

GLI 2019 Statewide Candidate Survey

Michael Adams for Secretary of State

1. As Secretary of State, what would be your office's top legislative priorities in Frankfort?

As the only candidate for chief election official who has any election experience (a prestigious, national election law practice: see more info at www.cpblawgroup.com/leadership/michael-g-adams), I'm proud to offer a comprehensive platform, with more information at www.michaelgadams.com.

- 1) Enact a Photo ID law for Kentucky elections. Current state law requires a voter to provide at most a non-Photo ID such as a credit card, bank statement or utility bill. Several of our neighboring states, and states around the country, have spotted and closed this loophole. In a KET debate on April 7, my opponent stated that she opposes tightening our voter ID law.
- 2) Work with the Republican-controlled General Assembly to obtain funding for free IDs, to ensure any legitimate voter can vote, and additional funding for county boards of elections, as counties currently are not receiving the funds, they are guaranteed by statute to defray their costs in holding elections.
- 3) Extend the polling hours to 8:00 p.m. prevailing time.
- 4) Reduce wait times for early voting by amending statute to clarify that a county clerk may place early-voting machines in any of the clerk's office locations.

My top priority overall is to restore public confidence in the office of Secretary of State, and our elections, by cleaning up the corruption and mismanagement in that office. My opponent is a self-described "good friend" of, and max-out donor to, the incumbent Secretary of State, refuses to speak truth to power on her various scandals, and is even raising money from her supporters. Unlike the incumbent or my opponent, I'll work to ensure Kentucky adequately maintains its voter file, as required by federal and state law (and a federal court order), removing people who have moved away or died.

2. What steps would you take to ensure safe and secure elections in Kentucky?

- 1) Require all county clerks to use password protected Wi-Fi. A State Board of Elections study found that this practice is not universal and exposes our voter database to hackers.
- 2) Work closely with federal officials offering intelligence on foreign threats. As Counsel to the Deputy Attorney General at the U.S. Department of Justice in the G.W. Bush administration, I previously held a high-level security clearance, and would be able to obtain this again and receive highly classified information.
- 3) Fight my opponent's plan to replace proactive voter registration with "automatic" voter registration that dumps names in other government databases into our voter

file without prior consent of these individuals, and fight her “vote-at-home” plan to mail ballots to voters regardless of their ability to vote on election day. Most election fraud cases in Kentucky arise from ballots cast by mail outside the supervision of authorities, with no ID check.

3. How can the Secretary of State’s office improve its services for businesses?

- 1) As an attorney for business clients, I regularly make online filings with this office, and recognize we need to revamp the “One-Stop Shop” entirely.
- 2) Use my office as a platform to discuss how Kentucky can improve its business environment, with particular attention to encouraging entrepreneurship and startups. As a small businessperson myself, I understand the disincentives in our laws toward creating and growing a business, and jobs.

4. What role do you believe the Secretary of State’s office should play in encouraging voter engagement and electoral participation?

The Secretary of State is the chief election officer and should be the chief civic advocate. I’ll work closely with the Kentucky Council for the Social Studies to improve civics curricula for secondary school students, encourage more mock elections and work to include more students as poll workers. I also want to work with employers to encourage greater freedom of employees to take time off and serve as poll workers (dearth of poll workers is a critical need that my opponent’s plan for unlimited “early voting” would only exacerbate).

The number one reason people don’t vote is not suppression, it’s lack of information about the candidates and issues. Low-information voting is a bigger problem than (and contributes to) low voter turnout. I’ll use my office’s resources to provide free, limited webspace for any candidate for state or local office to provide basics on her candidacy and platform.

My opponent’s promise to be an active advocate for voter participation is clearly insincere, as she has barely campaigned, dodges media questions, and has refused appearance after appearance before neutral civic organizations like Louisville Forum and Together Frankfort, in a cynical effort to run on her fame as Miss America rather than transparently discuss her qualifications and positions on issues.