



PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS
2026 Governor's Council
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate: Jordan Korgood

Office Sought: Governor's Council, District 6

Party: Democrat

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A. Questions about Your Candidacy & Platform

1. Why are you running for Governor's Council? What has drawn you to this office in particular?

I'm running for the Governor's Council, to ensure that our judicial system functions as equitably as it can—to ensure that it's working in the interest of all of Massachusetts' residents. A huge impetus for my decision to run for this role in particular has been the judicial attacks we've seen against my community—the trans community, in the last year (spurred by the fascist federal regime trying to legislate and punish trans folks out of public existence). Judges in MA should be comfortable and confident to use their full judicial authority to protect the human rights of not just trans folks under the law, but for anyone whose had a judicial target put on their back by the current administration—black and brown folks, immigrants, women, queer people, and the working class. Additionally, my own experiences with the judicial system made me aware of the deep inequities that dictate the legal process, even here in Massachusetts. I was arrested a little over 2 years ago for engaging in 1st amendment protected speech. Although I was never arraigned or convicted, it still took 6 months for my charges to be dismissed. During that time, I began to ask questions about and look into the functioning of the judicial system here in MA. Who decides who gets punished, and for what? I learned about this elected body (the Governor's Council) that approves every single judicial nominee for the state—and learned that they're largely serving in the interest of the governor right now, rubber stamping almost every single one of her nominees through. It inspired me to run, to advocate for my neighbor's interests, and to ensure that judges are serving in the interest of the people of Massachusetts.

2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?

My master's degree in Environmental Policy (and its associated coursework in environmental and conservation law) has given me the deep understanding of the legal system necessary to holistically analyze nominee's backgrounds and to determine whether they are qualified to serve as a judge, accountable to the law and to the people of the Commonwealth. Furthermore, my background in organizing and activism, as well as my own experience within the judicial system (and having to appear before a judge in court) has given me the personal understanding of the deep inequities and dysfunction currently governing our judicial processes in MA.

3. What factors do/will you consider when determining whether an individual should be confirmed as a judge, a member of the Parole Board, or a member of any of the other boards and positions considered by the Council? How much weight/importance do you give to each of the factors you consider? Do you have any litmus tests?

I will be considering multiple factors in my determination of whether individuals should be approved—namely professional background, values based commitments (see below in Question 3), as well as the demographics of nominees. It is important that our judges and parole board members have diverse backgrounds and represent diverse demographics—that means appointing people with backgrounds in psychology, social work, and in public defense, rather than solely in prosecution or in law enforcement. Additionally, approved nominees should reflect the demographic diversity of Massachusetts’ residents and of folks going through the judicial system. I will prioritize the approval of nominees from underrepresented backgrounds on the bench—women, queer and trans individuals, black and brown individuals. The nominees being approved should also be committed to the values of Massachusetts’ residents as a whole—racial equity, antirecidivism, rehabilitation, prison reform, LGBTQ/ immigrant/ reproductive/labor/digital and media rights, and 1st amendment protections for protestors and activists. Most importantly, nominees should have a vested interest in ensuring equitable treatment for everyone going through the legal system in MA; we’ve seen the implications and impacts of bigoted and biased judiciaries across the country in recent years; it is fundamentally critical that our judges be willing to use their authority to protect the constitutional rights and interests of marginalized and suppressed groups, as well as to protect justice and liberty more broadly for everyone living here.

4. What issues do you intend to prioritize during questioning in confirmation hearings?

I intend to prioritize the approval of judicial nominees committed to racial equity, rehabilitation, antirecidivism, and prison reform, as well as LGBTQ rights, immigrant rights, labor rights, reproductive rights, and 1st amendment protections for protestors and activists. Additionally, judges should be committed to employing a holistic understanding of the circumstances and context that may have brought a party to the courtroom in the first place—in both their rulings and sentencing. Parole Board Nominees should demonstrate the same understanding, and particularly should employ a forward-facing approach in their philosophy—one that seeks to give folks a real opportunity to reenter society following a sentence if

they've demonstrably proven that they have engaged with rehabilitative programs, paid their penance, and have turned their life around.

5. What role can the Governor's Council play in helping to end mass incarceration in Massachusetts?

Steering Massachusetts towards a future that does not employ mass incarceration as a tactic of the state has been one of the primary tenets of my campaign. We can accomplish that by using the Governor's Council as it was intended—to scrutinize the governor's nominees for the judiciary and the parole board, and to only approve judges that are going to serve in the interest of all of Massachusetts' residents, as a whole; that means approving judges with a vested interest in rehabilitation and decarceral practices rather than solely in punitive systems and "law and order". The judicial system, even in Massachusetts, is incredibly biased and two-tiered. Those with lighter skin, with the right access to wealth, lawyers, and the right connections face a very different reality in court than those with darker skin, less money, or without the right access to legal representation. It is imperative that our judges be committed to giving every person an equitable chance in court, regardless of their background, if we ever hope to end mass incarceration in Massachusetts. Likewise, we need Parole Board members focused on rehabilitation, ensuring that people going through the judicial system have a real future to work towards while in prison—one where they can live fully and work freely in society. Finally, our judicial nominees in Massachusetts should be committed to promoting pre-trial diversion when possible, as well as alternative sentencing measures that might better serve people whose crimes don't necessarily warrant them serving time within the prison system.

6. As a (current or future) member of the Governor's Council, will you commit to ensuring that the judges you confirm will uphold free speech protections at both public and private universities? Explain how your understanding of freedom of speech informs your judicial nominations.

As a former student activist who was arrested for engaging in 1st amendment-protected free speech at my own alma mater, I am entirely committed to ensuring that the judges I confirm will uphold free speech protections. In the wake of the second Trump administration, we have seen free speech and protest protections deteriorate across the country. Left-wing organizing and activism, in particular, has been stifled and suppressed by judiciaries at both the state and federal level (including in 'blue' states). It is critically important that judges steadfastly protect the American 'freedom of speech', which strongly proclaims that people in the US are free to say what

they want, where they want, provided that their speech does not “incite imminent unlawful action” or constitutes “a true threat of violence”. Under this establishment, protestors should be free to engage in free speech and expression, including at both public and private universities.

7. To what extent do you intend to participate in the *recruitment of demographically and professionally diverse candidates to apply for positions on the various boards under the Governor’s Council’s purview?*

Improving the diversity (in both demographics and background) of the Council was one of my first and foremost policies I wrote for my platform. How can we expect our judiciary to act equitably, and in the interests of all of Massachusetts’ residents if it is currently composed of primarily older, white male former prosecutors? I am already calling for more black and brown nominees, queer and trans nominees, and women to be put forward by the JNC and the Governor’s office, and will continue to do so once elected. The composition of our judiciary in Massachusetts should reflect the diversity of not just Massachusetts, but also of the people appearing before them. That also extends to the background/professional diversity of the bench. It is unrealistic to expect all defendants in the MA legal system to always have a fair shot in court, if the judge presiding over their case worked as a prosecutor for much of their career. Prosecutorial bias already impacts sentencing for so many folks because of this; to counter it, it is fundamentally important that we approve former public defenders, environmental lawyers, and civil rights attorneys to the bench, and I will specifically work to push the JNC to be recruiting and recommending nominees from these spheres of law. In terms of the Parole Board, we need to be recruiting and appointing candidates who will use the post to both emphasize rehabilitation and public safety. Rather than recruiting or approving more former prosecutors and former law enforcement, I have a vested interest in approving more individuals with backgrounds as social workers, victim advocates, psychologists, as well as formerly incarcerated individuals to the Board.

8. Many people are unaware of the existence of the Governor’s Council. How will you seek to increase transparency and civic engagement if elected?

Engaging and educating folks on the existence and role of the Governor’s Council has been a central part of my campaign. If elected, I will continue to do so by using social media—which is currently reaching approximately half a million people each month. Monthly explainer and update videos can be employed so that voters can both stay knowledgeable of and understand the work that the Council is presiding over in hearings. If elected, I will

continue to do direct outreach with voters and explicitly seek out opportunities to discuss the council's work as well as voter's priorities and interests regarding what they hope to see out of the judicial system in Massachusetts. I will also commit to hosting a quarterly town hall regarding the decisions of the Council in the prior 3 months (as well as reasoning for my specific votes). This will also provide an opportunity to stay accountable and up-to-date with my constituents' wants and needs.

9. (If a challenger or a candidate for an open seat) How would you describe yourself as similar to or different from the current officeholder?

I will preface this by mentioning that because the incumbent lacks any publicly accessible platform, website, or social media, and to my knowledge has not held any town halls within the last 20 years, it's difficult to specifically elucidate his key policy or platform commitments. I should say that my campaign largely revolves around more closely and critically scrutinizing the governor's recommendations, and that the incumbent is the most serial rubberstamper on the Council (voting to approve 98.2 percent of nominees during the Baker administration)—which is a massive difference between our outlooks and ethos. Additionally, I would characterize myself as significantly more progressive, more accessible to my voters and constituents, and younger. I should also add that I did not inherit a role in MA politics from a family member; unlike the incumbent; I come to this solely on my own merit. A vote for me is a vote for real and serious change—change to the makeup of the council, and change to better advocate for the interests and concerns of my neighbors within the Governor's Council.

B. Yes/No Questions

1. **Reproductive Justice - I.** Young people under sixteen seeking an abortion must obtain parental consent or judicial authorization. While most young people involve their parents, many cannot, causing delays to timely medical care and counseling. Scared teens may also turn to dangerous measures: going out of state or risking their lives and health with illegal or self-induced abortion. Would you support repealing this restriction on young people's access to abortion? (Y/N) **YES**
2. **Reproductive Justice -- II.** With the overturning of Roe v. Wade, states are more important than ever as bulwarks of reproductive rights. Would you commit to voting against any judicial nominees with anti-abortion records? (Y/N) **YES**
3. **Police Accountability.** The 2020 police accountability legislation passed by the Massachusetts Legislature contained a number of steps forward, but important measures were left out. Would you support legislation to do the following?
 - a. Eliminating qualified immunity for state and local police and correctional

officers so that individuals whose constitutional rights are violated can have their fair day in court? (Y/N) **YES**

- b. Enacting the recommendations from the special legislative commission on facial recognition, to implement privacy, civil rights, and due process protections to govern police use of the technology? (Y/N) **YES**
4. **Sentencing Reform.** The 2018 criminal justice reform bill was an important first step in reducing mass incarceration. However, in our “liberal” state, incarceration rates remain much higher than they are in other countries, and sentencing laws can be even more punitive than those in states viewed as conservative. Do you support the following reforms?
 - a. Eliminating mandatory minimums for all drug offenses? (Y/N) **YES**
 - b. Raising the age of criminal majority from 18 to 21, in line with research that shows that young offenders served by a juvenile system are much less likely to reoffend and more likely to successfully transition to adulthood? (Y/N) **YES**
 - c. Decriminalizing consensual sexual activity between adolescents, by creating an exception to the statutory rape law for youth [close in age](#)? (Y/N) **YES**
 - d. Eliminating the sentence of life without parole, which is costly and has been shown to be racist in its application? (Y/N) **YES**
5. **Clean Slate.** The Massachusetts court system maintains a database of name-based court arraignment records, referred to as Massachusetts Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI). Many people are trapped in poverty and shut out of jobs and housing because of the difficult process to expunge their records, even for cases that did not end in a conviction or occurred when they were teenagers. Would you support...
 - a. Requiring the Commissioner of Probation to automatically seal criminal and juvenile records after the applicable waiting periods without requiring individuals to file a petition to do so? (Y/N) **YES**
 - b. Requiring the immediate sealing of a criminal offense if the charge did not end in a conviction? (Y/N) **YES**
6. **Solitary Confinement.** Would you support legislation to create universal access to productive out of cell time with programming, education and vocational training for all incarcerated people? (Y/N) **YES**
7. **Prison Moratorium.** Would you support a moratorium on the construction of new prisons and jails in the Commonwealth? (Y/N) **YES**
8. **Prison Accountability.** Governor's Councilors have the statutory right to make unannounced visits to correctional facilities run by the state. Would you commit to exercising this right in order to improve accountability for the Department of Corrections? (Y/N) If an incumbent, are you already doing this? **YES**
9. **Labor.** Will you commit to consulting with labor unions before considering a nominee for the board of industrial accidents? (Y/N) If an incumbent, are you already doing this? **YES**

C. Voting Record

The Governor's Council is often unanimous in its votes, but there have been several split votes in recent terms. If an incumbent, why did you vote the way you did? If a challenger or not yet elected for the vote, how would you have voted?

- Vincent DeMore for Parole Board (2026) **NO**
- Mary M. Ferriter for Probate & Family Court judge (2026) **NO**
- Gabrielle Wolohojian for Supreme Judicial Court (2024) **NO**
- Gloriann Moroney for District Court (2022) **NO**
- Michael Callahan for District Court (2022) **NO**
- Claudine Coutier for Superior Court (2022) **NO**