



Thursday, September 5, 2019

2019 BALC Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

Dear Candidate:

The Boulder Area Labor Council represents over 20,000 union members and their families in 114 affiliates ranging from building and construction, communications workers, janitors, health care workers, airline attendants, state employees, postal workers, firefighters, and teachers, to name a few.

The Boulder Area Labor Council is dedicated to organizing working people in the our Area and the State of Colorado; to securing, protecting, and promoting dignity and equality, rights and benefits; and to raising the standard of living and quality of life for all working people and their families. We represent union members and their families in Boulder, Broomfield, Gilpin, Clear Creek, Summit and Lake Counties.

Running for office is one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences you can have in your lifetime.

There is always room for hard-working candidates who fight for equality, raising wages and improving the lives of working people. Thank you for your service to Colorado and your City.

As part of our multi-step endorsement process for the Boulder Area Labor Council, you must complete the following questionnaire. These questionnaires will be posted on our website and available to the public. This is not a "closed book exam," if you have questions or need explanation of terms feel free to contact Geof Cahoon, President of the BALC at (303) 601-1679.

There will also be a Labor Education Event that will include an Apprentice Program tour September 18 at Pipefitters 208, 5:30 - 8:00 PM. Attendance will be a positive factor in our endorsement considerations. Candidate interviews will be scheduled for Saturday, September 7 and Saturday September 14. Final endorsements will be announced October 5. Once endorsed, you are free to use the BALC logo in print and web materials.

Once you have started the questionnaire, do not hit the 'back' button or navigate away from this page until you have submitted the form.

Candidate Name	Benita Duran
Email	duran4citycouncil@gmail.com
Phone Number	(303-) 350-6963
Mailing Address	541 Iris Ave Boulder, CO, 80304

Current Cash on-hand	\$6500 - will start receiving matching funding effect 9/06/19
Name of Campaign Contact	Benita Duran
Campaign Contact Phone Number	(303) 350-6963
Are you now, or have you ever been, a union member? If yes, when, where and what union were you affiliated with?	No, I have not been a union member, but I grew up in a union household. My dad was a union carpenter and then directed the Urban League's Southern Colorado Labor Education Advancement Program (LEAP) in the 1970s. My Dad passed in 1992 at age 61.
What would be your priorities as an elected official? What policies or coalitions do you see yourself leading?	Housing, economic health, transportation , environment/climate crisis and social equity. I pride myself in being a coalition builder around issues that impact human needs and economic justice issues. I know well how systems and governance work.
Of the policies and coalitions that you have prioritized, where do you see Labor being a key stakeholder and how do you plan to engage us on these issues?	I would always support worker friendly legislation, not only for BMEA, the Police Association, and the Firefighter's Association, the three bargaining units within the city government, but for low-wage retail, food, hotel workers. I would also support a Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights. Young people are stakeholders who have a right to education and training. BALC has a tremendously important role in all these issues. It needs to be at the table to help draft legislation, on assisting to improve wages and working conditions for low-wage earners, whether in a union or not, and to help frame the training of young people for jobs now, but more important for jobs of the future particularly in the renewable energy arena.

City Workers

In your first term, would you work with BALC to sponsor a policy granting collective bargaining rights to city employees?

Yes

Privatization of public services can reduce city expenditures, but often result in poorer quality services and lower wages for service employees. Under what circumstances would you advocate against the privatization of public services? If so, what tangible steps would you take to prevent this from happening?

I do not favor privatization of public services, particularly in view of profiteering and cruelty found in the privatization of the nation's prisons. However, in the event the strategy is considered for Council deliberations, outsourcing public services needs to be guaranteed accountability, transparency, and holding to the highest standards for quality of work and quality of service. Privatization is not the panacea for balancing the city budget. Specifically, I would weigh the risks and benefits of outsourcing carefully, make certain that data and security is not compromised, must be assured that interested private concerns can guarantee better cost benefits, that they have a demonstrable track record of compliance with city specific requirements, and are culturally aligned with Boulder government. I believe that maintaining a competent city management, in concert with capable BMEA leadership, city

personnel can meet the high-quality standards to meet the city's workforce and budgetary needs.

For Boulder Candidates only: Would you support the Municipal Utility employing a union workforce?

Yes, I would support this. I think this could further the sustainability/green elements of this important program.

Workers Rights

We believe that all people deserve the following basic civil rights. Please check all that you support:

The right to freely organize a union

Yes

The right to collectively bargain

Yes

The right to wages and benefits that improve the living standards of families

Yes

The right to full equality on the job

Yes

The right to a safe workplace and decent working conditions

Yes

The right to speak and be heard, without punishment

Yes

The right to a pension and a healthy retirement

Yes

The right to strike when necessary

Yes with Reservations or Conditions

Would you support the Use of Best Value metrics, as opposed to lowest responsible bidder for vendors supplying the City with goods or services?

Yes. Conditions under which I would not support BVM over LRB are if state law or municipal ordinance/statute require contract awards to lowest responsible bidder. If such were the case, I would take steps to review and change the statute. One way to assure best value and low bid, which results is cost saving, is to have enough bidders. I almost never support sole source contracting. But cost saving is not the only way to better buying value. Best value contracting takes other factors into account like vendor capacity, social and environmental impact, and whether local or disadvantaged businesses. To me the value of a bid is the combination of lower cost and best value factors which lead to good outcomes.

Would you support creation of a Local Minimum Wage by CityCouncil?

Yes, due to Boulder's living costs, the prevailing wage within the city cannot be consistent with state law. Municipal governments now have the right and responsibility for ensuring workers' living wages, and can set minimum wages higher than the state government.

Would you support licensing requirements for marijuana and hemp retail and grows that encourages high labor standards and favorable treatment of union shops?

Yes. Three bargaining units should be engaged with the marijuana space, and some are, such as the UFCW, SEIU, and Teamsters. Issues such as overtime pay, safety and security, are issues that must be bargained for.

Would you support a state-wide employee paid family leave policy?

Yes!

Your city has an affordable housing crisis. What steps would take to address this problem?

Agreed, but we are not alone. I would support the unit goals for the City's current AH program and also focus on leveraging the city's collaborations on a county level. Additionally, I'd integrate two priority areas of focus here -- public sector workforce housing and senior housing.

Why do you believe it is in the best interests of the BALC and its members to endorse your candidacy?

I value the BALC endorsement. I believe my election will bring Boulderites together from many parts of our community throughout the city. Although friendly to labor, labor has never had a solid foothold in city politics. I believe that collective bargaining is how working people gain a voice at work, and the power to shape their working lives. BALC then is their voice with the City Council, and management. Of course, a part of our relationship is governed by State Law. I do strongly believe that unions strengthen Democracy by giving workers a voice in policy debates. Every other sector is organized to advocate their economic interests: Chambers of Commerce, Realtors Associations, Retail Associations, etc. Workers should have the same opportunities.

Furthermore, organized labor has an opportunity to play an important role in upcoming elections. The municipal election can be viewed as an opportunity to gain strength for the 2020 elections. BALC, and its constituent unions, can mobilize members, increase voter turnout, endorse candidates, provide campaign staffing and volunteers. The unions are, generally, better informed about the values, character and preferences of candidates and issues than is the general public.

I have finished the Questionnaire, and I am ready to submit my final copy:

YES

You will receive an automated email response once your submission has been received. For your records, the response will contain a copy of the completed questionnaire. In case of a process error, we recommend saving your responses in a word document before submitting.

If you do not receive an automated response, the questionnaire was not received.