

**Berkeley Progressive Alliance  
Candidate Questionnaire  
June 2018 Primary**

**Name:** Andy Katz  
**Address:** 2001 Addison Street, Suite 300  
**E-mail:** andy -at- andykatz.com  
**Campaign Web site:** www.andykatz.com

**1. Introduction**

- a. Why do you think you would be an effective representative of AD 15?

The 15th Assembly District is the most progressive District in California. We have a long history of electing progressive champions to serve our community in the legislature.

It won't be enough for our next Assemblymember just to be a reliable progressive vote. We need our next Assemblymember to be a real progressive champion who will stand up and fight passionately and unapologetically for our community's progressive values.

I have demonstrated throughout my career that I am a true champion for economic, environmental, and social justice.

Working families need a strong advocate in the Assembly. As a workers' rights and environmental attorney with a deep commitment to access to justice, I will be prepared to fight in the Assembly to protect and strengthen workers' rights and consumer protection law as a member of the Assembly.

As a twelve-year Director on the East Bay Municipal Utility District Board, I've been a champion for working families, successfully working to expand eligibility for affordable lifeline rates, and to pass state legislation in order to hold big banks accountable and keep the water on for tenants in foreclosed apartment buildings.

California also has an important role to play in leading the nation with a comprehensive climate protection law. As a former Chair of Sierra Club California, and nonprofit clean air and public health advocate for the nearly a decade, I've worked to pass and implement clean trucks requirements, AB 32 climate protection regulations, and the increase in the renewable portfolio standard to 33% by 2020. I've taken on the oil industry and worked to pass legislation up to the Governor's desk increased penalties on polluters.

We need a health system that will provide universal health care, and provide access to quality care for all. As a member of the Assembly, I will fight for universal healthcare and real improvements to healthcare quality.

California's per-pupil spending remains near the bottom of the nation. As the son of a public school teacher and a professor, and the product of public schools, I have a deep personal understanding of the need to reinvest in our public schools and to support equal access to economic opportunity. And in the Assembly, I will have a fierce commitment to doing just that.

These are the values of our community, and I will fight tirelessly for them—and for all of us—in Sacramento.

b. What are the differences between you and the other candidates?

My broad range of experience and proven track record sets me apart from the other candidates in this race.

I've served for a combined six years on three city of Berkeley Commissions – Health, Housing, and Zoning Adjustments Board, and twelve years representing our community as an elected EBMUD Board Director. I've advocated at the state legislature for clean air, climate protection, and public health for nearly a decade. I led Sierra Club California as its Chair, and have served for over a decade on its legislative committee. I am the only candidate who has litigated for workers and consumers, fighting every day for workers impacted by discrimination, wage theft, unsafe workplaces, and health insurance denials, and can bring this experience to Sacramento.

In these roles, I've demonstrated the leadership to take on tough fights for progressive change. I took on big banks to protect tenants in foreclosed apartment buildings from water shut-offs. I fought to pass Berkeley's Rental Housing Safety Ordinance, led negotiations to pass Berkeley's \$15 minimum wage and paid sick leave ordinance, increase funding for affordable housing, and to provide a safety net for low-income customers so the most vulnerable could afford water.

## **Issues.**

### **2. General**

a. What are the critical key issues the Assembly must address?

1. The Assembly must address the structural budget problems that lead to underfunding public education and the social safety net.

It's unacceptable for California to be in the bottom of the nation in per-pupil spending. It's unacceptable that important health and human services programs for our low-income, seniors and disabled residents remain underfunded. We need to close the loophole in Proposition 13 so commercial property owners pay their fair share in taxes so we can reinvest in our schools and important state programs.

2. We need to ensure quality healthcare for all Californians through a single-payer health care program.

3. California must also strengthen California's climate protection and clean energy laws to continue to lead the nation towards 100% renewable energy.

### 3. Healthcare

a. Do you support legislation (e.g. SB 562) to establish **single payer health care** in California?

Yes, I support single-payer health care. The United States has lower life expectancy than other western and developed countries that have nationalized health plans. The current American health care system involves significant duplication of administrative expense, and even the Affordable Care Act fails to cover all people living in our communities, putting our country at risk of a two-tier health care system where ability to pay determines the quality of care.

If SB 562 does not advance this session, I will author or co-author similar single-payer legislation in the Assembly. I will be particularly attentive to health care quality and the process for a patient enforcing the right to access medically necessary care. If a ballot measure is eventually required to implement or conform financing, I will provide leadership to succeed in this important campaign for universal healthcare.

b. Berkeley is threatened with the loss of its hospital, **Alta Bates Medical Center**.

What could you do as an assembly member to ensure that Berkeley continues to have a nearby hospital with an emergency room?

The United States average of 2.5-3 miles distance from home to hospital is a good indicator for public health, and should not be eroded. Emergency medical services are essential for public safety. A patient suffering from a stroke, heart attack, or asthma attack is facing an immediate threat to health and safety, and it is imperative to keep emergency departments and trauma centers open to the public, including the uninsured and indigent.

I strongly support SB 687 (Skinner, 2017), but this bill only addressed prospective closures and recent asset sales with regard to emergency services. Communities

need full-service hospitals so patients have access to important services without the disincentive of traveling to a regional center. We need more comprehensive health facilities planning, and I would introduce legislation to empower local public health agencies to coordinate health facilities planning and restrict hospital closures.

This is an issue of critical importance to the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, because of the loss of Doctor's Medical Center in San Pablo, and the announced closure of Alta Bates in Berkeley. To fight the closure of Alta Bates, I am working with Mayor Arreguin as his Health Commissioner to help form a task force to protect our community's acute health care needs. I've led efforts to research epidemiology in the literature to prepare a comprehensive Health Impact Assessment to use as a community education tool to support efforts to save our hospital. I will continue to lead efforts on Mayor Arreguin's Alta Bates Task Force advancing this and additional measures.

As an Assembly member, I will co-author and actively support reintroduction of hospital continuity legislation to ensure that Berkeley maintains a nearby hospital and emergency services, and additional measures to hold hospitals accountable for protecting the health and safety of our community.

#### 4. Housing/Rent Control

a. Do you support repeal of **Costa Hawkins** vacancy decontrol legislation?

Yes. Rents in Berkeley are not affordable for many who work and live here. Repeal of this law will allow local governments to implement rent stabilization to be responsive to local needs.

b. Would you support **reform of Costa Hawkins**, such as allowing cities to implement rent control on new buildings after ten years?

Yes, if repeal is not possible, this reform would allow cities to protect tenants from volatile rent increases in new construction.

Regional housing statistics show that Bay Area communities are meeting regional allocations for above moderate income, market-rate housing but falling woefully short in creation of housing affordable to very low-, low- and moderate-income households See <https://abag.ca.gov/planning/housingneeds/>

c. What could the legislature do to ensure that an adequate amount of below market affordable housing is created in California?

I support improving the approach to Regional Housing Needs Allocations (RHNA),

and clarifying that the affordable housing splits within the RHNA are enforceable the same way the overall RHNA is. This will require cities to adopt policies to produce an adequate amount of affordable housing, such as Berkeley's approach combining inclusionary housing, impact fees, and Measure U1.

This approach works best when jurisdictions have a full range of tools to implement affordable housing at the local level. The legislature should place a measure on the ballot to make local revenue easier to raise for many local services, including affordable housing. It shouldn't take a 2/3 vote to enact a measure similar to Berkeley Measure U1, but restricted for affordable housing.

d. Do you support using state bonds or other public funds to fund construction of below market affordable housing in California? [reason for change: everyone is going to support the state affordable housing bond, but do they have other public funding ideas or do they think private developers will take care of it]

I support the housing bond that voters will consider this November. The legislature should expand the revenue collected through increased taxes on high-income earners.

e. What should state elected officials do to help prevent displacement of low income residents?

I would introduce legislation prohibiting unfair evictions statewide, including tenant harassment like in Berkeley's Tenant Protection Ordinance. The legislature should also fund nonprofit legal services so every tenant facing eviction has access to a lawyer and can enforce their rights.

## 5. Climate Change and the Environment

a. Do you support a **statewide ban on fracking**?

YES. It's unthinkable that the methane emissions from fracking are not accounted for in California's greenhouse gas emissions inventory, and that the drilling in the Monterey shale overlaps the Kern water bank, a critical resource for California's water security.

b. Do you support **High Speed Rail** in California?

Yes. California should invest in rail transportation in our regions and connecting our cities so we have alternatives to driving.

c. Do you support increased state funding for public transportation?

Yes. Obtaining funding for public transit, especially public transit operations, is

critical. More funding from cap-and-trade revenue and other sources should be identified to restore public transit operations funding. I would support legislation to allow localities and regions to assess themselves for transit or other transportation investments that can cut pollution.

d. What other efforts would you support to reduce greenhouse gases created by transportation?

I support robust investment in requirements and incentives for zero emission vehicles. California should set a date prohibiting the sale of fossil-fuel-powered vehicles to send the market a signal that electric cars must drive our future. As soon as we have a Federal Administration that agrees with scientists about climate change, California should request authorization to significantly increase the zero emission vehicle fleet standards (currently 15% by 2023).

e. Do you support implementation of a **Zero Net Energy** standard for new residential construction in California in 2020? (See <http://www.californiaznehomes.com>)

Yes, zero net energy buildings produce at least as much energy as they consume, through deep energy efficiency and on-site renewable energy. While some mid-rise and high-rise construction may not have sufficient rooftop space, California should require zero net energy for most new residential construction, and deep energy efficiency for all new construction.

f. Would you oppose any efforts to delay implementation of the **Zero Net Energy** standard?

Yes. Implementing energy efficiency early helps save more energy for the long-term.

g. What additional actions should the legislature take to reduce generation of greenhouse gases in California?

California must continue its bold leadership on climate protection. I will introduce legislation to advance enforceable requirements to achieve 100% renewable energy by 2045, which will involve increasing the renewable portfolio standard and distributed generation programs, energy storage procurement, and transforming our transportation sector and buildings. I will also introduce legislation to raise the ambition of the Global Warming Solutions Act to require at least 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, with a mid-point requirement in 2040. I will work with the environmental community to provide oversight of regulatory activities by ARB, the CEC, and the CPUC to ensure that the law is being implemented in a way that is effective, equitable, and supportive of environmental justice.

h. California faces a long-term water crisis. How do you propose to address that crisis?

Conservation and water use efficiency needs to become a way of life throughout California. I worked to target deep efficiency savings in EBMUD's 2040 water supply plan, and the 2013 – 2016 drought provided the moment to accelerate these efforts. We replaced 1 million square feet of lawn through enhanced customer rebates, and stepped up social marketing, far exceeding the state's 20 percent by 2020 goal. The legislature should require deeper water use efficiency for both urban and agricultural water users to help stabilize our demand as the supply becomes less reliable.

We should not flood habitat and open space with new dams. That's why I fought against the proposal to build a new dam on the Mokelumne River. We must preserve our rivers so that fisheries can thrive, and I will introduce legislation to complete the Wild and Scenic designation of the Mokelumne River.

The legislature must strengthen the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act to ensure that groundwater resources are utilized for storage but not overdrafted. Once the land has subsided and compacted after excessive pumping, that resource can never be restored. I'm proud of EBMUD's success negotiating directly with San Joaquin Valley leaders to achieve an agreement for groundwater banking, but the legislature needs to provide leadership to address the lack of progress elsewhere in the State.

## 6. Higher Education

a. What should state elected officials do to make higher education in community colleges, CSU, and UC affordable for California residents?

The legislature should fund all three college systems adequately to retain the quality of faculty and course offerings, and to reduce fees significantly (cut by at least two-thirds), and with sufficient new revenue, to zero. Low-income students and middle-class families should not have to incur debt to advance in higher education.

## 7. State revenues

a. **Do you support** reforms of Prop 13 that would ensure that commercial property owners pay adequate property taxes?

b. Do you favor creation of a **split roll property tax**?

Yes, I strongly support the creation of a split roll property tax that would ensure that commercial property owners pay a fair share of taxes based on the

reassessed value of property. This would raise \$8 – 10 billion for the General Fund, to support education, cities, and social services.

## **8. Politics and Campaign Finance**

a. Who did you support for President in the 2016 California Democratic Presidential Primary and why?

I supported Bernie Sanders for President in the 2016 California Democratic Presidential Primary because he raised issues that inspire a vision of a progressive revolution in American politics. He recognized climate change as one of the most important issues facing our country, boldly advocated for single-payer health care, public financing of elections, college affordability, and fighting income inequality. These issues speak to my values, and his campaign helped demonstrate voter support for this progressive agenda.

b. Is your campaign accepting corporate PAC money?

No.