of the worse racial disparities than any City-County in the Country. Tragically, our city has denied people of color an equal opportunity to educate their children, keep them healthy and advance their families economically. So this is how we must begin: We start with one of the most expansive government/private business/religious affiliations collaborative partnerships this city has ever seen by committing to and endorsing the following principles to close the racial divide: (1) Madison Corporations need to get involved in pursuing social justice and equal opportunity, literally from the Board level down; (2) Madison's healthcare providers and pharmaceutical retail outlets, need to facilitate mobile family healthcare programs targeting at risks neighborhoods and K-18 students; (3) Faith communities need to work together to tear down the racial and socio-economic barriers that exist in our community; (4) Parents need to take specific, tangible steps to transmit social justice values to their children; (5) Madison Public School Children of all ages need to "get involved" through cooperative activities in less privileged neighborhoods; and (6) Madison' Banking and Investment Companies need to invest in hundreds of community scholarship for high school students of color can attend the UW, Madison College and/or Edgewood College, which will advance their employment opportunities and lifelong learning skills.

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How will you promote restorative justice and address racially biased policing?

Having the Mayor, City Council, Police & Fire Commission to immediately adopt the guiding principles recommendations from Pres. Obama's Special Task Force on 21st Century Policing. The first step is Building Trust and and Legitimacy and nurturing legitimacy on both sides of the police/citizen divide -- must be the City's and the MPD's foundational principle underlying the nature of relations between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. The public confers legitimacy only on those whom they believe are acting in procedurally just ways. In addition, law enforcement cannot build community trust if it is seen as an occupying force coming in from outside to impose control on the community.

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How will you improve the public health of our community in your position?

By the Mayor and City Council Guaranteeing to every citizen of Madison/Dane County, Clean Air & Clean Water; Free Dental Care Accesses for children and seniors; increase the number of community access clinics in underserved neighborhoods; and team up with all of the local health care providers to declare the end to racial healthcare disparities in our city and county and partner to eliminate such disparities.

What are the largest transportation issues you wish to work on and how will you address them?

The Mayor's Bus Rapid Transit outreach has failed to truly engage marginalized communities, our elderly & at-risk neighborhoods - which flies in the face of public transit equity. Residents could get less service due to inadequate geographic coverage & therefore, there needs to be more in-depth equity analysis by city planners, to ensure riders with the most needs are better served. Public Transit is essential for work, access to city services, parks, health clinics, business services & grocery stores. The mayor's BRT rush to judgement will also destroy historic State Street & the many small businesses, who employ many of the service workers and students who are struggling to pay their way through college.

How have you elevated diverse voices in government and public discourse? How would you continue to do so if elected to this office?

We need to expand the number of Aldermanic Seats on the Common Council. When Madison's population was only 168,000 people (1970's) the City had 22 Aldermanic Districts. Since then, the City has decreased the number of Aldermanic Districts from 22 to 20. That is insane. We now have over 100,000 more people living in Madison, therefore we need to increase the number of Aldermanic Seats, which will in fact increase and elevate diverse voices in our local government. Instead of one alder per 13,725 people, we should increase the number of Common Council Seats from 20 to 28 seats, which is one alder per 9,800 residents.

Any other issues/topics you wish to discuss?

As a community, we can no longer ignore the growing threats from climate change which has already impacted our community and neighborhoods and is causing an increase infrastructure costs and most of all, is a growing threat to our children's future and the next generation. Madison ranks 39 out of 100 cities for energy efficiency. The Mayor & Council are failing to achieve their own Co2 GHG's emission reductions goals. We must now embrace, a nature based de-carbonization programs & aggressive set new measurable climate crisis goals, in order to achieve net-zero Co2 emission by 2050. Worse yet, the mayor, both of my opponents & City Engineering, support the removal of over 4500 trees from the Sauk Creeks Woods Greenway, which run's counter to all of the scientific & environmental advice from local experts and from the UW-Madison Nelson Institute.

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