



# THE PEOPLE'S DA PLATFORM

Philly needs a District Attorney who will resist Trump's lock em' up tactics, not endorse them or sit by while they ravage our communities. We need a **DA on the side of the people.**

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## PHILLY NEEDS A DA WHO IS HERE FOR THE PEOPLE

—Survivors of crime and those caught up in the system. And Philly needs a DA who's here for justice—not to seek the harshest punishment or get the most convictions. Because convictions don't equal safety.

### **The DA is the most powerful person in the criminal justice system.**

Aside from having control over the decisions that can make or break someone's life, they have executive power over the entire prosecutor's office, legislative & lobbying power, coordinated relationships with the police, and relationships with judges. And especially in the Trump era, when we're seeing a resurgence of racially coded "Law & Order" tactics and violent persecution of immigrant families, the DA election is one of the most important to show up for.

After a long history of DAs notoriously targeting rather than showing up for Black and Brown people in Philly, this is the time for a real people's DA to stand up. The 2017 race is wide open--and that means candidates have to earn our votes. We need more than talk about progressive policies, we need real concrete commitments to stop the overcriminalization of Black and Brown people.

As a coalition, we have united around the following priority policies - that any District Attorney calling themselves progressive would need to commit to acting on in their first 100 days as DA. Below this list are other major priorities of many of our constituent organizations.

## STOP TARGETING BLACK & BROWN COMMUNITIES

### Decline to prosecute charges that criminalize us but don't keep us safe

District Attorneys have the power to stem the tide of over-incarceration and mass deportations by simply not putting as many people in jail in the first place. Too many prosecutors, due to political and monetary incentive, focus their energy on racking up convictions instead of justice. And that often means prosecuting low-level offenses that are easy to convict, but pose no harm or threat to the community.

This practice works in tandem with racialized policing practices like "Stop and Frisk," that disproportionately target black and brown folks, and also places a larger population of city residents at risk of deportation (as every arrest in Philadelphia is immediately communicated to ICE through NCIC). These practices devastate communities that are targeted by heavy policing, leaving residents with stigmatizing criminal records—especially for immigrants who often have their first interaction with the legal system through low level charges.

### End Cash Bail

No one should have to pay their way to freedom. But with Philly having some of the highest set bail amounts, too many people—because they just can't afford to get out—are stuck in jail without even being convicted of a crime. These people are literally being punished for being poor. We need a DA who will publicly call for an end to cash bail and take steps to lessen the impact on our communities until that

happens. That means not asking for bail, using alternatives to bail, and directing prosecutors to assess ability to pay before making bail recommendations. This also includes not expanding the criminal system by relying on false solutions like ankle monitors, that only serve to create prisons for people in their own homes.



## TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

District Attorneys have an immense amount of power—but no mechanisms for oversight or accountability. This often results in DAs wielding their power to aggressively target Black and Brown communities unchecked.

We need a DA who will commit to releasing data and be transparent about the impact of their work in the communities they serve. And we need a DA who will use their power and discretion to fight for—and agree to be held accountable by—a community oversight board. Last but not least, we need a DA who will commit to holding police accountable to the people they serve and prosecute excessive violence and targeting of Black and Brown communities.

## TREAT KIDS LIKE KIDS

Children don't belong in adult jails and prisons. Too often the DA's office puts youth into adult jails before they even reach trial. The solution is simple: the DA needs to commit to making sure youth are in juvenile facilities where they can get the support and services they need. On top of that, Philly has the highest number of young people sentenced to life without parole due to mandatory sentencing laws—which were ruled unconstitutional. The fact that there are still so many people sentenced to life as youth who haven't had individual re-sentencing is an injustice. We need a DA who will commit to finishing this work.



## CONSIDER THE IMMIGRATION CONSEQUENCES OF ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS

Any contact with the criminal system can result in deportation. Undocumented community members can be brought to the attention of deportation authorities, while legal residents may face deportation after a conviction that jeopardizes their status.

The District Attorney has the authority to instruct trial attorneys not to collude with deportation authorities by reporting individuals to the federal government, to consider deportation as a collateral consequence when negotiating plea agreements and can take a stand against permitting deportation agents in Philadelphia court rooms.

Also, language access is the cornerstone for making communication between the criminal system and immigrant communities accessible. We must ensure that families have services through the District Attorney's office in their own language through all stages of their interaction in the system.

