

# Unite 25 – 2018 Judicial Candidate Questionnaire



Unite 25 is an independent community organization building grassroots political power in and around Chicago's 25th Ward. We are dedicated to supporting local leaders who are committed to ensuring that government puts people before profit. To this end, we are committed to fully supporting those candidates who we believe will best support our communities. In order to be favorably considered for the Unite 25 endorsement, follow the below instructions carefully.

## Instructions:

- From within your Word processor, please answer all questions in Part I (Instructions and Candidate Details) and Part II (Issue Questions). In the Essay section, please answer the questions at the level you deem sufficient.
  - Y/N questions may also include a short answer if you deem it necessary. Please use as much space as necessary when answering each question. Please also feel free to include supporting documents as necessary.
- **Please email your completed Unite 25 questionnaire to [info@unite25.org](mailto:info@unite25.org) no later than 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>. Candidates who fail to meet this deadline will not be able to be considered for endorsement.**
- All responding candidates will be invited to appear before an interviewing committee on Saturday, January 20. Unite 25 will then endorse candidates following a majority vote of its members. For each office, Unite 25 will endorse only one candidate or make no endorsement.
- Completed Unite 25 questionnaires will be posted on our website after the submission deadline has passed. For privacy purposes, your home address will be redacted from the questionnaire prior to posting.
- All candidates who submit their questionnaires by the deadline will be notified by email of the endorsement decision.
- **If you have any further questions, please contact us at [info@unite25.org](mailto:info@unite25.org).**

## Candidate Details

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DATE: 1/18/18	VACANCY: 14 <sup>th</sup> Subcircuit	PARTY: Democratic
NAME: <b>Beatriz Frausto-Sandoval</b>		
[REDACTED]		
EMAIL: <b>campaign@beatrizforjudge.com</b>	WEBSITE: <b>beatrizforjudge.com</b>	
CAMPAIGN MANAGER: <b>Dion Miller-Perez</b>		
CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE NAME: <b>Frausto-Sandoval for Judge</b>		

A)	List elective or appointive offices held including dates. <b>None</b>
B)	Other elective offices for which you have been a candidate. <b>None</b>
C)	Describe the general nature of your legal practice during the past ten years and identify any areas of concentration. <b>I have been a practicing immigration attorney since 2005. I have managed my own solo practice since 2012. My practice primarily focuses on immigration law and related issues. I routinely practice before the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the Executive Office for Immigration Review, and the U.S. Department of State. I have significant trial experience before the Chicago Immigration Court. Aside from immigration, I have substantial familiarity with criminal law, and court experience with criminal, traffic, real estate, probate, and some labor-related matters.</b>
D)	List educational, professional and civic activities of the past ten years.  <b>Aside from my legal practice as described above, I have been an active member of several bar associations, most notably the American Immigration Lawyer Association, which I joined in 2005 prior to being sworn in as a lawyer. I have also been very active in my community on a volunteer and consulting basis with various organizations, including several churches, Catholic Charities of Chicago, and various labor unions. I have conducted know-your-rights trainings and volunteered at legal workshops, for instance citizenship and DACA application workshops. In the past year, I have presented trainings to union stewards and key members of a local union with respect to the Trump administration’s executive orders on immigration and how those will affect the mixed status families of union members, as well as how it could affect various union activities and bargaining in the future.</b>
E)	What experience have you had which will be most helpful to you in the office you seek? <b>I earned my J.D. from DePaul University College of Law in 2005. I previously earned a B.A. from Washington University in St. Louis in English and Spanish in 2002. My best experience, however, comes from my career of helping everyday people in my legal practice for the last twelve years.</b>

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F)	<p>Have you ever taught any law school courses or any continuing legal education courses? If so, please describe.</p> <p><b>I have not taught any continuing legal education courses. However, I have experience lecturing on a community-based level. In the last three years, I have conducted approximately 7-10 know-your-rights trainings or lectures to church groups and labor unions regarding the current administration's executive orders on immigration enforcement, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, temporary guardianship and other issues related to immigrant community's safety and security. In previous years, I conducted workshops and trainings on DACA and other immigration programs. I also taught street law during my third year of law school, where I taught high school juniors and seniors at Juarez Community Academy twice a week. My curriculum was bilingual, self-designed, and included the following topics: consumer law, civil rights, criminal procedure, and immigration law.</b></p>
G)	<p>List any prior political activity.</p> <p><b>I have not been involved in any political activity prior to this.</b></p>
H)	<p>Please list all endorsements you have received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Commissioner Jesus "Chuy" Garcia, of the 7th District of Cook County has endorsed me as part of a progressive slate in the greater Southwest Cook County.</b></li><li>• <b>Michael Rodriguez, 22nd ward Democratic Committeeman</b></li><li>• <b>22nd ward Independent Political Organization</b></li></ul>

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## Issue Questions

1.	<p>What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Circuit Court? In what way can the circuit court be improved?</p> <p><b>In my experience as an immigration lawyer, the court system is difficult to navigate for the many indigent people forced to be pro se. Those needing interpreter services also suffer long waits, or go ahead without interpreters to their detriment. Non-citizens facing criminal charges often feel pressured to make plea deals which they don't fully understand, which often create unintended immigration consequences. The Cook County Court in particular has a large budget, and theoretically those resources can be used to make strategic improvements.</b></p>
2.	<p>Are there issues with an elected judiciary? Would the court system benefit from an appointed system? Please explain.</p> <p><b>In Illinois, we have associate judges which are appointed, and elected judges. In either system, there is potential for the politically powerful to maneuver appointments or nominations based less on service to the community and more on political favors owed. It would be beneficial for the appointment process to be more transparent.</b></p>
3.	<p>What are the effects of mandatory sentencing in the criminal justice system in Illinois?</p> <p><b>Mandatory minimums remove sentencing discretion from the judge, which can lead to excessive sentences in situations where a judge can't consider mitigating factors. It also affects the plea-bargaining process, by moving discretion from the judge to the prosecutor, who decides what to charge people with. Defendants are more likely to accept a plea bargain for a lesser offense when threatened with a more serious offense with a longer mandatory minimum sentence. Evidence also suggests that mandatory minimums have led to disproportionately high incarceration rates of minorities.</b></p>
4.	<p>What are your thoughts on the automatic transfer of juveniles for felony charges?</p> <p><b>HB 3718, signed in 2015, and primarily codified at 705 ILCS 405/6-12, eliminated mandatory transfer of juveniles, established juvenile justice councils to address juvenile delinquency. The age for automatic prosecution as an adult in cases of murder and other extremely serious crimes was raised from 15 to 16 years. Courts are also now able to consider mitigating factors in the sentencing of a minor. Studies have shown that incarceration of youths makes them more likely to be incarcerated as adults and makes them less likely to graduate from high school. While its likely too soon to measure the effects of the new law, it looks like a step in the right direction.</b></p>
5.	<p>Do you think the juvenile justice system should focus on rehabilitation or punishment? Why?</p> <p><b>I think the juvenile justice system should focus on rehabilitation. Justice involves trying to make all involved parties of a dispute or problem whole, not simply punishing transgressors. Rehabilitation should focus on finding and addressing the problems which led the juvenile to commit a crime, for example, through counseling for substance abuse or psychological issues. It should also address the impact of the juvenile's actions on the victims and their families, and work on successfully reintegrating juveniles into the community and helping them to succeed academically.</b></p>
6.	<p>How do you account for the disproportionate number of minorities prosecuted and incarcerated? What can the courts do to correct the disparity?</p> <p><b>The courts should better reflect all of the citizens they serve by working to promote diversity in the judiciary. This will not only bring compassionate judges of more diverse backgrounds who might better relate to defendants before them, it will also serve to address the implicit bias in the judicial community as a whole, by changing the demographics of that community. In addition, eliminating mandatory minimums would reduce the number of incarcerated minorities since as a group they are less likely to access legal representation and more likely to plea bargain to avoid stiffer minimums.</b></p>

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7.	<p>What is your position on cash bail and the impact it has on the justice system?</p> <p><b>The cash bail system has negatively impacted low-income people, and disproportionately affects people of color. It also costs taxpayers more money in the long-run to house offenders who cannot pay. The Bail Reform Act signed by our governor last summer is a step in the right direction. It allows low-level non-violent offenders who cannot afford 10% of their bond to be released on recognizance, or comply through home monitoring, curfew, drug counseling or in-person reporting.</b></p>
8.	<p>What do you consider the important aspects of a judge's decision in handling a petition by a minor for a waiver of parental notice with the intent to have an abortion?</p> <p><b>The most important aspects of a judge's handling this type of petition are the protections in place in the system for the minor's safety and well-being. These protections include access to a free lawyer, appointment of a guardian ad litem, both which provide a system of protection focused on the safety of the minor involved.</b></p>
9.	<p>In regard to sentencing for hate crimes, what options available to a judge are most effective under Illinois law? Please explain.</p> <p><b>Victim impact panels combined with extensive counseling and diversity and cultural sensitivity education.</b></p>
10.	<p>What is the role of the judiciary in fostering diversity in the legal profession and on the bench?</p> <p><b>We better serve the people in our court system when we attract and retain more diverse judges. Having a diverse court will give the public greater confidence in the court system and work to promote fairness and impartiality. Some of the ways I think the judiciary can promote diversity on the bench is by appointing a diversity officer who would work to increase strategic recruitment, advertise vacancies, etc. I also think the judicial nomination process needs to be more transparent, and the members of the slating committee need to be more forthright about their selections and whether or not diversity matters to them, as I am sure it matters to their constituents. The judiciary and the legal profession as a whole would be better off if we acknowledge that most of us have implicit biases with which we must deal.</b></p>
11.	<p>One prominent Illinois judicial evaluation survey asks attorneys to evaluate candidates on Integrity, Impartiality, Legal Ability and Temperament. How would you critique yourself in these four areas?</p> <p><b>As an immigration attorney, I have always practiced with integrity. I take my duty as an officer of the court very seriously and know that reputation is important. I have never had a complaint filed against me with the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Committee, another signal that I have conducted my profession with the utmost level of integrity. In my practice I have also had to exercise my judgment to weed out potential clients who are not being honest with me, or who otherwise would be poor clients. These skills, as well as my real-life experience in the communities in my subcircuit will help me to be impartial as a judge. In my practice I have also always kept abreast of changes in immigration law, which have been frequent. I will apply the same legal ability to my work on the bench. Finally, my lack of ARDC complaints and good repore with clients in my legal practice evidences that I have the right temperament to be a judge.</b></p>

