



# ARIN Election Campaigning Issues

John Curran, President and CEO

## Purpose

- ARIN does not presently constrain candidate campaigning activities, other than nominal constraints on use of ARIN facilities (e.g. AUP on the email lists, definition of "statements of support", the time limit for candidate speeches)
- Historically, it has been the policy to not impose campaign constraints – recognizing that the ARIN electorate can judge what is appropriate or inappropriate candidate behavior
- This presentation provides an overview of the various types of issues with ARIN elections and campaigning that have been raised by members of the community in the recent past

## Purpose (cont.)

- Staff recommends consideration of several changes to the election and campaigning practices:
  1. ***ARIN to provide more specific candidate speech guidelines specifying that a candidates focus on their own candidate strengths and qualifications***
  2. ***ARIN to modify AUPs to explicitly forbid use of ARIN Whois information and ARIN mailing lists for campaigning purposes***
  3. ***ARIN will offer each candidate an opportunity to provide two brief email statements that ARIN will send to all voting contacts (one just after slate announcement and the second just prior to October meeting)***
  4. ***Following the Candidate Speeches, ARIN will provide an interactive “ARIN Candidate Forum” where members of the community can pose questions to the candidates***

## Candidate Speeches

- ARIN Candidates are provided the opportunity to introduce themselves to the community at the Fall ARIN meeting.
- Some candidates have used their time at the podium to speak in favor of other candidates, rather than their own candidacy or qualifications
- This has been perceived by opposing candidates as an unfair and/or unethical campaign activity

### Recommendation:

- ARIN to provide more specific candidate speech guidelines specifying that a candidates focus on their own candidate strengths and qualifications

## Campaign Emails

- ARIN does not presently constrain candidate email campaigning, which has become more common in recent years
- Direct email to potential voters has increased. The validity of using ARIN email lists for this purpose is unclear, as the AUP merely states: "*Statements of a political or philosophical nature are discouraged.*"
- While ARIN does not facilitate emails for voting contacts (except as previously described), ARIN is obligated by VA law to make available a list of organizations entitled to vote, and to include the organization name and postal addresses

## Campaign Emails (cont.)

- Harvesting of ARIN Whois email addresses has occurred in the past and the ARIN Whois AUP does not clearly forbid this practice. This creates ambiguity in the community about whether the practice is permitted
- Recently received ACSP 2019.8 “Election Conduct Standards” seek to make improvements in this area
- It is desirable to clarify whether ARIN Whois data or ARIN mailing lists may/or may not be used for campaigning, so the candidates and community have common expectations

## Campaign Emails (cont.)

### Recommendations:

- ARIN to consider modifying the ARIN Whois AUP to explicitly forbid use of ARIN Whois information for ARIN election campaigning purposes
- ARIN to consider modifying the ARIN Mailing list AUP to explicitly forbid use of ARIN mailing lists for ARIN election campaigning purposes
- These two AUP changes require no change to election procedures and enforcement would occur via the existing Mailing List AUP and Whois AUP processes. Changing these AUPs would clarify expectations regarding appropriate data usage

## Campaign Emails (cont.)

### Recommendations: (cont.)

- ARIN offer each candidate an opportunity to provide two brief email statements that ARIN will send to all voting contacts (one just after slate announcement and the second just prior to October meeting)
- Following the Candidate Speeches, ARIN provide an interactive “ARIN Candidate Forum” where members of the community can pose questions to the candidates



## Individual NomCom Public Statements

- We have had a NomCom member post their views of specific nominees on social media, and while that may not technically violate the confidentiality of NomCom deliberations, it is easily misunderstood by the ARIN community
- NomCom members are not prohibited from speaking in support or criticism of nominees or candidates, so long as they do not violate the NomCom confidentiality obligations

## Individual NomCom Public Statements (cont.)

- While NomCom members in particular could be constrained, it should be recognized that in the general case, ARIN has nominal ability to constrain social media content regarding its elections

Recommendation: None at this time

## Potential “Statements of Support” Abuse

- While ARIN does review and approve “Statements of Support” submitted for candidates, the review is limited to making sure that the statements are supportive in tone.
- ARIN cannot confirm the veracity of the statements submitted, nor whether the submitter is an actual person.
- It is presumed that submitters actually know the candidates that they support and further that they have some awareness of suitability for the position

## Potential “Statements of Support” Abuse (cont.)

- High numbers of statements of support may be indicative of abuse, whereby candidates enlist those with no tie to the community to submit them

Recommendation: None at this time

**Discussion?**

## ACSP Suggestion 2019.8: Election Conduct Standards

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### Suggestion

**Description:** Election Conduct Standards

In sufficient time for implementation before the 2019 Board and AC elections, the Board should promulgate standards for election conduct.

At a minimum, these standards ought to be aligned with our diversity goals and establish guidelines for use of email in campaigning. The current regimen puts those who honor the Community's traditional aversion to spamming at a disadvantage to those who do not.

**Value to Community:** Sets expectations for conduct, avoids appearance of wrongdoing by candidates and other potential distractions from more important issues.