

## Montana PACE Fact Sheet for Members and Students

### **How is NASW involved in politics?**

- NASW (the association) influences current officeholders by lobbying for and against specific legislation, and members lobby state and federal legislators by mail, fax, e-mail, and phone to advocate for legislation that affects social workers and advances sound public policy that meets human needs and improves the quality of life in Montana.
- The political action arm of our NASW Montana PACE (PACE-Political Action for Candidate Election) influences who is elected to office through financial and non-financial endorsements, and can help by mobilizing NASW Montana members to become involved in electoral races and campaigns.

### **Why is political action important?**

- To gain better services for the clients and communities we serve, and to improve the well-being of the social work profession, it is necessary to elect legislators who share NASW's policy concerns.
- To make a greater impact working together for common goals.
- To include social work voices in policy-making. Social workers are trained communicators with concrete ideas about how to empower communities and should run for office and offer their professional expertise to campaigns.
- The NASW Code of Ethics states that "Social workers should engage in social and political action.... Social workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice" (p. 27).

### **Which members of Congress are social workers?**

Please open the following link:

<http://www.socialworkers.org/pace/swCongress/default.asp> (labeled Social Workers in Congress Brochure) Presently 9 social workers are members of congress.

### **What is PACE?**

PACE is the political action committee of NASW, dedicated to advancing social workers' public policy goals in campaigns and elections. PACE endorses and contributes to candidates who support NASW policy issues, and mobilizes social workers to vote for PACE-endorsed candidates.

PACE is a multiparty, federally registered political action committee established to support candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate, and the U.S. Presidency. The national unit of PACE endorses candidates for federal offices and implements program development and training for political action throughout the

association. Chapter PACE units endorse state and local candidates and collaborate with the national unit on federal elections.

### **What is Montana PACE's Purpose?**

To help elect Montana candidates to public office who support legislation and policies consistent with the goals of the social work profession and ethics and advance sound public policy that meet human needs and improves the quality of life in Montana.

### **How can I become in Montana PACE?**

The Montana PACE bylaws state: "Montana NASW-PACE will be organized through a Committee ... which will be composed of no less than *five* NASW members, at least *three* of whom shall represent different geographic areas of the chapter consistent with the units defined by the chapter of NASW and two members who shall be chapter board representatives.

During this coming year, 2 Montana PACE members will be "terming off" the Committee, and we will require representation from our North Central (Great Falls), and South Western (Missoula) regions. NASW Montana members are invited to apply to serve on our PACE Committee, and are encouraged to apply.

### **Where do PACE funds come from?**

PACE funds come from voluntary member contributions, and each year, when NASW members renew their memberships, you are provided the opportunity to contribute to PACE. Half of members' contributions go to national PACE for federal candidates, and the other half goes to the chapter PACE for state and local candidates. Members also can make contributions at any time of the year directly through the national NASW PACE link: <http://www.socialworkers.org/pace/onlinegiving.asp>. (Labeled: [Contribute the Political Action for Candidate Action \(members only\)](#) on the NASW PACE site.

### **How are your Montana PACE funds being expended?**

Prior to the 2010 June primary, NASW Montana PACE's account balance was: \$1,694.50. Montana PACE endorsed 4 primary candidates, and financially supported 3 Montana legislative candidates, expending \$480. Based on the \$160 maximum donation that can be made in Montana, our PACE can financial endorse 7 additional candidates in the November 2010 general election.

### **Who can give to PACE?**

PACE can receive contributions from only current NASW members; therefore, new members in the process of joining NASW cannot contribute because technically they are not yet members.

### **Why should I give to PACE?**

Every dollar that PACE can invest in key campaigns, and in our network of get-out-the-vote organizers, will pay meaningful dividends by strengthening NASW's presence and influence on Capitol Hill, and measurably adds to NASW Montana's presence during our

Montana Legislature's bi-annual sessions. PACE is heavily involved in making sure that social workers have an effect on congressional and Montana legislative races and that each election represents a positive outcome for NASW's & NASW Montana's policy agenda. The goal is to make it easier for us to do our work, practice our profession, and make a positive difference in society.

### **How are endorsements made?**

The Montana PACE Board of Trustees makes endorsements after identifying supportive candidates in their regions, and after staff research and recommendations.

National NASW Staff consults with the respective chapters and compiles information about the candidate's viability and support for key issues of concern to the social work community. Candidates who are social workers, women, or people of color are given special consideration.

### **What can social workers do to get-out-the-vote?**

- Work on campaigns
- Call other social workers to encourage them to vote
- Post yard signs
- Work to get-out-the-vote on election day
- Contribute to the national and chapter PACE financially.

### **Who can I contact if I have questions?**

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