

Draft

Oprah Winfrey

for President of the United States 2020

Press Kit

ABOUT

WHY OPRAH?

Oprah Gail Winfrey is a self-made media tycoon, journalist, humanitarian and philanthropist among many other titles and references about her. Born into poverty in Mississippi, she pulled herself up by the bootstraps and became the richest African-American and North America's first multi-billionaire black person, and has been ranked the greatest black philanthropist in American history. In 2013, Oprah was awarded the nation's highest honor, the *Presidential Medal of Freedom*, by President Obama among numerous other honors. This includes having received an *honorary doctor of laws degree from Harvard University* and honorary doctorate degrees from Duke University.

According to Wikipedia, Oprah has been called "arguably the world's most powerful woman" by both CNN and Time.com. She is, in fact, reportedly the only person in the world to have appeared on Time Magazine's "One of the Most Influential People" on ten separate occasions. Oprah was also deemed "one of the 100 people who most influenced the 20th Century," by American Spectator and in 2007, USA Today ranked her as the "most influential woman and most influential black person of the previous quarter-century." Vanity Fair summed it up with this, "Oprah Winfrey arguably has more influence on the culture than any university president, politician, or religious leader, except perhaps the Pope."

By one estimate, her endorsement of President Obama delivered over a million votes in the close 2008 Democratic primary race. Her influence is perhaps unequalled by any other notable American.

IS THIS COMMITTEE SACTIONED BY OPRAH WINFREY?

No. Draft committees exist to encourage or pressure a certain individual to enter a political race by demonstrating a significant groundswell of support for the candidate. A recent example on the GOP side is the committee that was formed to draft Dr. Ben Carson to run for President in 2016. He reportedly initially laughed off the idea and said he was not considering running for president but this eventually changed after the draft committee succeeded in gathering over 500,000 petition signatures supporting his candidacy. It should be noted that super PACs, whether or not operating as a presidential draft committee, are prohibited from donating money directly to political candidates, and their spending must not be coordinated with that of the candidates they benefit.

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT OPRAH WILL RUN?

We don't but we are hopeful! The purpose of the Draft committee is to build public support for such a candidacy and to urge the potential candidate to run for office. Draft committees can not only "test the waters" to get a feel for the level of genuine public support that exists for such a candidacy, but they also provides an opportunity to build a nationwide infrastructure including volunteers, donors, and voters who will support her at the polls if she does officially file as a candidate.

IS OPRAH QUALIFIED TO RUN FOR THE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES?

One thing we know about Oprah is that she surrounds herself with and accepts expert counsel. We have every confidence that she would rely on the best and most qualified experts available to advise and guide her in every decision and policy. She embodies proven character and leadership and has already earned the respect of dignitaries and heads of state around the globe. We believe that her entry into the race will elevate the dialog and help regain the confidence of our friends and allies the world over who know and trust her.

WHAT IF WE CANNOT CONVINCHE HER TO RUN?

The Committee plans to work closely with other progressive political organizations and to take back The White House in 2020. If we are not able to convince Oprah to run, we are committed to using our resources to further the progressive agenda in 2020.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THIS COMMITTEE IF OPRAH FILES AS A CANDIDATE?

At that point, the Committee will change its name and focus from drafting Oprah to defeating her GOP opponent and taking back The White House. Of course, we would plan do everything possible to continue supporting Oprah's candidacy!

TEAM

CORMAC FLYNN

FOUNDER & NATIONAL DIRECTOR



Cormac Flynn serves as national director of the National Committee to Draft Oprah Winfrey for President of the United States 2020, which he founded.

With a background in advocacy, fundraising and political campaign management, Cormac has most recently worked as an executive coach and consultant on strategy and organization development.

In 2014, Cormac left his role as a vice president at the League of Conservation Voters Education Fund after fifteen years leading a transformative project to improve political outcomes on environmental issues by building a seamless nationwide advocacy network. In that project, Cormac helped increase spending on state environmental advocacy tenfold, build state-by-state common agendas and messaging among environmental groups, unite dozens of independent state organizations under a single national umbrella, and bring climate change to the forefront of national politics.

Before joining the League, Cormac worked with as a campaign manager, organizer, and fundraiser for Democratic Party candidates across the country. Cormac's work led him to periods living in communities like Winchester, TN; Reidsville, NC; Salinas, CA; Erie, PA; Lansing, MI; Bay City, MI; Lakeland, FL and more. Candidates worked for included such well-known names as U.S. Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa, U.S. Representatives Ted Weiss of New York, John Moody of Wisconsin, and Frank Pallone of New Jersey as well as 1988 Democratic Presidential nominee Michael Dukakis. Cormac also managed the 1997 Brooklyn Civil Court campaign of Deborah Silber, first successful countywide LGBT candidate in New York State.

Cormac's campaign experience is notable in its scope. He has worked for candidates at every level of American government, from city council to Presidential runs. He has lived and worked in rural, urban, and suburban settings, in old industrial areas and new built boom towns, in painfully poor and stunningly wealthy corners of the country. At kitchen tables and church gatherings, Cormac learned firsthand the challenges Americans face and the faiths and communities that sustain them. He believes passionately that Oprah Winfrey can help bring the country together and transcend the divisive anger, frustration, and hopelessness that colors our politics today.

Cormac lives on the street where he grew up in New York City and is very active in local community affairs. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Bard College and a professional certificate in Executive Coaching from New York University.

DOUG LEVY
NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR



Doug Levy serves as national communications director of the National Committee to Draft Oprah Winfrey for President of the United States 2020.

With a career at the intersection of technology, science, health, policy and ethics, Doug is an expert on corporate and crisis communications, branding and messaging, content strategy, and building or protecting a reputation. His experience as a lawyer, investigative reporter, and public relations consultant gives him the ability to dig deep and recognize important details that others miss. He is known for rapidly spotting potential crises and working with clients to prevent negative impact.

Doug began his career in Southern California at [KCRW](#) public radio. (Read more in this [Los Angeles Times](#) profile.) In addition to general assignment news, his focus turned to medical news, leading to roles as medical reporter and then science editor at [UPI](#) and health reporter at [USA Today](#) during most of the 1990s.

As a reporter, Doug revealed tobacco industry secret research on cancer and addiction, mismanagement at celebrity-run charities, and conflicts of interest in medicine. This work garnered multiple awards, including a Peabody.

Doug is an expert on public communications about complex or scientific issues, **crisis and issues management**, regulatory matters and public affairs. Active on social media and interactive journalism from its earliest days, Doug has specific experience on social media in emergency communications and issues management. He also has demonstrated how to use digital and multimedia communications to improve communication of science and other complicated topics.

He held key communications roles at three of the nation's top medical centers, guided C-level executives and their organizations through complex crises, and established effective ways to tell their stories, protect and build their brands, and improve their public images.

He has experience preparing Congressional testimony, working with legal teams on corporate liability or other litigation, and has advised public safety agencies on communications strategies and tactics.

An active volunteer, Doug served on the executive board of the New York City Police Department (NYPD) [34th Precinct Community Council](#), where he worked to improve police-community relations. He also is active with [City Harvest](#), a charity that pioneered food rescue in 1982 and helps feed the nearly 1.4 million New Yorkers struggling to put meals on their tables.

Doug is a member of the National Association of Science Writers, International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the American Bar Association. He is licensed to practice law in Maryland but does not actively practice.

HONORARY BOARD OF ADVISORS

Coming Soon!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Doug Levy, Communications Director
Phone: 202-770-4200
Email: press@yesshecan democrat

PRESS RELEASE ANNOUNCING COMMITTEE LAUNCH

Washington, DC – January 15, 2018

It is fitting that we announce the formation of the National Committee to Draft Oprah Winfrey for President of the United States 2020 today, Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

The Committee is seeking to recruit 1,000,000 founding members to support its efforts to draft Ms. Winfrey to officially run for the office of President in 2020.

Ms. Winfrey's entrance into the race at any future time is sure to coalesce millions of voters looking for genuine leadership as befits the stature of the office and our nation's creed.

"I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed, a democracy in a republic, a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes".

– Excerpt from National Creed written in 1917, and accepted by the United States House of Representatives on April 3, 1918

The Committee's website is at www.yesshecan democrat.

More information will be available shortly. Please direct press inquiries to press@yesshecan democrat.

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IMAGES

Committee logos and photos can be download from this public Dropbox account link:

<http://bit.ly/DraftOprahMediaKit>

CONTACT

Official Name: National Committee to Draft Oprah Winfrey for President of the United States 2020

FEC Committee I.D.: C00666610

Address: National Committee to Draft Oprah Winfrey for President of the United States 2020
1300 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20004

Press Contact: Doug Levy, National Communications Director

Email: press@yesshecan democrat

Direct Phone: 202-770-4200 (Media Only)