



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Monday, September 26, 2022  
**CONTACT:** Christine Bolaños, [christine@jolttx.org](mailto:christine@jolttx.org), (512) 767-2978

### **JOLT ENDORSES CENTRAL TEXAS CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE**

AUSTIN, Texas - Jolt Action proudly announces its official endorsement of the following candidates for the 2022 November Midterm Elections in the Central Texas region:

[Celia Israel](#) for City of Austin Mayor  
[Natasha Harper Madison](#) for Austin City Council, District 1  
[Paige Ellis](#) for Austin City Council, District 8  
[Zo Qadri](#) for Austin City Council, District 9  
[Arati Singh](#) for Austin ISD Board of Trustees  
[Jose Orta](#) for Williamson County Commissioner, Precinct 4

"Jolt is excited to support the following Central Texas candidates whose leadership share an alignment on voter democracy efforts at an inflection time when Hispanic Texans now represent the largest majority in the state. Jolt remains committed to bringing a voice of representation on issues important to Latinos on education, economy, climate, immigration and health," said Jolt Interim Executive Director Diana Maldonado.

Celia Israel moved to Austin as a young, gay Latina, graduated from the University of Texas at Austin, served in the Ann Richards administration, became a realtor and later, a member of the Texas House of Representatives. If elected, Celia promises to address the housing affordability crisis in Austin by making more housing available to working families, using public land for public good, growing transit-friendly housing, ensuring housing for seniors, providing relief for renters and making government work for Austin families. Like Jolt, she believes that Austin's diversity is its strength.

*"As a proud Latina who spent nine years standing up for voting rights as State Representative and is now running to be the first Latina Mayor of any major American city, I know first-hand that representation matters," Israel said. "That's why I am so honored to have the endorsement of Jolt, an organization that understands the importance of lifting up the voices of young Latinos y Latinas all across Texas. Now, I'm running for Mayor because the people of Austin deserve one of us to fight for our communities and invest in our city. ¡Adelante!"*

Natasha Harper Madison has represented Austin's District 1, the same part of town where she was born and raised, since 2018, including as mayor pro tem in 2020. She founded East Austin Advocates, a nonprofit dedicated to connecting underrepresented residents with resources for success. Natasha is chair of the Public Safety Committee, sits on the Housing and Planning, Mobility, and Public Health committees and the Capital Area Metropolitan Organization's Transportation Policy Board. If re-elected, the Austin firefighter and breast cancer survivor is committed to continuing to champion affordability, progressive mobility, and expanded economic opportunities.

*"I am honored to receive the endorsement from Jolt Action! I will continue to be a fierce advocate for a more affordable Austin for all and would like to thank Jolt for their unwavering support of my re-election campaign," Madison said.*

Paige Ellis has represented District 8 –Southwest Austin– since 2018. Before serving on Council, she spent 8 years specializing on environmental compliance on housing development and regional transportation projects. Paige is the Chair of the Mobility Committee and serves on the Austin Water Oversight Committee, Housing and Planning Committee, and Austin Energy Oversight Committee. She is first Vice Chair on Capital Area Council of Governments' Clean Air Coalition Advisory Committee and appointee to the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Policy Board, Clean Air Force of Central Texas Board of Directors, and the Texas Colorado River Floodplain Coalition. If re-elected, Paige will continue to ensure environmental responsibility for housing and transit projects, maintain Austin roads and ensure city services such as new fire stations and homeless care are brought to the region.

*"This is a big year for Texas voters. Jolt Action has a record of standing up for reproductive healthcare and fighting climate change, and I'm proud to have their endorsement as I champion these issues at the local level," Ellis said.*

Zo Qadri, who has called Texas home since he was 12, has dedicated his career to advancing progressive campaigns and advocacy organizations. He worked on Beto O'Rourke's Senatorial campaign team, as legislative assistant in the Texas House of Representatives, and as a Regional Organizing Director for Senator Elizabeth Warren's campaign. He is running to represent District 9 in the Austin City Council. If elected, he seeks to partner with local stakeholders, partner organizations, and government at all levels to advance the progressive future for Austin as a welcoming place to all. He plans to address the climate crisis, housing affordability, public health and safety, and serve the best interests of students, renters, the LGBTQIA+ community, Black, Brown and AAPI communities, among other underrepresented groups.

*"I'm grateful to have the support of Jolt Action behind our grassroots campaign for an Austin that works for everyone. We're building a grassroots movement that uplifts and listens to the voices of those most affected by policy," Qadri said. "In 2022, Austin has yet to elect a South Asian or Muslim to City Council—our city still has a long way to go to make sure our elected leaders look like our growing city. I am excited to work with Jolt to ensure Austin takes intentional steps to*

*value all voices and votes, and ensure young Latinos in District 9 and across Austin are heard and respected.”*

Arati Singh is seeking re-election as member of the Austin ISD Board of Trustees. As PTA President of a Title I school, she helped stop vouchers by testifying several times at the Texas Legislature on behalf of the Texas PTA which boasts over 500,000 members. Described as an equity champion, Arati started her career as a bilingual fourth grade teacher in the Rio Grande Valley and for 20 years designed and evaluated college access and STEM programs for universities and foundations. If re-elected, she will continue her commitment to school safety, student excellence and innovation, advocacy work, providing support to teachers and staff, delivering on a healthy and transparent budget, and serving the best interests of families and the community.

*“As a school board trustee, I have learned that the best policy decisions happen when we collaborate with the people that are directly impacted. Jolt Action embodies this inclusive policy by engaging Latino voters throughout Texas so they have a say in our democracy. This endorsement means so much to me because we are stronger and better together!,” Singh said.*

Originally from Lubbock, Jose Orta served in the U.S. Air Force before working as Democratic Party elections administrator in Williamson County. He is running for Williamson County Commissioner to represent Precinct 4 because he believes that county government should work for the people, not against the people. He promises to fight for residents’ fair share of funding to improve county roads, failing infrastructure and the public health system. He is committed to bringing integrity, ethics and equity to Williamson County government.

*“I am proud to be endorsed by Jolt. I hope that my candidacy will empower more Latinos to join La Lucha to transform Texas through their voice and their vote,” Orta said.*

For media inquiries or to arrange an interview, contact our Communications Team at [christine@jolttx.org](mailto:christine@jolttx.org)

#### ABOUT [JOLT ACTION](#)

Founded in 2016, Jolt Action is a progressive civic engagement organization focused on building the political power and influence of young Latinos in Texas.

###