

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

Name: Buffy Wicks

Address: 2625 Alcatraz Ave #227 Berkeley CA 97405

E-mail: bw@buffywicks.com

Phone (optional): 510-207-9263

Campaign Website: www.BuffyWicks.com

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1. Introduction

I am running for the State Assembly because California needs strong leaders to push a bold, progressive agenda, and District 15 deserves a representative who will is ready to get to work tackling our housing crisis, ensuring all Californians have quality and affordable health care, improving our public education systems and making California the most family-friendly state in the nation.

My passion is fighting for equity, equal opportunity, and economic security - with a particular focus on policies affecting women and children. I currently lead the California Kids Campaign at Common Sense Kids Action, a statewide effort to empower parents to advocate for better opportunities for their children. Previously, I launched a national policy initiative at Center for American Progress on women and families, advocating for better paid leave policies, affordable childcare and pay equity for women.

My career as an organizer and an advocate started when I led protests against the Iraq War in the Bay Area. I've organized for Howard Dean's presidential campaign, have led a United Food and Commercial Workers' campaign fighting for better wages and health care, and was one of the chief architects of the groundbreaking organizing strategy behind President Obama's successful campaigns.

In the East Bay, we are united behind a progressive agenda. An electorate this engaged deserves a representative who will do more than just agree with the voters -- we need someone will turn ideas into policy, someone who knows how to pass progressive legislation that will actually improve people's lives. I have both served in the White House and organized at the most local grassroots level. I know how to identify key players and bring advocacy groups together to find commonality and create political power to pass legislation in Sacramento.

I'm ready to build coalitions in our community from Oakland to Hercules. I'm ready to fight for and with my community to give families across the district the best future possible.

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

Here in California, we have a real opportunity not just to resist President Trump's dangerous agenda, but to put forth bold, progressive public policy that reflects our shared values and builds a more just and equitable society. California should be the leader in showing America what progressive governance can be.

I want to be the Assemblywoman that leads that fight. An Assemblywoman has a responsibility to do more than talk. She should listen to you, strategize with you, and organize alongside you. As your representative, it would be just as important to me to bring your voices into the decision making process in Sacramento as it would be to use my own. It's what a good advocate does. It's what a good organizer does. And the thing is: it's the only way that change gets made, and it's the only way I know to do the job.

In addition, I am uniquely qualified to bring additional national and statewide relationships, networks and resources to the table to be the most effective leader for Assembly District 15.

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

I have spent my entire career building and running grassroots organizations, most importantly developing President Obama's organizing model. I know what it takes to win an election and I know what it takes to actually pass bold, progressive policy. That is why I am tireless in both fundraising and grassroots organizing.

On top of an aggressive fundraising schedule, my campaign is holding house parties across the district, talking directly to voters about the issues affecting their lives. Five nights a week I stand in living rooms speaking to 10, 20, 30 people at a time about the issues they care about and why I should be the next Assemblyperson for the East Bay. I am investing early in organizing and building an army of supporters and volunteers who will be essential to my victory.

I also have a unique profile. I have worked in the highest levels of government. I worked for President Obama in the White House and helped pass groundbreaking legislation like the Affordable Care Act, and I've also organized at the most local level. I understand how to get things done.

For all of these reasons, I've been endorsed by progressive champions US Senator Kamala Harris, Lt Governor Gavin Newsom, Howard Dean, BART Board Director Lateefah Simon, and many others.

Issues. (Please limit each response to **200 words**; you may provide links to more detailed statements/position papers)

2. General

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

As the next Assemblywoman from District 15, these would be my top priorities:

- **Ensuring all Californians have affordable access to healthcare.** California is taking an important and necessary look at universal healthcare and creating a single-payer system. I believe California can and should be committed to providing single-payer health care for its residents.
- **Tackling the housing crisis head on.** Our East Bay community faces a severe shortage of homes that are affordable to low- and middle-income young people, families, and seniors.

- **Boosting funding for public education.** I am a product of public schools - from kindergarten through college. I believe everyone has a right to quality public education and I will support legislation to reduce teacher shortages, increase funding for K-12 public schools, invest in community colleges, and ensure our public universities are accessible and affordable for California residents.
- **Making California the most family-friendly state in the nation.** I will lead the push for a package of legislation aimed at promoting the health and safety of California kids. We need to transform our system of early childhood services at the state and local levels to be more child-centered.
- **Protecting and welcoming immigrant communities.** We must reject the politics of hate and fear, and we can do that through responsible legislation that protects crime victims and keeps undocumented immigrants out of the shadows. Our strength is our diversity, and our diversity is reflected in our vibrant immigrant communities. I will do everything in my power to make immigrants from all corners of the globe feel welcome here.
- **Fighting for safety and justice for all residents.** We must be honest about the outrageous racial disparities in our criminal justice system, work to end racial profiling and mass incarceration, and promote fair and impartial policing. And we must support re-entry programs to put formerly incarcerated individuals on a path to success.

3. Healthcare

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

I worked alongside President Obama to pass the ACA. I'm very proud of that, as it resulted in 20 million more Americans having health care – including 5 million Californians. I know what it takes to create bold policy change.

I support single payer health care and believe that it would ensure every California has quality health care. It has the potential to lower cost, confusion, and uncertainty for citizens. It would ensure health care security for working people, make our companies more competitive, and free Californians from being tethered to their employer for health care thereby allowing them to do what they do best - take risks, innovate, and change the world. This is the vision we should all be striving for. As someone who's done big things on health care and who has a record of bringing people together to tackle tough issues, I believe I'm uniquely suited to help get it done in Sacramento.

The fight for single payer should continue in California and nationally with the Medicare for All push, which I also support. We are in an urgent moment, with our healthcare system on the brink of failure and there is an intermediate and immediate step we should consider taking to ensure our citizens are protected from Trump's disastrous policies. While California has one of the strongest and most competitive exchanges set up by the ACA, Trump's actions threaten to destabilize this. We should immediately create a "Medi-Cal public option" to ensure affordable and quality care open to all state residents. A Medi-Cal public option would mean the government would take the risks, set the rules and pay out the claims. This would live on the exchanges and compete with private insurers, many of whom are risk-averse and could leave the marketplace at any moment. Any state resident could opt for this plan, receiving the same quality care that that current Medi-Cal recipients receive. This could serve as an important and necessary next step on our way toward a single payer plan, while at the same time stabilizing our exchanges and

protecting us from the President Trump's power grab aimed at helping the wealthy at the expense of the poor.

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?

As a member of the AD15 community, questions regarding the future of Alta Bates are deeply personal to me. I had my own daughter at Alta Bates and am eternally grateful to the nurse there who cared for me during a very difficult three-day delivery.

Access to an emergency room is often a life or death issue, where the speed with which care is available is critical. This means we need emergency facilities within the community that are geographically close and easily accessible. Emergency services are, by their very mission, "essential public services" and should be protected and supported as such. Patients should be served regardless of their financial or insurance status.

I would strongly support laws that declare emergency services to be "essential public services" and champion budgets that provide funding to emergency departments and trauma center to provide care to the uninsured and indigent. I will also lead oversight efforts to ensure compliance as it relates to these matters.

I also support SB 687, which would require the consent of the Attorney General when a non-profit hospital plans to reduce or eliminate emergency medical services, as well as obtain consent by the AG before selling, leasing or otherwise disposing of any assets resulting from the reduction or elimination of emergency medical services provided at an emergency center. I particularly appreciate CNA's work to ensure that SB 687 does not allow for the creation or existence of standalone emergency rooms, freestanding emergency departments or freestanding emergency centers. This issue is of deep concern to the residents of AD15 given the fight around the closure of Alta Bates Hospital.

4. Housing/Rent Control

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

Renters in our community face severe challenges. We have to do everything we can to guard against displacement, including reforming Costa-Hawkins. In addition, I think we should strongly consider other measures to help renters such as making the Renter Tax Credit much more significant amount as well as develop and state-funded legal fund for renters who are facing unfair eviction.

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

I would be very interested in reforms that include a rolling date. I think this could be a good and necessary reform.

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

First and foremost, we need more funds for affordable housing. Secondly, we need to build more homes quickly. Too many members of our diverse community—from artists and teachers to service workers and seniors who've contributed to our community—are being displaced. We must also recognize that the shortage of homes in our community cuts across other issues: exacerbating homelessness, contributing to more greenhouse gas emissions from workers forced into long car commutes, and denying low-income families and hardworking young people equal access to the world-class educational and professional opportunities of the Bay Area. I believe in—and am committed to fighting for—an East Bay that is sustainable and accessible to all.

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]

Yes. I would also be very interested in exploring the idea of having a California State Infrastructure Bank fund affordable housing. We should also consider the idea of purchasing housing stock during economic downturns that can be converted to affordable housing units.

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

As mentioned above, I strongly believe we have to do everything we can to guard against displacement. I think rent stabilization is an important component to that fight. I will additionally work to significantly expand the renter tax credit and support a legal defense fund for renters to fight against unfair evictions from unscrupulous landlords.

It is because of my strong housing platform that I have been endorsed by house champions Assemblymember David Chiu and State Senator Scott Wiener.

5. Climate Change and the Environment

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

Yes. Fracking and other extreme extraction methods pose unacceptable risks to our climate, environment, and communities, and we must do more to move our state toward a clean energy future. Establishing a moratorium would be a critical step to achieving that goal.

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

Yes.

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

Yes.

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

I believe the state must take into greater account the environmental impacts of land use practices and transportation policies and continue to pass a range of policies to actively foster more compact urban areas that encourage walking, biking, and transit use.

That means promoting the construction of dense housing around transit stations, encouraging production of lower emission and electric vehicles, spurring the design of cities and communities that promote car-less travel, and potentially exploring changes to gas taxes and vehicle licensing fees.

It also means being able to effectively measure whether these and other policies actually reduce vehicle miles traveled. I think the state could provide additional tools and resources for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to gather appropriate data and conduct the analyses to make better determinations.

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.

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

Yes.

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

I will be a strong and relentless champion for steering California toward a 100% clean, renewable energy future by advocating for legislation that sets ambitious renewable energy goals, further limits greenhouse gas emissions, moves us away from destructive carbon energy production (e.g. fracking, offshoring drilling, etc.), and fosters local and regional efforts to reduce this dependence (e.g. supporting Community Choice Aggregation programs).

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

California's legislature should spur and support investments that address both the structural and behavioral challenges that we face around water scarcity and consumption.

I believe the legislature should actively support investments in the following:

- Water recycling (e.g. encourage households to adopt greywater reuse systems)

- Water conservation (e.g. new landscape, plumbing, and green building ordinances)
- Infrastructure improvements (e.g. fix pipes that result in 10% of urban water to be lost through leaks)
- Better groundwater management (e.g. replenishing and protecting our aquifers).

And because agriculture accounts for 80% of California’s water consumption, I believe the legislature must work toward the development of a resilient agriculture-water system that can grow and provide nutritious food and sustain itself between periods of drought.

That may mean looking at ways to more accurately price crops according to water consumption. By ensuring prices of crops better reflect the cost of the water to produce them, hopefully that influences the purchase of high water crops like almonds and more sustainable water consumption overall.

6. Higher Education

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

As someone who is a proud alum of the California Community College system, I’m a big believer in utilizing all of the tools in our toolbox to ensure students are ready to pursue the academic or career path of their choice. To this end, we should meet students where they are, and encourage their academic and career growth through every means possible - through traditional public schools, public charter schools, community colleges (for vocational programs or for four-year transfer), as well as our CSUs and UCs. Our schools and school districts should be preparing our students for a lifetime of learning, and to this end, we should make schooling as affordable as we can. We are saddling our next generation with mountains of debt. I support free community colleges and significantly reduced fees for UC and CSU.

For these reasons, I have been endorsed by Assemblymember Jose Medina, chair of the Committee on Higher Education.

7. State revenues

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

I strongly support reforming Proposition 13 and closing the corporate loophole. By doing this, we could add \$11.4 billion into our state budget every year.

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

Yes.

88. Politics and Campaign Finance

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

In the 2016 California Democratic Primary, I supported Hillary Rodham Clinton for President of United States. As a member of the Obama Administration, I felt strongly Secretary Clinton would do the best job both protecting the President's legislative victories, as well as build on that legacy. I believe she would have moved the needle on gun violence prevention issues as well as issues impacting women and families. I was also determined to help elect our country's first woman president. For these reason, I was honored to serve as the California State Director for Hillary for America's winning California primary campaign.

b. Is your campaign accepting corporate PAC money?

My campaign has accepted no corporate money.

Please type your responses to the Questionnaire and submit them in pdf or Word documents using these question numbers/headings/questions. Be sure to include your name and contact info at the top. E-mail the completed document containing your responses to: BPA2016@aol.com

We will post each candidate's responses online prior to our endorsement meeting and our members will be encouraged to read them.

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