**2015 Seattle City Council Candidate Questionnaire**

Thank you in advance for taking the time to answer this questionnaire, which was developed by members of the Civic Alliance for a Sound Economy (CASE). Please note, answers will be shared with CASE members but will not be publicly distributed.

Your responses to the following questions will be used as part of a screening process to determine which candidates the CASE candidate evaluation committee will interview.

**Responses are due by Friday, April 10.**

To submit your completed questionnaire, or if you have any questions, please contact Markham McIntyre, Executive Director of CASE, at 206-389-7313 or markhamm@seattlechamber.com.

**About the Civic Alliance for a Sound Economy**

The Civic Alliance for a Sound Economy (CASE) is a political action committee sponsored by the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. CASE is the strongest political voice for businesses, large and small, in the Seattle metropolitan region. We represent employers and organizations from every industry sector in the region.

CASE supports local candidates and issues that help create a healthy economy, competitive business climate, high quality of life, and progressive future for the Seattle metropolitan area.

**Basic Information**

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| --- | --- |
| Candidate Name: | M. Lorena González |
| City Council Position: | Seattle City Council, Pos. 9 (At-Large) |
| Party Affiliation: | Democratic Party |
| Phone Number: | 206-395-5033 |
| E-mail Address: | info@electlorenagonzalez.com |
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**Administrative Questions**

*\*This is for background information and internal use only. It is confidential and will not be published.*

1. Please list your political consultant(s), campaign manager, and fundraiser.

*Christian Sinderman, NWP Consulting; Michael Charles, Campaign Manager; Rachel Padgett, Oldmixon Hill*

1. Please list all endorsements you have receive

*We have earned the endorsement of many individuals throughout the City thus far and are focused on continuing to build grassroots support. Public endorsements of note thus far include:*

* *Seattle Mayor Ed Murray*
* *King County Executive Dow Constantine*
* *State Senator Pramila Jayapal (D-37th LD)*
* *Speaker of the House Rep. Frank Chopp (D-43rd LD)*
* *State Rep. Brady Walkinshaw (D-43rd LD)*
* *Latino Political Action Committee of Washington*
* *Latino Victory Project*
* *OneAmerica Votes*
* *Rich Stolz, President & CEO of OneAmerica Votes*
* *Hillary Stern, Executive Director of Casa Latina (for identification purposes only)*
* *Estela Ortega, Executive Director of El Centro de la Raza (for identification purposes only)*
* *Fé Lopez, Executive Director of the Seattle Community Police Commission (for identification purposes only)*
* *Rebecca Saldaña, Executive Director of Puget Sound Sage (for identification purposes only)*

*Other noteworthy endorsements that I have obtained or that are highly expected to be obtained but are* ***embargoed*** *are:*

* *Retired State Rep. Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney (D-46th LD)(anticipated)*
* *Seattle City Council President Tim Burgess*
* *Seattle City Councilmember Bruce Harrell*
* *Seattle City Councilmember Sally Bagshaw*
* *Seattle City Attorney Peter Holmes*
* *King County Councilmember Rod Dembowski*
* *King County Councilmember Joe McDermott*
* *King County Councilmember Larry Gossett (anticipated)*
* *King County Councilmember Larry Phillips (anticipated)*

*Additionally, given my work in representing both union and non-union workers, and my own personal history of growing up as a migrant farmworker in the lower Yakima Valley, I anticipate receiving endorsements from various labor organizations once I’ve gone through their respective endorsement processes.*

1. Please list how much money you have raised to date, and your fundraising targets for the primary and general elections.

*In six weeks, we have raised approximately $50,000. We have an aggressive fundraising and voter contact plan for the Primary. We have the goal of raising at least $100,000 to cover costs but are on pace to exceed this amount. In totality we plan to raise over $300,000 and run an aggressive field, communication and outreach strategies, including visiting every neighborhood prior to the General Election.*

1. Please describe how you would use the CASE endorsement.

*My campaign is community focused and our City’s businesses are part of that community. I would feature the endorsement of CASE on literature and other campaign materials, as appropriate. I would also hope to meet membership, especially small businesses, in neighborhoods throughout the city. I have plans of visiting every neighborhood before the November election and that includes visiting business districts, local chambers and the like, to listen and to learn from our business owners.*

**General Questions**

1. What are the top three issues in your district you think the City Council should address? Please describe how you would address these issues.

*As a citywide candidate, there are many issues that I believe the City Council will need to address with significant leadership from the two, at-large councilmembers.*

***Fostering Innovation****: We rely on our business community and take pride in nurturing small businesses, entrepreneurs, science, technology and other industries. We must ensure that we continue to be a global city and we support our small businesses by streamlining licensing and permitting services, reducing traffic, addressing shortages of parking and public safety concerns. Additionally, looking at freight mobility beyond the heavy haul corridor to transport products between point of receipt (whether it’s the Port or from other parts of the State or Country) and our businesses. Finally, we must think broadly about how the City and business – small or large – can partner together on issues we all care about, such as homelessness, public disorder, affordability and pay equity.*

***Building Strong & Safe Communities****: We’re a young, diverse city demanding more mobility choices, affordable housing and cultural amenities, but we are also a city that protects seniors, families and the safety net for those in need. We need to bolster public safety in our neighborhoods, protect our vibrant nightlife culture, and ensure wrap around services for our kids to make sure they can achieve their full potential while at our public schools. We need to continue to build long-term multi-pronged approaches to transportation solutions and affordable housing that works for neighborhoods across our city.*

***Addressing Social Inequities:*** *We’re a progressive city on the leading edge of addressing wage and social inequities. But we still have too many families and others sleeping on our streets. And we live in a City where the middle class is shrinking while the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. We have taken big steps but need to continue to broaden support services to ensure opportunity for kids and families from all walks of life.*

1. What is the top challenge for the City as a whole? How would you, as a City Council member, help solve this challenge?

***Affordability:*** *I think all of the issues I outlined above are important and a large part of all three fall under the issue of affordability. When it comes to balancing housing, transit infrastructure, wage inequalities, growth of small business, many of these are rooted in making sure our city can grow in a smart way while not pricing out the diverse people, who add to our culture and make our city work. This is a complex issue and it will take long-term planning on many fronts with diverse interests and stakeholders. I am excited to see the recommendations of the Mayor’s Housing Affordability and Livability (HALA) Committee. I believe that many of those recommendations will provide for pragmatic solutions to the housing affordability crises that are also aligned with our progressive values. We are at a critical juncture with regard to this issue and my prior work, as the Mayor’s legal counsel, will position me well to hit the ground running on this issue. There is no question that this is a difficult issue with some very differing views on potential solutions that are likely to be at the top of the agenda for years to come. My legal training, collaborative work style and ability to make difficult decisions will help in the effort to move our city forward during this critical juncture.*

1. Seattle is the fastest growing City in America. Is this a good thing? What steps can the council take to help effectively plan for continued growth?

*I believe it is a good thing that we are experiencing such growth, but it definitely comes with its challenges. Like previously mentioned, affordability is one of the greatest challenges that has come with rapid growth. Finding ways to secure affordable housing options and greater mobility around the city through transportation alternatives are huge components of what the city council can do to help prepare for our continued growth. In doing so, we must make sure we are addressing potential inequities, so that we are not leaving certain communities behind.*

1. What is the City’s role to support business growth and economic development?

*I believe the City can be a partner with local businesses. Obviously providing better infrastructure and reducing gridlock will be hugely beneficial to our local businesses. Working collaboratively with our ports and state government to keep goods and services moving is also key to our success. We have vibrant communities and businesses that want to be here but it is important that we don’t price them out of our communities as well. I think we can work together by bringing all partners to the table and finding ways of not only helping people who live here but the businesses that serve them.*

1. What would you hope to accomplish in your first year in office? Do you have specific legislation that you plan to introduce? If so, please describe your strategy to get your idea implemented.

*I have a number of goals but high on the list is addressing housing affordability. We have a lot of ideas that have been brought to the table but we need to work to create a master plan to best meet our growing needs. Additionally I want to look at how we can challenge inequities in our city, especially around wrap-around services for youth who are not being adequately served by our school system. Gender pay equity in our City, for both our city employees and privately employed female workers, continues to be a significant concern for me. The Boston Woman’s Compact is a very interesting model that I think is worth exploring here in Seattle.*

1. What experiences have you had that you think best prepare you to be a city councilmember?

*I was raised in Central Washington, in a proud Spanish speaking migrant farmworker family. I earned my first paycheck at age 8, alongside my parents and five siblings. Relying on scholarships, need-based grants and jobs, I attended community college and later WSU. I moved to Seattle in 2002 to attend law school where I graduated with honors from Seattle University School of Law. I currently live in West Seattle but since 2002 have lived in Ballard, Capital Hill, First Hill, South Park and White Center.*

*Professionally, I have most recently served as a senior advisor and legal counsel to Mayor Ed Murray where I have spent the past year helping set policy and implementing historic minimum wage and worker protections alongside the Mayor, unions and progressive leaders throughout Seattle. Additionally, in that role, I advised the Mayor on shaping his Equity & Environment Initiative, which will focus on ensuring that communities of color and other vulnerable communities are part of and leaders in Seattle’s environmental progress.*

*Before joining the Mayor’s Office in May of 2014, I had been practicing law for 10 years and was a partner at Schroeter Goldmark & Bender. While at SGB, I built a multi-faceted law practice but worked primarily as a civil rights attorney, representing individuals who were victimized by people in authority positions—police officers abusing their power, employers not giving workers the pay and benefits owed to them, nursing home workers abusing the elderly and sexual aggressors preying on children and others who were unable to defend themselves.*

*Notably, I was the lead attorney for the Monetti v. City of Seattle case in which a SPD detective was filmed threatening my client with a racial slur before kicking him in the head. The video was later uploaded to YouTube and the incident made international headlines. My work on that case yielded two results: (1) SPD implemented a new policy adopting a “zero-tolerance” rule for use of racially charged language; meaning that if it was shown that an officer used racially charged language, that officer would be terminated, and; (2) the Department of Justice utilized the evidence I discovered in the Monetti case to include in its Consent Decree a requirement that the City look at eradicating racial biased policing through training, de-escalation and meaningful community engagement.*

*Outside of my law practice, I was appointed by former Mayor Greg Nickels to serve on the City’s Police Accountability Review Board in 2007. In 2012, I was appointed by the Seattle City Council to be a commissioner on the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission. That appointment was renewed in 2013 and in 2014 (I resigned as Commissioner when Mayor Murray hired me as his legal counsel).*

*I have volunteered a countless amount of hours to national, regional and local boards and organizations, which are fully listed below. I would like to take a moment to highlight some of the work I’ve done on or for a few of these boards.*

*First, as a co-chair of Casa Latina’s Capital Campaign, I worked with my co-chair, Thomas Goldstein, to raise $4 million worth of capital to allow Casa Latina to move its day-worker center from Belltown to it’s current location in the International District.*

*Second, while I was President of the OneAmerica Board, I worked closely with our Executive Director Rich Stolz, when we made a deliberate choice to be engaged in the climate change discussion. This choice was not an intuitive one for our members, allies and even some board members. But, with Rich’s leadership, we knew that it was critically important for OneAmerica to bring the voice of immigrants to the table where these critically important environmental discussions and decisions were being had. Since then OneAmerica has been consistently looked to for leadership on equity issues by Gov. Inslee and other environmental champions.*

*Thirdly, under the guidance of the Board, OneAmerica has worked closely with the Seattle Chamber of Commerce (Maud Daudon, in particular) and other business community leaders to build an alliance between immigration advocates and the business community, law enforcement and faith community, to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform. Again, this seemed like an unlikely alliance but is a perfect example of being open to finding an area of common ground were collaboration is possible.*

*Lastly, though I’ve never served on the board of El Centro de la Raza, I did establish a free legal clinic for low-income and non-English speakers at El Centro de La Raza in partnership with the Latina/o Bar Association of Washington and my former law firm, who continues to fiscally support the legal clinic.*

*Below is a complete list of my civic involvement to date:*

* *OneAmerica Board of Directors, Immediate Past President (2015), President (2014), Vice President (2008-2014)*
* *OneAmerica Votes Board of Directors, President (2010-2013)*
* *Northwest Area Foundation Board of Directors, Director (2014-present)*
* *Latino Victory Project Steering Committee, Founding Member (2014)*
* *Washington State Association for Justice, Board Member (2012-2014)*
* *Justice PAC Board, Member (2012-2014)*
* *National Council de la Raza (NCLR), Director (2012-present)*
* *Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission, Commissioner (2012–2014)*
* *Latina/o Bar Association of Washington Board of Directors, President (2007), Director (2003-2008)*
* *Latino PAC of Washington, Co-Founder/Co-Chair (2005-2015)*
* *City of Seattle’s Police Accountability Review Panel, Drafting Committee Chair (2007)*
* *Seattle University School of Law Alumni Board, Director & Chair of Programs Committee (2006-2010)*
1. Describe how you would assess the impact proposed legislation would have on businesses.

*Collaboration is key as we work to move our city forward. As with any legislation I believe it is important to bring together all parties affected to hear concerns in an attempt to mitigate any adverse effects. As with any situation, I cannot say that we would always agree but I believe that listening and learning to differing perspectives is a critical function of any councilmember. This is the approach I took in the Mayor’s office and it is the leadership style that I will bring to the city council.*

1. If you have any other relevant information that you think would be useful in our evaluation, please add it below.

*As a candidate running citywide I’m committed to learning the myriad of issues local neighborhoods, community groups, stakeholders and local businesses face. I have pledged to visit every neighborhood in the city between now and the election to better understand the real-world challenges people face.*

*I have been aggressively campaigning since my announcement and recently left my position at the Mayor’s office on April 3, 2015, to become a full-time candidate. I am committed to winning and have raised $50,000 in just over 6 weeks.*

**Issue QUESTIONS**

1. **TRANSPORTATION**

Recently, the Mayor proposed the Move Seattle levy, a $900 million property tax levy for transportation. This proposal is the beginning of an important conversation about how the City of Seattle funds its transportation infrastructure over the next number of years. Ensuring an efficient, integrated, multi-modal transportation system is a core government function that makes a huge difference in the lives of our employers, employees, residents and visitors.

Levies should help the city expand its ability to make investments. When the original transportation levy, Bridging the Gap, was introduced in 2006, there was concern that levy money would replace money that was already going to transportation.

Unfortunately, that’s exactly what happened: 5.25 percent of general fund money used to go to transportation, and now it’s 4.25 percent.

**Q: Do you support the Move Seattle levy? Why or why not?**

*Yes, I think it is critically important that we renew the Bridging the Gap Levy (now Move Seattle) this fall. This $900 million dollar levy proposal will be critical to ensuring that we continue to invest in our transit infrastructure in a multi-modal manner, which includes pedestrian zones. If the levy is approved and I’m elected to City Council, I will look at the budget proposed by the Executive very carefully to fully understand how these dollars are being invested throughout the City to ensure that the promises made are fulfilled in an equitable fashion. I do not believe that the passage of this levy should offset a decreased investment by the general fund toward transportation investments. We are at a critical juncture and I am committed to keeping needed funding so we can continue to move forward.*

1. **HOUSING**

Seattle’s economy continues to rebound after the most recent economic recession. As we welcome new workers and residents to our city, healthy wages and robust employment are driving an increase in demand for housing. It is essential that Seattle continue to produce a supply of housing to meet a growing demand for housing at all income levels.

Multiple studies, including one commissioned by the City of Seattle and one commissioned by the Downtown Seattle Association, have found that current actions and policies are not sufficiently addressing the issue.

**Q: What actions and policies can Seattle implement to increase the supply of affordable housing in the City?**

*As was previously mentioned, Seattle is the fastest growing city in the United States. We must do more to preserve and produce affordable housing throughout the city. This will be one of my top priorities as a councilmember.*

*We need to explore and put all options on the table, both traditional and non-traditional, for dealing with what is undoubtedly a growing affordability crisis in our City. Growth is happening and I believe that the solution to our crises affordable housing crises cannot and should not be a one-size-fits all approach.*

*In defining the problem, we know there is a massive need for affordable housing across the in-come spectrum with those who make less and only moderately more suffering the brunt of the impact of rent hikes and unaffordable single-family homes. The solutions we come up with need to be catered and specialized to the segment of the population we seek to help so that we can carefully monitor and ensure that people of low to moderate incomes can afford to live in the city.*

*I would be in favor of several strategies that look at how to make the future supply of housing affordable and how to preserve current affordable housing inventory. I would be supportive of some combination of mandatory incentive zoning, inclusionary zoning (for residential zones) and impact fees[[1]](#footnote-1) (for commercial zones). There has been much discussion about rent control and rent stabilization; both policies that are worthy of discussion. However, it appears that State law would prohibit the City from pursing those strategies without a state law fix. I would be supportive of creating a strong partnership between the City and the State to address these legislative gaps.*

*The Housing Levy that Seattle voters have consistently supported to help build affordable housing is a resource that I will continue to champion and advocate for. I will also look for ways to encourage the development of affordable housing through the multi-family tax exemption and other ways to encourage developers to build affordable units in some of their projects.*

 *At the end of the day, development is important but sensible development that doesn’t cost us overall affordability is critical. All reasonable options should be discussed and considered as we consider the suite of programs that will ensure that people who work here can also live here. Progress must be made quickly on this issue to prevent the majority of our low- and middle-income residents from having to move out of the city. I will work with my colleagues to implement solutions that work for all.*

1. **PUBLIC SAFETY**

Public safety is of the utmost importance to the business community and neighborhoods throughout Seattle. We believe that residents should be able to live and work in safety and public spaces should be clean, safe, and inviting.

**Q: What is the most important public safety issue in the city and how would you address it?**

*￼￼￼￼Reducing property theft, street disorder and other illegal activity in our downtown core, neighborhoods and business districts are of critical importance. Community policing and working in a collaborative private-public partnership will be required to effectively turn the tide in our neighborhoods that are facing the biggest challenges.*

 *As a former senior advisor and legal counsel to Mayor Ed Murray, I helped shape the recent plans around prioritizing investment of City resources into the 9 ½ blocks in downtown in collaboration with private businesses, the MID and others as an effort to address significant public safety issues. That plan includes strategies to cut off access to certain problematic areas and increase foot and bike patrols as short-term strategies to send a strong message to the most prolific repeat offenders that their illegal activities will not be permitted in our downtown core.*

*However, I am committed to leading on other long-term strategies that will continue to have a meaningful impact on reducing disorder, not only in downtown, but in other neighborhood business districts. For example, should these short-term strategies help to significantly mitigate immediate concerns, then phase two should be to look at root causes of this disorder to determine how we can effectively prevent the disorder from occurring in the first place.*

*Property crimes are largely motivated by poverty, drug addiction and untreated mental health issues and we must continue to fund programs that get at the heart of these systemic problems rather than focusing entirely on policing. We should consider creative approaches like the citywide scaling of programs like LEAD to re-route unproductive energy to something more productive.*

*In sum, we must work together – City of Seattle, community members and business – to ensure that all of our business districts are safe for residents, employees and visitors.*

1. **GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**

In 2014, residents and business owners in Seattle had eight special property tax levies to fund: transportation, families and education, parks and green space, libraries, low income housing, voter approved bonds, the Pike Place Market, and universal preschool.

This “a la carte” funding of City services is increasing the tax burden on our households and businesses, while masking opportunities for efficient and effective integrated delivery of City services. Furthermore, piecemeal service funding makes it harder to understand and analyze the City’s policymaking and budgeting processes.

**Q: How would you improve transparency and accountability in Seattle’s budget to help citizens better understand how their money is being spent and whether they are getting the desired outcomes?**

￼￼￼￼￼￼￼￼￼￼*I agree that promoting transparency is critically important as we move forward on tackling a wide range of issues. It is particularly important in the cities budget as we ask residents to make continued investments in our future.*

*I applaud steps that the Mayor and City Council have undertaken to give additional tools to residents so that we can all better understand how tax payers dollars are being utilized. We are in the information age and people have a reasonable expectation to have access. Websites like* [*www.openbudget.seattle.gov*](http://www.openbudget.seattle.gov) *and* [*www.performance.seattle.gov*](http://www.performance.seattle.gov) *are great resources for the community at large and need to be expanded upon.*

*We should continue to broaden performance metrics for each city department and find new ways of promoting efficiencies. This will only build confidence among residents that their tax dollars are being spent in a transparent way and are focused on the City’s core responsibilities.*

1. **EMPLOYMENT**

The underrepresentation of women in business and leadership roles, and the persistent gender wage gap, is an issue that has gained forceful momentum in popular media, in tech companies, in policy initiatives, and more.

The gender wage gap—the difference between the overall earnings of a man versus a woman for equal work—has deep implications for women, employers, policy makers, and our entire economy. Women in the Seattle metropolitan region are paid 73 cents for every dollar paid to men in the area, making it one of the worst wage gaps in the country.

**Q: What is the best way to improve gender pay equity in Seattle? How would your solution work?**

*This is an issue I am extremely passionate about and that I have worked on throughout my professional career as a civil rights attorney who demanded equity for women in the workplace. This is once again not a simple solution and will require a multipronged approach that will begin to break down the institutional and cultural barriers that keep white female workers earning 73 cents on the dollar as compared to white males. The gender pay equity is even worse for women of color both as compared to white females and males.*

*First, the City must lead by example and the City has work to do to address internal gender pay equity issues. We must continue to make sure that all female City employees, including women of color, are being paid fairly for the work that they are performing.*

*Second, to get at gender pay equity, we must also look at pipeline issues. It is clear that white males overwhelmingly hold the higher-paying jobs, both at the City and in the private sector. Eva Longoria, actress, philanthropist and co-founder of one the Latino Victory Fund[[2]](#footnote-2), has said, “As Latina women, we have to be present in the conversations. Latinas are the CEO's of the household. We make the educational, financial, and health care decisions for the family. It is very important to have many Latina leaders*.*" She’s right. We must invest in workforce development programs that focus on preparing young women, especially women of color, to be CEOs, business owners, scientists, entrepreneurs and community leaders in our city. By not doing so, we are leaving innovation and creativity on the table. I believe there is a great degree of opportunity for the City to partner with the public sector to provide young women with meaningful employment opportunities that will set us on a path to empower women for generations to come. I would be thrilled to lead that partnership.*

1. **EDUCATION**

Education and workforce development are key priorities for the business community because our region’s economy depends on people having the knowledge and skills they need to work in its current and future job markets.

**Q: What would you do as a City Councilmember to improve education outcomes for all students?**

*This is a deeply personal issue for me. When I was in high school, my public education was less than mediocre. My history teacher often popped a video into the VCR and then proceeded to sleep in the back of the classroom. And when I asked my high school counselor about the potential of going to college, she told me that people like me don’t go to college and then unenthusiastically pointed me to a wall with mostly old college brochures. When I was president of the Latina/o Bar Association of Washington, I spent time talking to students in Seattle high schools and heard many of the students, particularly students of color and young women, relay the same frustrating experiences I had more than 20 years ago. This is unacceptable.*

*If there is one thing I accomplish as a City councilmember, it will be to take a hard look at what the City can and should be doing to support our kids, from cradle to college, to have full and open access to any opportunity or career path he or she desires. Opportunity and a quality education, including a pre-school education, open doors and can change the trajectory of a person’s life forever. I would not be where I am today but for tenacity, hard work and a little bit of luck.*

*At the City, this starts with providing support along the edges. This means quality wrap around services like early learning, skills training for those who graduate and before and after school programs to ensure kids have something to do and stay out of trouble. These services are critically important for kids to achieve their full potential while at our public schools, where kids of color and the learning disabled are too often left behind. We have to help our kids open doors to high school diplomas, living wage jobs and college.*

*I don’t believe this is a one-size fits all approach either. The needs of students in different parts of the city are very different. As a result we need to work with communities to develop programs that fit the needs of their communities so we can achieve the highest outcomes. The Road Map Project is a wonderful example of the power of shaping education based on a specific communities need. This is particularly true when it comes to communities of color and English Language Learners where there are diverse needs and where we see the largest opportunity gap.*

*Providing these services is also key to continuing sustainable economic growth in our region and to addressing wage inequities in our city. By supporting training and post-secondary opportunities the City can continue to expand our economy and help lift people up instead of seeing them left out.*

*If I can do one thing on City Council it will be to work with kids and families on those wrap around services to ensure that our City is doing all it can to take care of our kids from cradle to college so that we avoid contributing to the shameful opportunity gap.*

1. Impact fees are also sometimes referred to as “linkage fees”. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. As mentioned above, the Latino Victory Fund has endorsed my candidacy. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)