



## **How does the Colorado Association of Home Builders select candidates to support?**

Given that our Association spends a lot of time and effort to raise money in support of Builder friendly candidates, this is a logical question. By the time we are deciding which candidates to support, we are well into the “political cycle of life.” The cycle includes raising money into our political entities, interviewing candidates, compiling incumbent records, possibly getting involved in campaigns, without coordinating with the campaigns, through independent expenditures and, ultimately, working with these lawmakers once they get elected. Then the cycle starts all over again two years later. So, let’s answer the endorsement question by explaining the process CAHB uses to decide which candidates will receive CAHB support at the federal and state level.

### **Federal Candidates**

Let’s use U.S. Congressman Mike Coffman as an example, since he is running for re-election this year. Coffman is opposed by Democratic candidate Jason Crow. Coffman is the incumbent finishing his fifth term and Crow, an attorney, has never been in Congress. Coffman has an established voting record on Builder issues and Crow has no record at all in Congress.

With incumbents running for re-election at the federal level, NAHB will review their voting record on important Builder issues and several other factors important to our industry, such as key committee votes, access by NAHB staff, etc. If the legislative record is good and NAHB believes the incumbent deserves our support, they work with CAHB and our local associations to review the record and make a joint recommendation for support to NAHB’s BUILD-PAC Trustees.

If NAHB and CAHB decide to support a challenger over the incumbent, it’s because the incumbent’s record on NAHB and CAHB issues is not very good.

In either case, a decision to support or oppose a candidate is made with great attention paid to two important factors: for an incumbent, what is the candidate’s record; and for a new challenger, how would they likely vote on homebuilding and property issues? The process to reach a decision is very thorough.

### **State Candidates**

For the statewide offices of Governor, Treasurer, Secretary of State and Attorney General, the CAHB Executive Committee must take a formal vote to support a candidate. Prior to the official vote of the Executive Committee, the vetting process to reach a decision is rigorous.

Decisions on statewide candidates start with the Political Funding Committee (PFC), a formal committee of CAHB that includes members from across the state. This committee reviews the record of incumbents, compares that record with information on potential challengers, and provides a critical evaluation of all the facts surrounding a candidate and the race. Every facet of the candidate(s) is reviewed, discussed, and ultimately voted on by this committee first.

The next step involves the CAHB Executive Committee. By the time a final decision is made on any statewide race, at least two major committees of your organization have been fully educated on the merits of the candidate(s) and the possible consequences of their election. The Executive Committee must vote to approve the recommendation of the PFC.

In individual legislative seats, the PFC has final authority. In legislative seats with no incumbent running (open seats), CAHB lobbyists and staff participate on candidate interview teams along with our business community allies and conducts a formal face-to-face candidate interview with most all candidates running in a specific district. Staff and lobbyists then make a recommendation to support candidates to the PFC. Often, the PFC will accept the recommendation.

With incumbents, it starts with their record but also considers other factors as well. If the incumbent has a record of support with CAHB, they receive Builder support using much the same criteria as NAHB's BUILD-PAC Trustees consider. If the incumbent's record is poor, we may set up discussions or interviews with the incumbent and any challengers to determine possible support.

The bottom line: at each level, the candidates, their records, their responses to specific questions, and their philosophy and approach to business and Builder issues are key. Candidates who deserve our support often receive it; those who don't must look elsewhere for support.

### **Conclusion**

While you may or may not always agree with the recommendations of your Association, the vetting process for candidate selection is both thorough and logical. Candidates, both Democrat and Republican, who support Builders are recommended for support. Vote for the candidate of your choice, but factor in the work of your Association when you decide. It's not an arbitrary process. Your local, state and national associations care about your ability to succeed in business and that's why they put in the time and effort to offer suggestions on which candidates are the most Builder friendly.