

Office Sought: **Pennsylvania's 3rd Congressional District**

Candidate Name: **Morgan Cephias**

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Committee Name: **Morgan for Philly**

Committee Address: **PO Box 22611 Philadelphia, PA 19110**

1. Please provide a brief biography including what elected or appointed government office(s) have you held, what community or policy issues have you worked on and why you are running for this office. (Please no more than 350 words)

**I currently serve as State Representative for Pennsylvania's 192nd Legislative District, which I've proudly held since 2017. Before entering politics, I worked as Deputy Chief of Staff to Councilmember Curtis Jones Jr. I've dedicated my career to improving public education, expanding access to affordable housing, addressing gun violence, supporting economic development, and championing women's health. I've authored and supported legislation to ban "ghost guns," expand student loan relief, and improve health care access for women and families. I'm especially proud of the statewide initiatives I've worked on to improve maternal health outcomes for Black women, increase access to childcare, and create career pipelines for young people in underserved communities.**

**I'm running because I understand the challenges that many Philadelphians face—working for minimum wage, commuting an hour to school each way, and struggling to afford a home. These are struggles that I've lived and fought to address. Philadelphia deserves a representative who has a proven record of delivering results that make people's lives better.**

**Finally, I'll use my role as a Member of Congress to generate the Democratic enthusiasm and turnout needed to help fuel statewide victories that shape our nation's future. What we do here in Philadelphia determines whether we win in Pennsylvania. And winning in Pennsylvania determines whether Democrats win nationally. We need to leverage our power here in Philly to deliver change in our state and our nation. We need someone who will fight to stand up to Donald Trump and work to uplift the people of Philadelphia, just as I've done for the last nine years in Harrisburg.**

2. How much money have you raised so far? What is your plan to win this race, including your fundraising goals and strategies?

**Our campaign has seen significant early momentum and excitement, raising over \$155,000 in the first 28 days. We have an aggressive fundraising strategy that includes 35–40 hours of weekly call time, digital outreach, and engagement with both new and longtime supporters. We’re focused on scheduling fundraisers from this quarter through the primary, including both low-dollar community fundraisers and high-dollar events to expand our donor base. Our goal is to build a broad and reliable coalition of financial support to ensure we can communicate our message, turn out voters, and win in May.**

3. How would you assess the Democratic Party's response to the Project 2025 agenda, and what would you change to more effectively oppose the GOP? What is your plan to promote these reforms?

**I’ve spent my time in Harrisburg fighting extremist Republicans who have consistently worked against the people of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania. We took back the House in Pennsylvania for the first time in a decade to ensure we could advocate for an agenda that reflects the needs and concerns of our constituents. As Chair of the Philadelphia Delegation, I had to go against the Republican-controlled Senate to protect SEPTA funding and defend Philadelphia’s right to accessible, reliable public transit. Those fights weren’t just about transportation, but about dignity, economic mobility, and ensuring our communities have a voice in decisions that affect daily life. Project 2025 is a nationalized version of the extremism we’ve seen in Harrisburg. As Democrats, we need to respond with discipline, message clarity, and a unified strategy to remind people that government should work for them and not against them.**

4. With the deep polarization in Washington, extreme party line voting, and the administration's policies of rescission and impoundment, what would you do in order to accomplish your priorities?

**We’ve faced similar battles in Pennsylvania. I’ve seen firsthand how difficult governing can be when the other side prioritizes obstruction over solutions. The Republican-led Senate repeatedly tried to defund SEPTA, threatening the livelihoods and mobility of Philadelphians. But we didn’t give up. We organized, negotiated, and delivered results for the people who depend on us most. To achieve progress, we stayed focused on people’s needs rather than partisan politics. When polarization threatens Congress’s constitutional role, my approach will be to remain grounded in the needs of everyday**

**people and build coalitions around shared goals. I'll bring my experience from Harrisburg to Washington to deliver real solutions that move our communities forward.**

**Despite gridlock in Harrisburg, I've demonstrated what persistence and partnership can accomplish. I've sent four pieces of legislation to Governor Shapiro's desk on issues including gun violence prevention, women's health, and economic development.**

5. As a US Congressperson representing Philadelphians, what taxes and financial regulation policies would you pursue to benefit your constituents, and the city as a whole?

**One of my biggest priorities, as both a State Representative and Philly's future Congresswoman, is making Philadelphia truly affordable for working people. No one should work full time and still struggle to put food on the table, keep a roof overhead, or send their child to college. Economic policy must work for those who power our communities, not just those at the top. We need to expand tax credits that lift families up. I'll fight to ensure small businesses, the soul of our city, receive low-interest federal loans and direct support through community development financial institutions.**

6. Do you support establishment of public banks and would you co-sponsor a future version H.R.6775 - The Public Banking Act of 2023? What other policies would you pursue to democratize access to the financial system, and are there areas would you like to see greater regulation?

**I absolutely support public banking. It's essential to addressing income inequality and holding predatory banks accountable. Everyone deserves a fair chance to build wealth and stability. I support expanding affordable banking options through postal and community development financial institutions, capping predatory lending rates, and ensuring access to safe, low-cost credit and savings tools. At the federal level, I would promote financial literacy, homeownership support, and small-business lending, particularly for women, minority, and first-time entrepreneurs. We need a financial system that is not just accessible, but empowering, and that creates real opportunities for generational wealth and pathways to the middle class.**

7. What are your key policy positions that would help end poverty, and alleviate health, housing, nutrition. and educational issues for low income families?

**Until recently, Philadelphia was the poorest big city in the country. Today, 27% of children live below the poverty line, and nearly 10% of residents live in deep poverty, defined as an annual income of \$7,290 for a single person. Our city faces a crisis of**

**displacement and disinvestment. Education is essential to opportunity, but it cannot stop at the classroom. We must build professional development pipelines that support residents throughout their careers.**

8. How would you protect women's reproductive rights in PA and across the nation?

**Reproductive freedom has been a cornerstone of my campaigns and my nine years representing PA's 192nd District. After the fall of Roe v. Wade, I served as Co-Chair of the Women's Health Caucus, opposing extremist constitutional amendments aimed at restricting reproductive freedom. We worked with Governor Tom Wolf and the Women's Law Project to enact an executive order protecting out-of-state patients seeking care in Pennsylvania. After Democrats regained the House majority, I continued championing maternal health policies, including extending Medicaid coverage for one year postpartum, securing doula care for incarcerated women, and passing legislation requiring Medicaid to cover doula services. I'm also proud of the Philly Joy Bank pilot program, which provided pregnant Philadelphians \$1,000 per month from the second trimester through the first year postpartum. I remain committed to expanding access to comprehensive reproductive health care.**

9. What specific policies would you promote to address climate change?

**I believe climate policy must create cleaner air, lower costs, and build opportunity. In Congress, I would continue to champion investments in renewable energy such as PA's "Solar for schools Grant Program" which enables schools to apply for grants to install solar energy systems. I would also continue to support incentives for electrical vehicles and public transit. My goal is to fight climate change while ensuring that every community benefits from a more sustainable and equitable economy.**

10. In what ways would you support and protect the rights of resident immigrants and their families, and what policies would you prioritize for systemic immigration reform?

**Every person who calls this country home deserves dignity, safety, and opportunity. I support comprehensive immigration reform with a clear path to citizenship, protections for Dreamers and TPS holders, and policies that keep families together. I will advocate for expanded access to health care, education, and legal protections so immigrant communities can fully participate in civic and economic life.**

11. What would you do at the federal level to promote criminal justice reform?

**My approach to legislation has always been compassionate, community focused, and equity driven. This is what I will bring with me to DC regardless of what topic is at hand. True public safety comes from opportunity and trust which means we need to fight for policies that remove barriers to employment, housing, and education for returning citizens. We need a system that is focused on rehabilitation rather than punishment. This means ending mandatory minimums for non violent offences, expanding the diversion and reentry programs, and investing in mental health and substance use treatment instead of incarceration. I would also push to eliminate cash bail and support federal funding for community based violence prevention and increase oversight of policing to ensure transparency and accountability. My goal is a system that delivers justice while restoring lives and strengthening communities.**

12. What is your position on US support for Israel and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza? How should the US deal with Netanyahu? What will ensure the safety, dignity and opportunity for Palestinians and Israelis in the region? What is your view on a two-state solution?

**Peace and security for Israelis and Palestinians can only come through a negotiated two-state solution that ensures Israel's safety and Jewish character while allowing Palestinians to achieve self-determination. I support diplomacy, accountability, and peacebuilding initiatives, and I will speak out when any government undermines democratic norms. Before lasting peace can be achieved, there must be mutual recognition that both Israel and Palestine have a right to exist. This is the basis for building bridges and stability in the region not just for today but for future generations.**

13. How would you deal with the rise of racism, anti-semitism and anti-Muslim sentiments here in Pennsylvania, nationally, and abroad?

**My office has worked tirelessly to keep our community safe. We secured a security grant for Yeshiva Ketana of Philadelphia and pushed to extend deadlines and increase funding for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program after October 7th, while remaining committed to protecting all communities, Jewish, Muslim, and people of every faith and background. We will continue working with community leaders to prevent hate and respond swiftly to threats. There is no place for antisemitism, Islamophobia, or any form of hate in our Commonwealth.**