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A candidate will be invited to participate in a WTTW News debate or forum produced and broadcast/streamed by WTTW News for the 2026 general election if the candidate can demonstrate that:

A. Candidate is qualified by the Illinois Board of Elections or other appropriate election body for a place on the general election ballot and remains qualified as of the date of the debate or forum; and

B. Candidate meets both of these criteria:

1. The candidate is the nominee of a political party recognized under state law, as determined by the State of Illinois or other appropriate election governing body (if it is a political party-based election);
2. The candidate has been named and has received a minimum of 15% support (not including any margin of error) in a public opinion survey professionally conducted after the primary for the current election by an independent pollster. For the purposes of these criteria, "independent" shall mean the poll has not been commissioned or paid for by a candidate, campaign, political party, political action committee or any person or entity that financially supports the candidate's campaign.

And at least two of these criteria:

3. The candidate has a publicly accessible website or social media account relating to the campaign that contains at least three (3) statements on public policy issues;
4. The candidate has accepted at least \$50,000 in Net Contributions for the current election cycle;
5. The candidate has received more than incidental media coverage, in at least five (5) bona fide print, online, radio, television, or cable TV news stories that identify him/her as a candidate for the current election.

(If there is no polling that qualifies, candidate must meet all of 1, 3, 4, and 5).
WTTW News reserves the right to add candidates it deems newsworthy at its discretion.