

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

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Deadline for submitting completed questionnaires: Friday January 19, 2018

1. Introduction (maximum 300 words total)

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

I care deeply about the people of the East Bay—with a particular emphasis on those who are struggling to make ends meet or to put food on the table for themselves and their family.

I am a long-time progressive activist and policy reformer. I have 30 years of organizing, policy and political experience including 10 years in Sacramento as an environmental and public interest policy director/advocate. I work hard and have demonstrated locally and in Sacramento that I can be successful at drafting and enacting significant policy solutions to complex challenges.

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

My three decades of experience including 10 years as a public interest advocate and policy director in Sacramento and my 5+ years on the Oakland City Council with a strong record of legislative accomplishments sets me apart as the progressive candidate with the most relevant experience.

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?

Access to higher education, climate change, environmental justice, Prop. 13 reform, affordable housing and protections for renters, chronic homelessness, criminal justice reform, grade-level literacy in our schools, campaign finance reform.

3. Healthcare

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

YES, I've been a passionate supporter of single payer health care ever since then-State Senator Nick Petris introduced a single payer bill in the Legislature back in the late 1980's.

I would finance this through a combination of: (a) a new payroll tax that would be equivalent to what most employers pay in health care premiums for their employees; (b) an income tax surcharge of .25 of one percent on incomes over \$500,000; (c) funds that CA is already spending on medical and Healthy Families; (d) a modest co-pay for medical expenses (with low-income residents exempt from the co-pay and all preventative services exempt as well); and (e) a new wealth tax on wealth of over \$10 million (with primary residence exempt from calculation). Additionally, the expected reduction in administrative costs could also in effect help to finance a cost-effective single-payer system. Cost controls in terms of prescription drug prices and bulk purchasing of medical equipment/supplies would also make a lot of sense.

b. Berkeley is threatened with the loss of its hospital, Alta Bates Medical Center. What could you do as an assemblymember to ensure that Berkeley continues to have a nearby hospital with an emergency room?

I am on the working group headed up by Mayor Arreguin that is coordinating the local effort to prevent the hospital closure.

Continue to support Nancy Skinner's bill (I authored the Oakland City Council Resolution in support of the bill). I would urge passage of a bill that would penalize a hospital association for closing a full-service facility with an emergency room if it leads to longer distances for people to travel to get urgent care.

I would use the bully pulpit of my office to pressure Sutter to keep this facility open, and use available data to bolster the case to keep it open.

4. Housing/Rent Control

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

YES!

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

YES! I have already drafted legislation that would end the state-mandated exemption for single-family homes and individual condos, and move the so-called new construction exemption to a rolling 10-year restriction.

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 will author legislation to bring back Redevelopment with needed reforms so the abuses of the past are kept away.

Any new incentives or streamlining should clearly emphasize below market housing.

Allow neighboring jurisdictions to take on a portion of each other's RHNA affordable housing allocations as long as they receive substantial payment from the other jurisdiction accordingly.

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. First, we must pass SB 3 on the November ballot. I plan to author legislation to bring back Redevelopment with appropriate reforms and increased emphasis on below marked housing.

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

Repealing or reforming Costa-Hawkins would help tremendously. Additional assistance to build additional lower and moderate income housing is needed.

5. Climate Change and the Environment

a. Do you support a statewide ban on fracking?

Yes. I will be authoring legislation in my first term to immediately ban fracking for oil and to phase in a ban of fracking for natural gas.

b. Do you support High Speed Rail in California?

Yes! It is needed for several reasons—not the least of which is climate change. Without HSR, we would see more cars on the road between northern and southern California. We would also see expansion of runways out into SF Bay and more airplane traffic.

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

Yes, of course. Public Transit funding is often one of the first things to be scaled back during difficult economic times. That is why we need dedicated

sources of funding for transit services. There needs to be a shared responsibility among the state, counties, and transit districts to each set aside a dedicated on-going source of funding to ensure transit is available and accessible for people in all urban and suburban areas. This needs to include lower fares for students and low income transit riders.

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

Strengthening of our SB 375 Sustainable Communities policies with appropriate enforcement; move toward electrification of most of our transportation system—including passenger cars. Strong implementation and enforcement of our state’s Low Carbon Fuel Standard.

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! I plan to offer legislation to require that new buildings be all-electric with solar panels on the rooftop.

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?

Stronger energy efficiency mandates; using the lowest carbon fuels for our light-duty and heavy-duty vehicles. Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMTs) through better regional land use planning; new building standards. Encourage greener energy through expansion of community choice energy authorities across the state.

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

We need better water usage management; mandatory and incentivized conservation for all sectors; expanded groundwater capture/storage; increase use of grey-water and water recycling for selected purposes; increased agricultural water rates for those farms not using drip irrigation; incentivize switching to draught-tolerant crops; and more. I would seek out expert advice from NGOs with expertise in water and climate adaptation issues.

6. Higher Education

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

Pass Susan Eggman's bill to create a new tax on millionaires to reduce/eliminate tuition at all public universities and colleges in California for CA residents. I support Assemblymember Eggman's bill to make college tuition at public universities and colleges free for CA residents. I authored the Resolution at the Oakland Council to endorse this legislation. In addition to free community colleges, I also would carry that further to dramatically reduce tuition for most CA residents who attend any public 4-year university in CA.

I used to work at a Bay Area Community College and have a deep understanding and appreciation for the value that community colleges provide to so many residents of our state.

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?

These questions (a. and b.) are effectively the same. My answer is an unequivocal YES. Prop. 13 reform (commercial side) is and must be a top priority!

8. Politics and Campaign Finance

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

I supported Senator Bernie Sanders in the 2016 Primary. His policy positions and statements on the economy, wall street and a handful of other issues resonated with me.

b. Is your campaign accepting corporate PAC money?

I have not accepted any funds from corporate PACs; however, I have and will accept legal contributions from trade associations and companies *that are consistent with* my policy priorities and political philosophy. For example, the CA Solar Energy Industries Association (CalSEIA) has already donated to my campaign.

I worked for CA Common Cause as an organizer and have been a long-standing and passionate supporter of public financing of campaigns. As a legislator, I intend to take up and be a leader on the important cause of *clean money elections* in our state.

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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