

Green Voter Guide

A publication of the Green Party of Alameda County,
an affiliate of the Green Party of California.

Election Day: November 3, 2026

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Berkeley City Council, District 1

#1: Moni Gangopadhyay

#2: Daria Wrubel

#3: Laura Babitt,
with strong reservations
(Don't rank Bernet or Kromer)

Berkeley D1 looks to be a chaotic battle between the Developer-Wing and the DEI-Wing of the local Democratic Party, along with three wild-card candidates. Please rank Moni Gangopadhyay and Daria Wrubel #1 and #2 (or vice versa). Both clearly demonstrated values aligned with those of the Green Party. With strong reservations we think that Laura Babitt be ranked #3, but only to keep Ross Bernet from winning in case Moni or Daria fail to carry the day.

This five-way race is for the seat vacated by Rashi Kesarwani—perhaps the most pro-developer, pro-police, pro-surveillance, pro-market-rate-housing Council member ever to serve in recent decades. Only three of the candidates returned our voter guide questionnaires—Gangopadhyay, Wrubel and Babitt—and all agree Berkeley faces multiple budget challenges: aging infrastructure, affordable housing, homelessness, inequality, and a structural budget deficit. However, Babitt vacillated on issues of police, rent control and development, as indicated below. Based on endorsements and website issues, Ross Bernet appears to be the Developer-Wing heir apparent to Kesarwani, while Babitt represents the DEI (Diversity, equity, and inclusion) Wing of the local Democrats, and therefore is following in the steps of former mayor Jesse Arreguin.

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Berkeley Measure Z

Yes, yes, yes!

Parcel Tax to Fund a Public Bank

This initiative ordinance would create a parcel tax—\$0.06 per square foot for residential properties and \$0.09 per square foot for nonresidential properties—to capitalize and support a public bank. This requires a simple majority of votes to pass.

Why should the City of Berkeley keep its money in a Wall Street bank (currently Wells Fargo), making money for billionaires (\$21.4 billion in 2025) instead of using it to leverage the welfare of Berkeley's residents? This question has been asked repeatedly for more than a decade and the answer had always come back: there's no practical alternative. Well, now there could be. The state of California has provided the legal framework for the creation of banks run by and for the people through their local governments; now it's up to the people to provide the required capital to get it going.

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Boycott Most Statewide Partisan Races to Protest the Top Two Primary

The June primary has come and gone with predictable results, desired by the establishment. Because of Prop. 14 (the Top-Two Primary), first used in 2012, no candidates of the small parties will be on the ballot for statewide office in the November general election, and only a handful will compete for local partisan offices anywhere in the state. So much for the lies of the "Top Two" proponents about increased choices. "Top Two" even took away the possibility of the write-in option, so the sham democracy that now exists should be obvious to anyone.

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Proposition 40

YES, YES, YES!

One-time tax on Billionaires

Proposition 41

NO, NO, NO!

Prohibits some new taxes and blocks Prop. 40

Proposition 42

NO, NO, NO!

Prohibits some property taxes and stops Prop. 40

The Green Party endorses a firm YES on Proposition 40, followed by NO, NO, NO votes on the anti-tax-the-rich Propositions 41 and 42. This endorsement aligns with the Green Party's longstanding commitment to fighting for fairness and against inequality of wealth and power. The billionaires buy power in the form of politicians and media, and in that way they usurp much influence over matters that, in a democracy, we should be deciding for ourselves.

The Billionaire Tax (Prop. 40) would impose a one-time tax of 5% on Californians with more than \$1 billion in covered assets. The 200 California billionaires together hold \$2 trillion in wealth. A wealth tax is the way to make up for taxes that they have avoided in every way possible. The measure will raise about \$100 billion to replace lost federal dollars that have been cut in California at the same time that taxes on billionaires have been reduced. Prop. 40 directs 90% of funds to healthcare and 10% to public K–14 education and state food assistance programs.

Keep in mind that a billion dollars is an inconceivably astronomical amount of money, and yet within two decades not-taxing-the-rich has increased the number of California billionaires from about 90 to over 200. To work your way up to \$1 billion you need a full-time wage of \$10,000 an hour from age 20 to age 70, and you need to tighten your belt and only live on \$800,000 a year. Do the math. Whose work has ever been "worth" that?

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Emeryville City Council

Kalimah Priforce and also

Brandon Souble,
with reservations

Council Member Kalimah Priforce is a dues-paying member of the Democratic Socialists of America and that, combined with his impressive four-year record, should be enough to draw the vote of any Emeryville resident who considers themselves a progressive. Priforce has shown himself to be a "deep" progressive; over his four years as the lone progressive voice on the city council; he delivers the progressive policy to the council chambers in the face of chastisement from the conservative majority. Paying no mind to his status as a "super minority" of one, Priforce just continues on, bringing the one progressive vote to the council. He keeps the flame of progressive politics alive in Emeryville, waiting for a future where the people's business is attended to in an auspicious progressive democratic alignment.

Council member Priforce has stood for good government and he's always stood up for the dispossessed little guy during his four years on the council. He has been the lone voice, standing for renter protection for instance. His conservative colleagues have blocked him at nearly every turn. Kalimah said he would be a progressive if elected and that's exactly what he has done. There is nothing cynical about this man. Voters are strongly urged to vote for Kalimah Priforce.

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State Assembly, District 14

Mark Rendón

Healthcare is what is most at stake in the District 14 Assembly election. Mark Rendón has been working with the Oakland Education Association (his professional teacher's union) and the California Nurses Association to pass the universal health care bill called CalCare. Incumbent Buffy Wicks has successfully helped block CalCare from even coming up for a vote and we, the voters, must respond to her intransigence.

Mark is doing a service to the community by standing against a mainstream Democrat. Mark has been serving the community for a long time as a teacher, as a 19-year education union member and activist, as a Green Party member and as a community advocate at-large. He works with and for youth in and out of school, including as a Capoeira instructor.

Mark was able to get more votes than the official Republican in the primary. This is one of only two Assembly races where a Green qualified for the November run-off. Mark does not have Buffy's looks and stage presence. He also does not have or accept corporate support. Nor does he want to launch a political career. He is what we need; someone who has the commitment, the intellectual skills and above all, the ethics to represent us in Sacramento!

If he wins, he will serve our community in Sacramento by advocating some of the long overdue reforms that our state has been crying out for. Add to single payer healthcare our need for real electoral reform, tax fairness, and aggressive action on the environment. Mark has an established commitment to education, social services and affordable housing. On global issues he is a peace advocate and is opposed to US intervention in other countries' internal affairs and US support for repression in Palestine and everywhere else. As a union activist and a Green Party member, a Mark Rendón win will be a much-needed upset of the corporate campaign donation-based apple cart.

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Oakland City Council,

District 2

Nate Adams

The Green Party of Alameda County endorses and supports Nate Adams for District 2. We encourage people to volunteer, donate funds and to speak out in public. Our thanks to both candidates, Adams and Wang, for filling out our long questionnaire that we use for the voter guide.

At first glance both candidates seem quite similar in personal background and on the issues discussed in the mainstream press such as being a sanctuary city. Neither used the term "incompetent" when describing Oakland City government, unlike a good number of Oakland City residents, who do not hold back. The difference comes down to process and affiliation.

Nate Adams is part of a movement. He is running based on a vision of moving our people towards a higher standard of health, education and welfare in general, not just one liberal proposal at a time. For that reason, he is a leading candidate of the East Bay Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). His day job has been working for grass roots politics in Richmond. He pledges to not accept corporate money, but it would be hard to imagine a corporation foolish enough to go against their own best interest and support his campaign.

We are not saying that Charlene Wang does not have similar ethics and morals, but she is part of the social groups and Democratic Party clubs that led Oakland into the stagnant mess that we are in now and keeps us there. Maybe she believes in the change from within in small increments that has proven itself so ineffective over the past decades. She does not propose the serious structural changes needed to give Oakland a government that represents the people.

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The Green Party of Alameda County

The “GPAC” is one of the few County Councils that produce a Voter Guide for each election. We mail about 5,000 to Green households, and distribute another 10,000 through cafes, BART stations, libraries and other locations. Please read yours and pass it along to other interested voters. Feel free to copy our “Voter Card” to distribute it as well.

Your Green Party

The things you value do not “just happen” by themselves—make a commitment to support the Green Party. Call us to volunteer your time during this election season and beyond. Clip out the enclosed coupon to send in your donation today.

During these difficult times, individuals who share Green values need to stand firm in our principles and join together to work to make our vision of the future a reality.

The Green Party of Alameda County is coordinating tabling, precinct walking, phone banking, and other volunteer activities.

The Green Party County Council meets in the evening on the 2nd Sunday each month at 7:00 p.m. This is the regular “business” meeting of the Alameda County Green Party. We have several committees working on outreach, campaigns, and local organizing. Please stay in touch by phone or email if you want to get more involved.

Ways to reach us:

County Council:

Phone: (510) 644-2293

Website: www.acgreens.wordpress.com

Email lists: To join a discussion of issues and events with other active Greens, send an email to:

acgreens2012@gmail.com.

To get occasional announcements about current Green Party of Alameda County activities send an email to: greenpartyalamedacounty-subscribe@lists.riseup.net.

Locals:

Alameda County Green Sundays: 2nd Sundays, at 5 p.m., online. <http://www.acgreens.wordpress.com>. (510) 644-2293

Albany and Berkeley Greens: We are working on a number of November candidate and ballot measure contests. For more information, please contact: acgreens2012@gmail.com or: (510) 644-2293

Oakland-Emeryville-Piedmont Green Party: We are working on November candidate and ballot measure contests. Please join us as soon as you possibly can. For additional info, please contact: acgreens2012@gmail.com or: (510) 644-2293.

East and South County Greens: We are looking for east and south Alameda County Greens interested in helping re-activate an East County and a South County local. If interested, please contact our office at acgreens2012@gmail.com.

Credits:

We sincerely thank everyone who contributed to this issue of the Green Voter Guide. However, we were not able to obtain our contributors’ permission to list their individual names here this time due to time constraints—please help us get our work done quicker by volunteering for our next issue!

Voter Guide Contributions

We would like to thank the campaigns, businesses, and individuals whose donations allowed us to produce this voter guide. For the candidates and campaigns, please be assured that we conducted our endorsement process first. No candidates or measures were invited to contribute to the funding of this publication if they had not already been endorsed. At no time was there a discussion of the likelihood of a candidate’s financial support during the endorsement process. The Green Party County Council voted not to accept contributions from for-profit corporations. If you have questions about our funding process, call us at (510) 644-2293.

Enjoy politics? Missing a race?

If you’re interested in political analysis or campaigning, we could use your help. Or if you are wondering why we didn’t mention some of the local races, it may be because we don’t have analysis from local groups in those areas. Are you ready to start organizing your own local Green Party chapter or affinity group? Contact the Alameda County Green Party for assistance. We want to cultivate the party from the grassroots up.

Some races aren’t on the ballot

Due to the peculiarities of the law, for some races, when candidate(s) run for office(s) without opposition they do not appear on the ballot—but in other races they do. We decided not to print in your voter guide write-ups for most of the races that won’t appear on your ballot. Where we have comments on those races or candidates you will find them on our blog web site (www.acgreens.wordpress.com). Please check it out.

Our online Voter Guide

You can also read our Voter Guide online at <http://acgreens.wordpress.com/voter-guides>

Our endorsement process

For many of the candidates’ races, we created questionnaires for the candidates and solicited their responses. For others we conducted over-the-phone or in-person interviews. We also gathered information from Greens and others working on issues in their communities and from the public record. For local measures we gathered information as comprehensively as possible. The Green Party of Alameda County held endorsement meetings to consider all the information and make decisions. Our endorsements are as follows:

When we list “No endorsement,” either we had unresolved differences that prevented us from agreeing on a position, or no position was warranted.

We only endorse bond measures for essential public projects that are unlikely to be funded otherwise. Our endorsement “Yes, with standard bond reservations” reflects our position that funding through bonds is more costly and therefore less fiscally responsible than a tax.

Where no recommendation appears, we did not evaluate the race or measure due to a lack of volunteers. Working on the Voter Guide is fun! Give us a call now to get signed up to help on the next edition!

Taxes and Bonds:

TAX THE RICH not just the rest of us

In this Green Voter Guide some measures may be endorsed as “Yes, with reservations.” Often it’s a good cause with bad funding. Such funding includes bonds, parcel taxes, sales taxes, and other regressive taxes that tax the rich individuals and corporations at lower rates than the rest of us.

The Green Party’s commitment to being fiscally responsible is as important as our commitment to being environmentally and socially responsible. Given these values, we often endorse bonds and taxes with reservations. Why? Because structural inequities in the tax system make responsible and progressive financing impossible.

California budgeting took a turn for the worse in 1978 when Proposition 13 was approved by voters. The intention was to keep people, especially seniors on fixed incomes, from losing their homes due to escalating property taxes. Other less-understood parts of Prop 13 caused taxes overall to become less progressive and more regressive, damaging California’s legacy of great schools, parks, highways, health care and quality of life.

In 1992, the Green Party achieved ballot status in California and we’ve been fighting for a fairer tax system ever since. California can keep the good and fix the bad in Prop 13, but unfortunately, neither supermajority Democrats nor minority Republicans have used their power to promote and enact real solutions.

Regressive methods of funding public services include the following.

BONDS have been sold to voters as “no new taxes” but should be called “spend now and make kids pay later, with interest.” Super-rich individuals and corporations, instead of paying taxes, lend money to the government in the form of bonds, and get even richer with interest. The good news is that a few years ago Sacramento passed a bill to allow publicly owned banks, which will enable California to use its own capital to fund public projects, and then invest the interest back into the state and localities.

PROPERTY TAXES, before Prop 13 in 1978, were divided roughly 50/50 in totals from residential as opposed to commercial and industrial properties, but recently residential pays 72 percent and commercial pays a mere 28 percent. Homes are reassessed upon sale, whereas tax loopholes allow corporate properties to escape reassessment.

PARCEL TAXES are basically applied per property regardless of value, with small exemptions that are not nearly enough. Some residents of smaller properties now pay more in parcel taxes than they pay in basic property taxes.

SALES TAXES are another example of regressive taxes, and they incentivize governmental decisions in favor of shopping malls rather than needed affordable housing and open space.

“With reservations” we endorse funding when needed for vital services, and at the same time we educate and organize for better ways of raising revenue in the future.

Support Your Green Party!

The Green Party cannot exist without your help. Unlike some political parties, we do not receive funding from giant, multinational corporations. Instead we rely on donations from generous people just like you.

In addition, our mailing and printing costs have significantly increased over the past several years.

Please clip the form to the left and mail it today, or [donate online](#) to help your Green Party grow.

Green Party of Alameda County
2022 Blake Street, Suite A, Berkeley, CA 94704-2604
(510) 644-2293 • www.acgreens.wordpress.com



Name: _____

Phone (h): _____ Phone (w): _____

Address: _____

City/ZIP: _____

email address: _____

Enclose your check made out to “Green Party of Alameda County” or provide your credit card information below.

Credit card #: _____ Exp: _____

Signature: _____ 3-digit code on back of card: _____

Include your email address if you want updates on Green activities between elections.

If you’d like to volunteer your time, check here ☐ and we’ll contact you.

There’s much to do, and everyone’s skills can be put to use.

State law requires that we report contributor’s:

Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

Thanks for your contribution of:

☐ \$1 ☐ \$5 ☐ \$10 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$_____

Boycott

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Given this shameful situation, we thought much about what our position should be regarding the statewide partisan races for the November election. We recommend that people **BOYCOTT** these contests. Specifically, the following 6 statewide offices: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Controller, Treasurer and Attorney General. In addition, please note that specific information about the candidates running in these races was provided in our June primary Voter Guide, which is available on the internet, at: <http://acgreens.wordpress.com/voter-guides/>.

Boycotting these statewide partisan races is not much of a sacrifice, since only candidates of the two major wings of the money party will be on the ballot. We hope that a visible drop in the vote totals in these races will make a statement against “Top Two.” In addition, the state of California, as the Green Party has done for many years, also needs to start looking at proven alternatives to the failing electoral system we currently have. For example, most of western Europe as well as a majority of the world’s democracies use the “proportional representation” election system with great success, and with high voter turnout that often exceeds 80%. If you might be interested in helping to advance Proportional Representation” here in California, please contact the ProRep Coalition, at: <https://www.prorepcoalition.org/>.

We do want to be absolutely clear that we are NOT asking people not to vote at all. There are important ballot measures and worthwhile local candidates who are worth supporting. So please **DO VOTE**—but with the *exception of the above-listed statewide partisan races!*

Insurance Commissioner
Jane Kim

(recommended, but not endorsed)

The two candidates for insurance commissioner are Ben Allen, a state senator, and Jane Kim, a former San Francisco supervisor. Ben Allen has a fairly good environmental record, especially around limitations on pollutants such as plastics. He is seen as a mainstream Democrat, as evidenced by the endorsement of the state party.

Jane Kim was largely responsible for free college education for any SF resident and tenant protection legislation against unfair evictions. She helped pass a \$15 minimum wage in California. She also helped direct the Bernie Sanders ”California campaign in 2020 and he has strongly endorsed her now. Kim is an active member of the Working Families Party and some DSA chapters are supporting her campaign. She also has significant labor backing, including the California Teachers Association (CTA), the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and the California Federation of Teachers (CFT).

The main issue in this campaign is around insurance coverage for wild fires. While Allen wants laws to protect victims, Kim wants direct government intervention to mandate coverage.

With her Working Families support and her status as a Mamdani-style Democrat, she merits some backing, although we must qualify any support since she is a registered Democrat. In addition, we recognize that Jane Kim’s program is not the socialist platform advocated by our June left unity candidate Lalo Vargas, but since Kim is better than Allen, we do recommend that you vote for her.

State Superintendent of
Public Instruction
Richard Barrera
(No, No, No to Shaw)

The election of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, a nonpartisan office, had real importance in the past—as education became a neo-liberal football, it attracted big money and national attention in administering public education policy and resources in the largest state in the U.S. via the Superintendent’s office,

But now, with the end of incumbent Tony Thurmond’s eight years as State Superintendent (and his failed gubernatorial run), the situation has completely changed. While there had also been a Governor’s education assistant in the past under Gavin Newsom, there is a new Governor-appointed position, Education Commissioner, along with an Education Board that will run the California Department of Education. Thus, even though the State Superintendent of Public Instruction still helps push policies for California’s six million students, the position is less influential than it used to be.

That said and despite their commonality in some areas (such as both being county school board presidents), the contrast between the two State Superintendent wannabes is great. Richard Barrera, of San Diego, supports ethnic studies and increased funding for public education and he is a strong advocate for trans rights. Sonja Shaw, from Chino Valley, opposes more funding for education, rejects trans rights and believes ethnic studies are “divisive”. She says she considers her opponent to be a purveyor of dangerous, “radical ideologies.”

Unsurprisingly, Shaw is backed by the California Republican Party and she is an active member of the right wing “Moms for Liberty ”group. Barrera on the other hand is supported by a range of education groups (even a charter school organization, though he is very opposed to any privatization) and he is heavily backed by labor, especially the California Teachers Association. The CTA notably contributed over \$5 million to his campaign. Barrera is also supported by another union he has directly worked with, the United Domestic Workers.

Even though the State Superintendent of Public Instruction doesn’t have the clout it once did, a win for Richard Barrera will send a strong message to MAGA and other forces of reaction, so therefore he gets a YES vote from the Green Party of Alameda County.



US House, District 12
Jamie Joyce

(recommended, but not endorsed)

After the local Democratic Party/Bonta apparatus gave support to Lateefah Simon as the Congressional representative for California District 12 in the 2024 election, Simon has never responded to our questionnaires about her position on many issues. Joyce moved to the area about five years ago, bringing her understanding of the challenges of the tech world. While in the primary we expressed concerns about Joyce’s history with District 12, her recent work leads us to supporting her in this election. Where we had expressed concerns about the lack of information on her website previously, the changes are quite significant, and Joyce’s responses to our questionnaire with thoughtful answers that suggest her perspective and values are consistent with the majority of East Bay voters. <https://www.jamiejoyce.com/>

Joyce is the Executive Director of the nonprofit The Society Library whose “mission is to archive humanity’s ideas, ideologies, and world-views for future generations to access, understand, and more willfully choose to adopt or adapt.” Included in Joyce’s updated website are detailed explanations of her policy positions on many issues important to local voters.

Admittedly Lateefah Simon’s time in Congress has often been impressive. She has spoken forcefully on policy for single payer health care, immigrant rights and civil liberties, affordable housing, environmental justice, and slashing the military budget. We also acknowledge her membership in the Working Families Party, a front for the “left liberal ”wing of the Democratic Party. But Simon has not responded to Green Party questionnaires. If she is taking her time learning the system in Washington, we hope she would become the vocal advocate the East Bay deserves and demands. <https://www.lateefahsimon.com/>

We thus recommend that you vote for Jamie Joyce in order to pressure Simon, for independence from the Democratic Party apparatus. Because Joyce is registered with one of the pro-corporate political parties, we are recommending, rather than endorsing her, however, we still urge you to consider casting your vote in this midterm election for Jamie Joyce for U.S. House, District 12.

US House, District 14
Aisha Wahab

(recommended, but not endorsed)

California Congressional District 14 is comprised of much of southern and eastern Alameda County and was formerly represented by Eric Swalwell until he resigned in mid-April following charges of sexual harassment, assault, and rape. A special primary election to fill the remainder of Swalwell’s term was then held on June 16, followed by a runoff election held on August 18, in which Aisha Wahab defeated Melissa Hernandez. Now, the same two candidates are competing for the full-term seat which will begin next January. We sent questionnaires to all nine candidates who qualified for the June primary—Wahab, along with several other candidates responded, but Hernandez did not.

Melissa Hernandez, Democrat, <http://melissahernandez2026.com/>. Hernandez is the former Mayor of Dublin, currently the President of the BART board of directors and a staff member for Alameda County Supervisor David Haubert. Her website is lacking specifics on a number of the critical issues facing the District and the Country. Without her answering our questionnaire we have no information on many of her positions on critical issues. It should be noted she is working for David Haubert, the most conservative member of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. In addition, for the special election which concluded on August 18, she received over \$5 million in support from two super-PACs affiliated with the pro-Israel lobbying group AIPAC.

Aisha Wahab, Democrat, <http://www.aishawahab.com/>. As is noted above, Wahab won the August 18 special election to fill this seat for the remainder of the current term, thereby becoming the first Afghan American to be elected to Congress. She was first elected to office in 2018 when she ran for the Hayward City Council. In 2022 she was elected to the State Senate, where she authored or coauthored a broad range of legislation, with dozens of bills enacted into law. Wahab has the most high-powered local and state endorsements including the Democratic Party, many unions and others. The answers she provided to our questionnaire were well thought out and the best responses we received.

Aisha Wahab is clearly the best candidate in this race, and we urge you to vote for her. However, because she is registered with a pro-corporate political party, we are recommending her, instead of endorsing. Please vote for the best District 14 candidate, namely Aisha Wahab.

Understanding and Using
“Ranked Choice Voting” (RCV)

Understanding and using “Ranked Choice Voting” (RCV) RCV allows you to “rank” three candidates, rather than being forced to choose just one. Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) is more descriptive: when a candidate is eliminated, it’s as if there is a run-off between the remaining candidates.

During the first round of IRV, only the votes ranked first are counted. If nobody has a majority of votes, an elimination process begins. The candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated. If it’s your candidate, your next choice, if any, transfers up. This continues until someone has a majority. Your highest remaining candidate remains **YOUR ONLY VOTE** until that candidate is eliminated, or wins. Your other choices **DO NOT MATTER** and are not counted unless your higher ranked choices are eliminated. If you choose to vote for only one or two candidates, if they are eliminated, then your ballot is “exhausted.” It’s as if you chose not to vote in the remaining run-offs.

IRV is great because you can rank “sincere choices”—candidates you actually like—without “throwing away” your vote.

IRV invites strategies like:

- Only ranking sincere choices, people with politics or ideals you believe in, even if they can’t win.
- Saving the last vote for the “least disliked front-runner” in case your sincere choices are eliminated. Use your last place vote strategically. It may be the only one that counts.
- Make a statement by ranking a candidate you want to appear in the vote counting until they are eliminated, even if they’re not a sincere choice, as long as they have no chance of winning.

Regardless of your strategy, **NEVER** rank a front-runner you don’t want to see elected. Your vote could put them over the top.

Board of Equalization,
District 2
Sally Lieber

(Recommended, but not endorsed)

The State Board of Equalization was created in 1879 to ensure that county property tax assessors made honest, fully-valued assessments and avoided the temptation to cut the tax burden in their own counties. Less than a decade ago, it was responsible for collecting \$60 billion in taxes per year, but corruption scandals arose and the state legislature restructured it, which reduced the number of employees overseen by the Board from 5,000 to just 400. However, the Board still retains its original power to review property tax assessments and also insurer tax assessments. In addition, the Board maintains its role in the collection of alcohol, excise and pipeline taxes. There are four Equalization districts in the state, each with approximately 10 million residents. The 2nd District includes all of the north and central coastal counties, from Del Norte county at the Oregon border to Ventura county, just north of Los Angeles, and it includes all of the Bay Area counties.

In the June primary election, four Republicans and two Democrats were on the ballot with the two Democrats polling the most votes and moving forward to the current November election. Incumbent Sally Lieber is being challenged by John Pimentel, a member of the San Mateo County Community College District Board. Unfortunately though, the items in the “3 point plan” on Pimentel’s website are either deceptive or lacking in details. For example, his first point is to “end the sales tax on food,” which he says, “disproportionately burdens working families, seniors, and young people.” Yet almost all food sold in grocery stores is already exempt from sales tax, with the exception being food that is hot when sold, or that is sold for consumption on-site. So rather than groceries, most food that is subject to the sales tax is food that is sold by restaurants, or in similar ready-to-eat situations. And Pimentel’s two other points (“Close tax loopholes so that large corporations and the ultra-wealthy pay their fair share” and “Strengthen transparency and accountability to ensure the Board operates effectively and earns the public’s trust”) are missing the details to explain how these goals would be achieved.

Meanwhile, incumbent Democrat Sally Lieber’s website contains 5 “Priorities,” with modest amounts of details about each of them. Among the most important ones, under “Transparency and Accountability,” Lieber states that she is, “running a corporate-free campaign” (as she also did 4 years ago), and under “Housing That Is Affordable,” she explains that the Board of Equalization has “made a major commitment to rigorously examining the programs and mechanisms that help fund affordable housing” and that due to term limits, she will “be the only Boardmember that is eligible for re-election.” Lieber’s three other “Priorities” are: “Responsive and Sustainable Staffing,” “Environmental Protection,” and “Veterans ”and Homeowners ”Services”.

Lieber also has an impressive list of endorsers on her website, including 4 statewide officeholders, 37 California Congressmembers or state legislators, 20 labor unions including SEIU, the California Teachers Association, and the California Labor Federation, and dozens of other elected officials and organizations. Beyond her service on the Board of Equalization since she was elected in 2022, Lieber won a seat on the Mountain View City Council in 1998 and later served as Mayor. Then in 2002 she was elected to the State Assembly, where she served for six years, including two years as Speaker pro tempore. (She later lost 2 elections for State Senate—one in 2012, and the other in 2020).

Sally Lieber is clearly the best choice for this seat, but because she remains registered with one of the two major corporate-dominated political parties, we can’t endorse her. However, we still would like for her to re-elected, so please do vote for Sally Lieber for Board of Equalization, District 2.

State Assembly, District 14

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We Greens are very happy to support him and recommend voting for Mark Rendón in District 14. He is endorsed by the Alameda County, Contra Costa County and California State Greens. He also enjoys the endorsements of Our Revolution, The Richmond Progressive Alliance, the Oakland Education Association, and the United Teachers of Richmond.

The Rendón for Assembly District 14 website is <https://www.markrendon4ad14.com/>. If you live in District 14, please accept our recommendation to vote for him. Whether you live in AD14 or not, his campaign can use your support, volunteer time and donations. It’s time we send the corporatist incumbent packing!

State Assembly, District 18
Andre Sandford

(recommended, but not endorsed)

There are many reasons to not vote for the Mia Bonta steamroller for State Assembly District 18 but the best one can be found in the person of Andre Sandford, the other person running and the only progressive in the race. We say “Mia Bonta steamroller” because Ms. Bonta has all the money, the corporate press and all the VIP corporate endorsements in the race but she doesn’t have the one thing average people want in a politician: somebody who will look out after their interests in Sacramento.

Sandford states: “My campaign is centered on one core mission: reducing the cost of living and expanding economic opportunity so every Californian can live, grow, and thrive.” And he backs that up in his life: an African-American man, Andre was raised by a single mother in extreme economic insecurity in Detroit. He went on to obtain a Master of Science in Behavioral Sciences and a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice. His professional experience spans the systems most impacted by inequality. Currently, he is Program Director of HomeRise, a housing and homeless services nonprofit.

Andre is against the transport of coal in Oakland, for the divestment of fossil fuels from public pension monies, for making public transportation free for all, and for ending the sale of fossil fuel vehicles by 2035. He is for investing in clean energy and green jobs. He’s in favor of increasing teacher pay, Universal Healthcare “Medicare-for-all,” taxing billionaires and large corporations fairly, expanding tenant protections and rent stabilization and ending the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act so local governments have more authority to implement stronger rent control policies.

Andre Sanford is the non-corporate Democratic candidate for Assembly District 18. We recommend a vote against the Bonta corporate backed steamroll and for Sandford. (We are recommending Sanford, rather than endorsing, because he is registered with one of the pro-corporate political parties).

Andre Sanford is endorsed by the DSA member Emeryville City Councilman Kalimah Priforce, California Young Democrats Bay Area, Black Young Dems of the Bay, among others.

State Supreme Court
Kelli Evans and Joshua Groban

There are two California Supreme Court Justices facing retention elections this year: Kelli Evans and Joshua Groban. Both are experienced and qualified, and neither stands out as particularly radical or erratic. Evans was an Alameda Couty Superior Court Judge prior to her appointment to the State Supreme Court and she also has served as a Staff Attorney and Associate Director for the ACLU of Northern California. Groban was a lecturer at the UCLA School of Law prior to being appointed to the State Supreme Court and he also worked as an attorney for corporate-serving law firms from 1999 until 2010.

But since this is just a retention or confirmation election of justices already on the court, and not an election to the court, we believe it is most appropriate not to attack qualified, competent and non-extreme justices, particularly in an uncontested election. Rather than engage in the hyper-politicization of the judiciary that is occurring at the national level, we think California should retain its civility, and retain both of these justices.

State Courts of Appeal,
First District
No endorsements

In contrast to federal court judges, who are appointed for life by the executive branch and confirmed by the legislative branch, California state judicial officers are appointed by the governor and then confirmed and retained by popular vote.

To review every opinion that the district appellate judges have either authored or joined over the past term is currently beyond the capacity of our Voter Guide volunteer staff. We are therefore not endorsing either a “Yes” or a “No” vote on the retention/confirmation of the state appellate court judges on the ballot. Press accounts of state appellate court judicial holdings are relatively rare, and reviewing the opinions authored or joined by each during their twelve-year terms would require several months, if not years, of advance preparation.

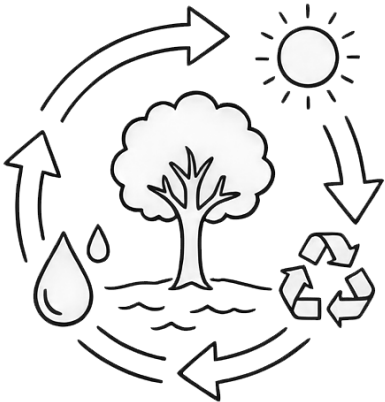
Since 1998 the Green Party has criticized the Governor’s judicial appointment system in which special interests predominate. The three-member commission that must ratify an appointment is often a mere rubber stamp. Prosecutors, supported by police and prison guards, have exercised an undue influence on this outdated judicial selection process. Judges are drawn primarily from a narrow band of the political spectrum, heavily weighted toward law-and-order/war-on-drugs cheerleaders, large corporate law firm partners, and those with tenure in a lower court. Racism and sexism are rampant. The present system of judicial selection does nothing to elevate the standards of judicial qualifications. Californians deserve to have confidence in their courts, but a 2014 study by Court Reform LLC found that of all states California had the highest level of perceived illegal corruption in its judicial branch.

The Green Party has supported renewed scrutiny of the selection of candidates and public financing of judicial campaigns. It has previously suggested that judicial term limits be considered, although they are arguably more applicable to the executive, rather than to the judicial or legislative, branches of government. Some Greens and other progressives believe that judges should be protected from the popular political whims of the electorate. They cite the 1986 removal of Supreme Court Justice Rose Bird over her opinions challenging the constitutionality of California’s death penalty. Although law enforcement advocates provided the public face of the campaign to remove Bird, instigating and financing the campaign against her were corporate employers and insurance companies that basically disliked her decisions on wrongful termination and tort liability. Bird was the first, and remains the only, Chief Justice to be removed from that office by a majority of the state’s voters.

The reality remains that the state’s voters have never denied retaining an appellant court judge. Nor does impeachment and conviction of judicial officers occur. Recall elections and the current confirmation/retention by popular vote have proven to be impractical ways to remove incompetent judicial officers. For this reason, the focus should be placed upon the state Commission on Judicial Performance (CJP) as the only practical deterrent to judicial misconduct and bad behavior. Both liberals and conservatives ought to be easily able to agree that a strong judicial oversight agency is of vital public importance because bad judges cause innocent people to be found guilty and vice versa. Bad judges also issue unfair and erratic sentences, unnecessarily hurt the lives of children and families, and destroy the public trust.

Unfortunately, the CJP currently under investigates and under disciplines judicial wrongdoing. As a consequence, there are possibly hundreds of incompetent judges currently sitting on the various districts and divisions of California’s Courts of Appeal whose removal would have been initiated by equivalent commissions in other states.

Scrutinizing the Commission on Judicial Performance and passing legislation to increase its transparency and accountability to the citizens of California are practical first steps to take, but we believe that this issue needs far more considerable discussion and we would like to hear from Greens and other progressives in the legal community who have insight regarding the wisdom of what more needs to be done in the way of reform.



Peralta Community Colleges Board of Trustees (Races in Oakland, Piedmont, Emeryville)

The Peralta Community Colleges—Laney, Merritt, College of Alameda, and Berkeley City College—play a critical role in educating local students, most of whom are working people, children of working people, and people of color. The Peralta Board of Trustees is elected to have ultimate responsibility for setting policy and overseeing finances for the Peralta District Office and colleges.

Three seats on the Peralta Board of Trustees are up for election on the November 2026 ballot. However, two incumbents, both elected in 2022, are running unopposed. Peralta saves on election costs by not running uncontested races. So if you live in Peralta Area 3 (*from San Antonio to Seminary, west of 580 to the Bay*), you will not see your Trustee **Louis Quindlen** on your ballot. Similarly, if you live in Peralta Area 7 (*parts of West Oakland, North Oakland, Lake Merritt, and Emeryville*), incumbent **Shweet Johannes** will not appear on your ballot.

In addition, Trustee **Bill Withrow** resigned mid-term for health reasons from the position he’s held since 2004, representing Peralta Area 1 (*Alameda, Oakland Chinatown, and other parts of downtown Oakland*). This election is not on the November ballot because no candidates filed to run. However, the Peralta Board is accepting applications from would-be Area 1 Trustees and will appoint a new Area 1 Trustee in the near future.

Peralta Community Colleges Board, Area 5 Cindi Reiss

For Peralta Area 5 (*Piedmont, and parts of Oakland—Upper Rockridge, east of Lake Merritt between 580 and Skyline*) your ballot will include an election in which the 2-term incumbent, **Cindi Napoli Reiss**, is challenged by newcomer **Sandra Weese**.

We support **Cindi Reiss**, a faculty member at a South Bay community college who is active on community college issues statewide. In her responses to our questionnaire, **Reiss** describes the various ways that the Peralta District has improved in the past 8 years: administrative stability (hiring a permanent chancellor and developing a capable administrative team), effective financial oversight, wise planning of resources and class offerings and avoiding loss of accreditation. She also acknowledges the challenges that lie ahead for Peralta, including a “demographic cliff” that many colleges face: a decreasing young adult population and a declining birthrate. To address falling enrollments and better coordinate student services, Peralta is in the process of merging Laney and Merritt into Oakland City College, a configuration from the early 1960’s when the Peralta District was being formed.

Sandra Weese recently retired from the California Federation of Teachers, where she held various staff positions, including Director of Organizing. In her questionnaire she emphasizes her skill and experience organizing workers, negotiating contracts, and helping to build coalitions around workplace and public-policy goals. She expresses concerns about the merger of Laney and Merritt and seeks more analysis about how this change will affect finances, programs, jobs, community needs and college identity. **Weese** is endorsed by several local elected officials and unions. We also note that as we go to press, she has no policy information on her website.

The Albany Greens

The Albany Greens stand—in solidarity with the Global Greens—for nonviolence by removing the causes of war by understanding and respecting other cultures, eradicating racism, promoting freedom and democracy, and ending global poverty. Greens stand for a rapid transition to a zero carbon economy.

A note from the Greens to the voting youth (aged 16 and above) at Albany High School: You will be able to vote for local candidates and measures, including voting for School Board of Trustees (BoTs) members. You deserve to be on the ballot, too, and to be full voting members of the BoTs, City Council and city committees and commissions. The effort which was initiated with Measure V is far from over.

Albany City Council

#1 (or #2): Aaron Tiedemann
#2 (or #1): Robin D. Lopez
Greens do not endorse the other candidates.

Aaron Tiedemann—Aaron Tiedemann led the way to make Albany the city that “*Kicked War Criminals to the Curb*” by first helping pass the ceasefire resolution calling for “*unrestricted entry of humanitarian assistance into Gaza, the full restoration of food, water, electricity, and medical supplies to Gaza and the right to self-determination and peaceful coexistence*,” later issuing an Albany values statement to divest from companies “*that facilitate and enable severe violations of human rights, war crimes, and crimes against humanity*.” Thanks to Aaron, “*Albany now boasts one of the most progressive ethical investment commitments among cities nationwide*.” Aaron is a lifelong Albany resident and Alameda County affordable-housing policy analyst, who served on the City Council, as mayor and also vice-mayor, from 2020 through 2024, where he helped achieve gender pay parity, Ranked Choice Voting and Youth Voting. He chairs Albany’s Housing Advisory Commission and leads the school district’s bond oversight committee. From a Green perspective, his focus on affordable housing, density, faster approvals, and homes along transit-oriented commercial corridors supports social justice, climate-friendly land use, and intergenerational responsibility. Tiedemann argues that Albany must create long-term conditions for housing production rather than rely on symbolic plans. Greens should seek firm commitments on permanent affordable housing, tenant protections, public or nonprofit development, union labor, embodied carbon, tree planting, and anti-displacement safeguards. He supports the Albany ballot measures, including low-income exemptions. He invokes progressive policymaking. Overall, Aaron Tiedemann aligns most strongly with Greens on non-violence, housing and public services.

Robin D. López—Robin D. López is Albany’s first Latino and mixed-Indigenous person elected to City Council. He is an ESPM PhD candidate at UC Berkeley, and National Lab researcher with a record of environmental leadership. He routinely brings technical scientific competency to City Council discussions which have transformed meetings into teach-ins on water quality, fish science and mapping technologies, to name just a few. Under Robin’s leadership in 2025, Albany City Council added “refiners/pipelines, tobacco, and firearms & ammunition” to the initial investment exclusions of “*oil and gas producers, energy services, and aerospace & defense*.” As an ecologist, incumbent councilmember, and former mayor, his fossil-fuel divestment achievements stand alongside a balanced budget, affordable housing, equitable access to basic needs, as well as accessible public infrastructure. Through a Green Party lens, he supports ecological wisdom, social justice, future-focused decision-making, and support for the 62-unit Verana Hill affordable-housing project. López supports the city’s revenue measures, arguing that exemptions protect lower-income residents and that the measures preserve public infrastructure and services. Overall, Robin López is closely aligned with Green priorities, especially climate responsibility, equity, affordable housing, and public services. He points out that Measure S is about those intending to sell/buy at higher values being expected to contribute an equitable share.

Katherine Enos—Albany native, UC Berkeley graduate, and former resident of the Berkeley Student Cooperative system, she explicitly supports combining Albany with an adjacent city (possibly Berkeley?) and County takeover of some Albany city functions (without identifying which ones). City erasure is distinct from the legal process of disincorporation, so there is some internal contradiction which needs to be addressed and revised. Enos supports democratic election of leaders of public institutions, separation of church and state and open government. These positions fall short of Green commitments to a decentralized, direct democracy, diversity and personal responsibility. Her anti-housing speculation position could open an important discussion about land trusts, tenant protections, social housing, and keeping homes affordable for future generations, but she is against increasing property transfer tax through ballot Measure S, which could slow home sales and decrease speculation. She raises wireless signal digital packet sniffing, and equates oversight of Homeland Security with oversight of our CERT groups—issues which other candidates discuss less. At the candidate forum, Enos supported a mixture of housing types

and stronger community participation, while questioning development driven chiefly by profit. She offers little in the way of public programs and her proposed solutions are comparatively undeveloped. She does not offer ideas for climate action, affordable-housing production, transit, labor standards, homelessness, racial justice, city revenue, or emergency services. Her emphasis on homeowner and tenant voices is constructive, but a Green assessment would ask how she would prevent consultation from becoming a veto on necessary low-carbon, affordable housing. Enos brings independent thinking and democratic instincts; her challenge is translating principles into equitable, funded, measurable policy.

Jon Destin—As president of the Albany Community Foundation, a YMCA board member, an Albany Education Foundation trustee, and founder of Albany Pride, Jon demonstrates civic engagement and support for community life. Through a Green lens, his positions include support for trees and “climate justice, not climate activism”—despite the shoreline park at Golden Gate Fields emerging due to activism. Jon talks about affordable housing along main arteries. His skepticism about bicycle improvements, climate activism, and raising taxes for public services begs the question of what is he for? What do Jon’s statements about ending Albany’s use of Flock license-plate cameras because of privacy and public-trust concerns mean when our intersections have a half dozen different other cameras? His insistence on transparent budgeting and reporting fits grassroots-democracy values, but is he going to track down the businesses that hide behind a veil of tax exemption to avoid paying taxes? Destin says Albany must attract capable builders and turn housing plans into completed homes; Greens might ask him what affordability requirements, tenant protections, labor standards, and anti-displacement safeguards he would attach. His business-oriented approach could increase traffic, but relationships with developers require clear conflict-of-interest rules and public accountability by empowering the public through a direct general population vote on plans. He criticizes new taxes as an insufficiently creative response to the loss of Golden Gate Fields revenue, yet has not specified replacement revenues or service tradeoffs. His climate platform is supportive but broad rather than target-driven. Overall, Destin offers responsive local leadership with promising positions on privacy and bussing, while needing specificity on equity, revenue, and implementation. In addition, he did not return our questionnaire.

Chris McDaniels—Chris McDaniels emphasizes competent government, infrastructure, emergency readiness, and fiscal stewardship. An Albany resident for 27 years, he describes service as a volunteer, coach, parent, and public-sector manager. His 30 years with San Francisco agencies—including emergency management, public works, and public utilities—could help Albany plan capital projects, maintain infrastructure, prepare for climate emergencies, and manage funds responsibly. McDaniels calls for long-term planning, collaboration, and town halls with businesses. At the candidate forum, he answered the first question by suggesting that Albany needs to improve infrastructure so we can keep small battery powered tools charged up. We suggest a map of accessible power receptacles could help address this. He also questioned the per-unit cost of subsidized housing and argued that Albany should have prepared earlier for lost Golden Gate Fields revenue. Fiscal scrutiny is valuable, but a Green evaluation requires care: affordable housing must be assessed by lasting public benefit, labor and environmental standards, land costs, and service needs, not cost alone. His campaign offers little specificity on greenhouse-gas reduction, shoreline ecology, transit, bicycle safety, tenant protections, homelessness, racial equity, police surveillance, cooperative enterprise, or progressive revenue. He needs to explain which alternatives to taxes could preserve services without shifting burdens onto workers or vulnerable residents. McDaniels offers administrative expertise; his Green alignment remains promising on resilience and stewardship but unproven. In addition, he did not return our questionnaire.

Conclusion—We rank Aaron Tiedemann as our #1 candidate and Robin D. Lopez as #2. (However, Aaron and Robin are running as a team, so if you want to rank Robin as #1 and Aaron as #2, that’s fine, too).



Albany Measure O—NO Requirements for Zoning Changes

Measure O amends the requirement for zoning changes to the single-family residential (R-1) zoned areas. Greens encourage a NO vote. This measure states that it encourages infill and multifamily development and streamlines the process, but it is not stated what might be added to the current R-1 standard that already allows up to 40’ height and four units on qualifying R-1 lots without a petition. The Measure may let the City Council rubber stamp particular properties and arbitrarily deny others. This centralization of power is regressive. To meet our housing needs we need planning, not unscalable scattershot and arbitrary one-off decision making by the latest vanguard. This measure takes away voter control and could allow developers to sway City Council to overlook or fast-track without proper environmental and fairness reviews. This does not contribute to a democratic, people-forward process for our growth and development. The building type that attracts developers is a 5 over 1 podium which is five stories wood frame residential over a commercial concrete first story with high and open storefront at street level. These are the structures which address the issue at hand, just look at the new graduate student housing at UC Village!

Albany Measure P Yes, with reservations Street Paving and Storm Drain Parcel Tax

Measure P updates the Special Parcel Tax for street paving and the storm drain special tax, passed by Albany voters in 2006. Greens encourage a *YES vote, with reservations*. This measure restructures the tax to redistribute the burden in the event of future revenue shortfalls, without significantly increasing rates, and seeks to do so equitably. However, leaseholders and renters who are NOT tax exempt “operating on UC property have not paid Albany’s parcel taxes” for who knows how long. Albany City Council states that previous city council members have “failed to account for how UC Berkeley could short-circuit certain taxes, even despite having businesses operate on their property.” The proliferation of pass-through entities to avoid taxes is not a new problem, and is addressed through an age-old process of the City reporting what are called Possessory Interests (PIs) operating business which rent or lease from tax exempt entities (such as UC) to the County Assessor but are still required to pay ad valorem property taxes. Somehow, this was missed despite the fact that “the California legislature first authorized the valuation of possessory interests for property tax purposes in 1859.” The passage of this measure does NOT address the omission in reporting PIs to the County Assessor by the City of Albany.

Greens support the standard progressive stance that it is the federal government’s responsibility to maintain post roads per the US Constitution and support legislators like Alisha Wahab who advocate for federal spending on infrastructure which includes both roads and public transportation through federally supported long-term transportation funding (a position also supported by many other leading legislators in California).

Albany Measure Q Yes, with reservations EMS, ALS and Fire Protection Parcel Tax

Measure Q updates what voters approved in 2022, specifically the Special Parcel Tax, to update the Emergency Medical Services, Advanced Life Support, and Fire Protection Special Tax. Greens encourage a *YES vote, with reservations*. The measure makes the current tax more progressive by adding exemptions for lower-income households. However leaseholders and renters who are NOT tax exempt “operating on UC property have not paid Albany’s parcel taxes” for who knows how long. Albany City Council states that previous city council members have “failed to account for how UC Berkeley could short-circuit certain taxes, even despite having businesses operate on their property.” The proliferation of pass-through entities to avoid taxes is not a new problem, and is addressed through an age-old process of the City reporting what are called Possessory Interests (PIs) operating business which rent or lease from tax exempt entities (such as UC) to the County Assessor but are still

required to pay ad valorem property taxes. Somehow, this was missed despite the fact that “the California legislature first authorized the valuation of possessory interests for property tax purposes in 1859.” The passage of this measure does NOT address the omission in reporting PIs to the County Assessor by the City of Albany.

Importantly, our Advanced Life Support service bills for service and the revenue they earn fully pays for that service.

Albany Measure R Yes, with reservations Business License Tax Change

Measure R changes the Business License Tax to levy the tax upon business gross receipts instead of the number of employees, and updates local tax collection procedures. Greens encourage a *YES vote, with reservations*. The Business License Tax in Albany has not been updated to address equity and fairness. This Measure does just that, and also increases revenue while balancing the tax to give most businesses—primarily the smallest businesses—a tax cut. The downside is that there may be good uses for that revenue in the community to address climate and equity goals, among other things, so cutting business taxes is not always a community-forward endeavor. Higher overall taxes on the largest businesses in Albany, Alameda County, and California can significantly affect services, especially given that Albany may lose revenue from Golden Gate Fields.

Albany Measure S—YES Real Property Transfer Tax

Ballot Measure S, Real Property Transfer Tax, adjusts the current rate from 1.5% to between 1.0% and 3.0% of the real estate value transferred, depending upon the real estate purchase price/value transferred.

Greens encourage a *YES vote*. The current tax, passed in 2020 by Albany voters, is a fixed rate and thus falls more heavily on less wealthy households. This measure fixes that issue by creating a progressive tax structure. It will generate significant revenue fairly, while lowering the tax burden on the least wealthy households.

Albany Measure T—YES Street Trees & Streetlighting Parcel Tax

Ballot Measure T is a Special Parcel Tax to fund the improvement and maintenance of City street trees and street lighting to enhance local safety and sustainability. Greens encourage a *YES vote*. This measure provides the City with a revenue stream to better address street maintenance and streetlights. This helps remove the burden on residences and thus addresses it more equitably and fairly. That said, Greens point out that the largest municipal power use is often streetlights and that more is not necessarily better; efficiency measures in this area are much needed. Proper planning will recognize that if power poles with streetlights are on one side of a street, trees can grow tall on the opposite side.

Berkeley Auditor Jenny Wong, with misgivings

After being elected City Auditor in 2018, and re-elected in 2022, Jenny Wong is running unopposed. For those unfamiliar with her duties, per the City of Berkeley web page, the Auditor provides an independent assessment of whether City funded services and operations: 1) Are managed properly and in compliance with laws and regulations. 2) Achieve their objectives and desired outcomes. 3) Are being provided efficiently, economically and effectively. Jenny Wong is a long time Berkeley resident who has 26 years of experience in the government auditing field including the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), and the last 8 years as the Berkeley City Auditor. As the city watchdog, Jenny Wong has seemingly performed well and we know of no complaints about her auditing work.

However, in March 2023 Ms. Wong made a trip to Israel that was paid by the San Francisco Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC), a lobby group for Israel. This trip remained mostly hidden from the public until revealed in this article: <https://marincountyconfidential.substack.com/p/what-a-berkeley-elected-officials>. Due to this controversy, we included an additional question in our Auditor questionnaire. Below is the question and Jenny Wong’s response. Our misgivings are with regard to whether elected officials should except junkets paid for by US lobbies that in fact represent foreign interests.

12. Do you think elected government officials should accept or reject free trips funded by foreign governments or by their Lobby agents?

Jenny Wong: “I support California law that prohibits elected officials from accepting gifts over \$630 from any foreign government. I have reported gifts related to foreign travel as an elected official. First, I was part of a group trip for local elected officials to Israel and the West Bank in March 2023, sponsored by the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC). Following the trip, I added on further travel with Extend, where I connected with former IDF soldiers from Breaking the Silence who speak out against the occupation, and community leaders in East Jerusalem. After the Extend tour, I came to better understand the apartheid system that exists. I am not actively involved with JCRC. Second, I received a painting from the Taiwan National Audit office during personal travel. At the time, I gave a presentation on US audit practices and received the gift as part of the cultural exchange.”

Berkeley City Council, District 1 Continued from Page 1

Summarizing where the three main candidates agree and differ, Gangopadhay and Wrubel strongly favor a vacancy tax on commercial real estate, whereas Babitt’s says she is “open to a carefully structured” tax—which sounds like wiggle room to not upset developers. When asked which revenues are up/down, Wrubel and Gangopadhay were informed while Babitt didn’t know. Gangopadhay and Wrubel want to eliminate Flock and similar surveillance whereas Babitt vacillated with “I would evaluate Flock ... I’m sure we can find a company less controversial” suggesting she hadn’t thought about Flock, but was open to surveillance. Wrubel and Gangopadhay favor shifting resources away from police to mental health units while Babitt, while favoring “alternative response systems,” changed the question she answered to avoid saying she favored cutting the police budget to support these services. Gangopadhay and Wrubel favor a ban on police use of tear gas and other “less lethal” pain inducing weapons, whereas Babitt only favors “strong restrictions” rather than prohibitions—referring to these weapons as “tools”—the minimizing euphemism that police prefer to use. Regarding rent control, Wrubel and Gangopadhay support the Right to Housing Rent Board Slate and repeal of Costa-Hawkins, whereas Babitt has not endorsed that Slate and waffles on repeal of Costa-Hawkins. On Homelessness, Gangopadhay and Wrubel oppose police sweeps while favoring sanctioned space and city supplied essential services, whereas Babitt waffles on what she supports by avoiding specifics. On whether the City Council should make National Policy statements, and specifically on the Gaza Genocide Resolution, both Wrubel and Gangopadhay agree that these moral statements are important, while Babitt avoids a direct answer saying this should not be a “focus” of the Council. Lastly, Gangopadhay and Wrubel fully support Berkeley Commissions whereas Babitt again waffles.

A few words about the two candidates who should not be ranked. Steve Kromer is a non-serious, no-experience, pro-surveillance, pro-police candidate based on his performance at the “Flip the Berkeley City Council” candidate event, and on his rambling answers to their questionnaire. Ross Bernet appears to be the slick, hand-picked, back-room replacement for Rashi Kesarwani. He received endorsements from the other Dem Party apparatchiks (Kesarwani, Taplin, Humbert), along with carpet bagger Buffy Wicks. Some of Bernet’s positions can be discerned from his website where one finds these gems: “Champion new housing at all income levels” and “missing middle”—which are pro-developer, pro-market-rate talking points; “keeping ... public spaces safe, clean, and welcoming for everyone”—code for keeping the poor and homeless out; “invest in the Berkeley Marina”—pro-developer; “Ensure our police department has the resources”—maintain bloated police budgets; “any policing technology to have clear and appropriate usage policies”—meaning more surveillance (although he says he is against Flock). Much like how Kesarwani was elected as the developer stealth candidate, I think we can expect Bernet to be massively supported by the same Democratic Party machine. Don’t rank Bernet.



Berkeley City Council,
District 4

Majdi “Gaith” Abuhamdieh

Small Business owner and former Berkeley Peace and Justice Commissioner Majdi Gaith is running to dislodge Igor Tregub who, after suddenly moving to D4 when Kate Harrison resigned, won the hotly contested four-candidate special election two years ago in a close rank-choice voter run-off. Majdi stresses that too much of the city’s budget is spent on police overtime, and the City is starved of revenue due to empty units in the “up-zoned downtown corridor.” As such, Majdi favors a tax on vacant commercial real estate and reductions in the police budget. He also favors restricting Measure P revenues to those specifically for mental health and addressing the unhoused crisis, as was promoted by the City Council when Measure P passed.

In contrast, Igor, although saddened by cuts in social programs, offers no concrete ideas other than passing the half-cent sales tax increase to solve the city’s budget problems. He claims to be “personally supportive of a tax on long-term vacant commercial real estate” but has done nothing to promote this item which would tax developers and landlords—key funders of the Democratic Party. Similarly, on restricting Measure P funds, Igor claims to support this but has done nothing about it.

Majdi supports shifting police resources to community health and safety outreach for non-violent incidents. In contrast Igor, while answering with a “Yes” on the questionnaire about shifting police resources to health services, has not actually proposed any such shifts in the last two years. Instead his answer goes on to discuss his unsuccessful efforts to seek other sources of revenue to restore the mobile crisis center—which apparently just leaves the status quo of police dealing with non-violent mental health incidents. In addition, both candidates favor a ban on police use of tear gas, pepper spray, less-lethal projectiles, smoke grenades and tasers. However it is odd that Igor refers to these as “tools” in answering our questionnaire—the minimizing euphemism that police prefer to use.

Regarding land use, both candidates claim to favor affordable housing. However Igor is a bit murky on market-rate versus affordable with his long-winded answers that seem to hem and haw. When you see Igor using phrases like “incentivizes market-rate developers” and “new housing affordable to those at all income levels” one has to wonder whether he actually prioritizes affordable housing for those with low incomes where the need primarily exists.

One issue that has drawn the largest public comment over the last 5 years is the demand that the City Council pass a resolution condemning the genocide in Gaza and demanding an end of military aid to Israel. Majdi favors such a resolution. Igor, while claiming to favor the Democratic Party line (i.e. ceasefire, return of hostages, end of hostilities and progress towards self-determination—a political position designed to go nowhere and allow the genocide to continue) decided to remove Diana Bohn, an anti-genocide activist, from the Peace and Justice Commission right before a Commission vote on a Gaza ceasefire resolution. This attempt to undermine that resolution, along with his pro-Israel Democratic Party position on Gaza puts Igor out of step with Berkeley.

In summary, Igor Tregub, the “finger to the wind” forever Democratic Party apparatchik, seems a bit out-of-step with Berkeley values. Igor stresses “safety” (code for no cuts to police), working to “incentivize” developers, and avoiding criticism of Israel—three key lobbies for those with ambition for higher political office—much as we saw with former mayor Jesse Arreguin. For those and other reasons listed above, the Green Party sides with “Flip the Berkeley City Council” and endorses change with Majdi Gaith who could bring back some moral clarity to the Council.

Berkeley City Council,
District 7

Aidan Hill and Syrak Micael

(Both endorsed with no preference)

Both candidates express values consistent with the Green Party and hold nearly identical positions on all issues as summarized here. Both candidates are former UC students, long time Berkeley residents, and served on Berkeley Commissions. Both demonstrate an understanding of the structural budget deficit, the crisis over deferred maintenance, are against prioritization of the police budget (overtime), favor a tax on vacant commercial real estate, and restricting Measure P funds to those promised (mental health and homeless services). Both candidates are against mass surveillance, are for shifting resources away from police and toward mental health units, are for strengthening the Police Accountability Board (PAB), favor a ban on all “less lethal” pain inducing weapons like tear gas, and are against MOUs with ICE and NCRIC. On land use, both candidates want to expand affordable housing with infill, while preserving green space, favor using zoning to affect these changes, and favor transit oriented housing at both Ashby and North Berkeley BART stations. Both candidates support rent control and repeal of Costa-Hawkins, oppose police sweeps of the homeless, and favor city services for the homeless. Micael and Hill hold similar positions on health impacting issues: oppose Oakland coal terminal, favor single-payer healthcare, and favor GMO labeling. Lastly, both candidates favor City Council resolutions on national issues and support a resolution opposing the Gaza genocide. Since the candidates are virtually identical on all issues in our questionnaire, we have no preference between candidates. Instead we summarize their stated priorities below and let you decide.

Syrak Micael wants to prioritize: “affordable housing and Tenant protections”; “safeguards on civil liberties... sanctuary [for] our most vulnerable neighbors”; protecting “labor... unions and small businesses”; “raise the minimum wage to \$30 by 2030”; “end mass surveillance and police militarization”; and give tenants “first right of refusal in the event of a sale” (i.e. Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act—TOPA).

Aidan Hill wants to prioritize “housing as a public good...rent stabilized buildings, community land trusts, and affordable housing” built with “strong labor standards”; “public land, infrastructure and ecological stewardship”; “UC accountability...[to] seek...enforceable...contributions” for student and city services; “end Berkeley’s Flock”; enhancing “democratic public power” including “participatory budgeting.” Aidan also says he “will protect People’s Park as a public green space” (although how that could be accomplished with the new student housing nearly complete is not discussed).

Berkeley City Council,
District 8

#1: Mari Mendonca

#2: Michael Wallman

(Reluctantly ranked, but not endorsed)

(Don’t rank Humbert or Feller)

None of the candidates returned our Green Voter Guide questionnaires, however two candidates, Mari Mendonca and Michael Wallman, did fill out the rather limited “Flip the Berkeley City Council” questionnaire which can be found here: <https://www.flipbcc.org/en/candidates/>. Also one can find recordings of the candidates at the FLIP public meeting. Regarding the questionnaire, Mr. Wallman provided rather cursory answers to those FLIP questions while Ms. Mendonca provided more extensive answers that gave us enough information to endorse her. She has experience on the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board, Housing Advisory Commission (former vice chair), on the Community Advisory Group for the Ashby and North Berkeley BART developments, and organized in support of unhoused neighbors and families with Brave Families Rising Above. Ms. Mendonca favors housing as a human right, ending Costa Hawkins and possibly exploring a rent freeze due to our current affordability concerns. She believes: “upzoning is an agenda run by lobbies who are benefiting from the commodification of housing and extraction of such assets for broader capital gains.” She states that: “municipalities are being bullied by state legislators who are working to force inappropriate and invasive densities under falsely

represented ‘housing crisis’ narratives. Neighbors, neighborhood geography, natural resources and, factual, safety and climate concerns should be respected, appropriately engaged and listened to by anyone who takes a position of leadership.” She wants to shift agendas away from those “motivated by predatory capitalism.” She believes: “Surveillance does not create safety, it does the exact opposite. It exacerbates distrust in one another and tends to create a culture that criminalizes its citizens.” Ms. Mendonca states: “In regards to fiscal accountability, our auditor already identified budget oversights and overspending within our police department. We can put these valuable resources towards taking care of our community instead.”

Regarding the other candidates, based on his FLIP questionnaire, Mr. Wallman doesn’t seem to be a serious candidate —has no opinion on rent control, no opinion on surveillance (he works for Google), and offered a rather bizarre answer on Council support of human rights. However, since it is hard to imagine that he would be worse than the incumbent, we ask that he be ranked second. The third candidate is the incumbent Mark Humbert. Mr. Humbert has shown himself to not only be contemptuous of the public, rarely even looking up from his computer during public comment, but has been party to one of the most right-wing Councils in the last several decades. Humbert has supported rule changes to streamline meetings that disempower democratic public participation, voted for Flock and favors surveillance, is in favor of maintaining large police budgets, and is pro-developer & pro-market-rate-housing—including 6 story construction along College Ave. Humbert is basically what one would expect from a Democratic Party apparatchik – he favors monied interests that fund the Dem Party and policies that slowly move us toward a surveillance state. Lastly, Fred Feller does not seem to have a campaign and should be ignored.

Don’t Rank Humbert. Rank Mari Mendonca #1.

Berkeley School Board
Ka’Dijah Brown
Jennifer Shanoski

Unfortunately, there are only 3 candidates for 3 seats. Unless one or more is disqualified (or an astounding write-in candidate emerges), they will all be elected. We cannot recall a Berkeley School Board election that was not at least minimally contested.

Vote for Jennifer E. Shanoski (Incumbent) based on her record and her Green Party questionnaire. She has been responsive and consistently visible to the community.

Vote for Ka’Dijah Brown (Incumbent) based on her record (she did not return our questionnaire).

Sandy Park has no record and did not return our questionnaire, therefore we are not endorsing her.

Berkeley Rent Board
Avery Arbaugh
Ida Martinac
Nathan Mizell
Vylma Ortiz
Derek Rodriguez

There are six candidates running for 5 seats—only one candidate was not chosen by the 2026 Rent board Convention. One incumbent did not qualify for the ballot.

Vote for the five candidates chosen at the Rent Board Convention: Ida Martinac (Incumbent), Nathan H. Mizell (Incumbent), Avery Arbaugh, Vylma Ortiz, and Derek A. Rodriguez. Do not vote for Carole Maracovic, who has run counter to the Rent Board “slate” for several elections.

Berkeley Measure Z

Continued from Page 1

A public bank is not a fringe idea. It is estimated that some 65% of all money held in banks worldwide is held in public banks. And the public Bank of North Dakota has operated successfully—wildly successfully—for over a hundred years, continually growing its ability to lend at favorable rates and terms while returning over half a billion dollars to North Dakota’s budget. Councilpersons narrowly focused on the short term will not be eager to devote portions of the City’s money to Berkeley’s medium and long-term wellness, but we as future residents can make that choice! A relatively small amount of money invested over the next few years will reap large benefits for residents and the City over the next century. Say no to Wall Street’s greed and YES to the future with a Berkeley Public Bank.

Ten Key Values of the Green Party

- Ecological Wisdom
- Nonviolence
- Social Justice
- Grassroots Democracy
- Decentralization
- Community-based Economics
- Feminism
- Respect for Diversity
- Personal and Global Responsibility
- Sustainability

Also please see:
<https://www.cagreens.org/ten-key-values>

Berkeley Measure U— Yes, with bond reservations

Infrastructure and Facilities Bond

This is a General Obligation Bond Measure for Public Infrastructure and Facilities, and we recommend that you “Hold-your-nose” and vote Yes! This measure would authorize the city to issue up to \$300 million in general obligation bonds to fund infrastructure and facilities work. The improvements are aimed at emergency response facilities, parks and recreation infrastructure, updates to seismic and climate resiliency and replacing existing natural gas infrastructure. This requires more than ⅔ of the votes to pass.

Berkeley faces an estimated \$2 billion unfunded infrastructure backlog for aging streets, storm drains, and public buildings, building on prior long-term planning like the city’s Vision 2050 framework. Funding of infrastructure is essential for the long-term health of Berkeley, and letting infrastructure further degrade can be more costly. However, infrastructure maintenance should be “pay-as-you-go” rather than a bond-funded effort that places the burden for past underfunding on future generations. Bond-funded infrastructure should be confined to new long-term infrastructure that future generations who pay can enjoy. The City Manager and City Council are to blame for these past failures which neglected infrastructure while prioritizing police overtime. This bond measure was an easy Council attempt at a short-term fix – another kick the can down the road. Voters would be wise to let them know this at the ballot box Council elections. The Green Party generally discourages bond-funded, short-term budget solutions which benefit the wealthy bond-holders at the expense of those paying the interest on the bonds. Interest often exceeds the bond amount over the course of payback. Nevertheless, Berkeley infrastructure is so degraded that pay-as-you-go may not be practical at this point. Therefore, we “hold-our-nose” with a weak thumbs up on Measure U. The alternative is to slash other city services or postpone further the decline of city infrastructure which will likely cost more in the long run.

Berkeley Measure V— No Position

Transactions and Use General Tax Measure

This measure would add a new 0.5% sales and use tax within Berkeley, collected by the state. The proceeds from this tax would be deposited into the city’s general fund. This requires a simple majority of votes to pass.

Berkeley is starved of revenue to restore essential city services. Unfortunately, sales taxes are the most regressive form of tax to replenish the city coffers, and are not guaranteed to fund essential city services. In addition, Berkeley’s sales tax is already well above the California average. A parcel tax increase to fund essential services would be far less regressive, but the City Council seems averse to taxing the owner class. Finally, the proposed sale tax will only generate about ⅓ the revenue needed to solve the structural deficit problem. This appears to be another kick-the-can-down the road partial fix.

Berkeley Measure W—YES

Amending of Multiple Administrative Provisions

This charter amendment modifies filing fees, candidate statements, the Fair Elections Fund, recall procedures, referendum timelines and vacancy and redistricting. This requires a simple majority of votes to pass. These updates to the Charter bring Berkeley into alignment with the State, increases public financing of elections, and makes other minor wording changes.

Berkeley Measure X—YES

Amends the Rent Stabilization Ordinance

This measure would update Berkeley’s rent control law with a mix of protections to tenants and administrative changes. This requires a simple majority of votes to pass. These updates are worth doing.

Berkeley Measure Y— No Position

Parcel Tax for Arts Institutions and Programs

This initiative ordinance would create a 12-year parcel tax of \$0.07 per square foot of improvements for a new “Arts Vitality Fund.” This requires a simple majority of votes to pass.

No position. Although Green values including valuing art, our non-support concerns prioritizing art at a time when essential city services are being cut for lower income people. This measure directs 75% of the funds to performing arts organizations, which typically benefits wealthier individuals who can afford to attend. Where is the parcel tax to restore essential city services to the poor?

Berkeley Measure AA—YES

Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Special Tax

This initiative ordinance would raise the existing soda tax in Berkeley from 1 cent to 2 cents per fluid ounce, converting it from a general tax to a special tax. Tax proceeds would be placed in a special fund and dedicated to specified public health, nutrition, and drinking water projects and programming. This requires a simple majority of votes to pass. The health benefits from encouraging less consumption of sugar-beverages out way the fact that this is a regressive tax. Vote Yes.

Dublin City Council, District 2

Daniel Hor

We normally don’t cover Dublin City Council races since there haven’t been any active Green Party members there for many years. But shortly before our final November election endorsements meeting, we learned that a Green was running for this seat—in fact, a Green who had helped our June gubernatorial candidate, Butch Ware, put on Butch’s campaign meetings!

His name is Daniel Hor, and he’s running because, “I see things that I wish were different about our world and, to be honest, I wish someone else would go and fix everything so that I can live my life without worrying for the future. But the more I thought about it, the more I realized that watching passively from the sidelines and ‘waiting for someone else’ isn’t going to change anything.”

Among Daniel’s priorities are working to create a “down-town Dublin,” avoiding a deficit as Dublin approaches “full build-out” by 2040, making homes affordable, and reducing traffic problems. Daniel is an officer on the Dublin Unified School District’s Citizens Bond Oversight Committee and has also served on the Public Art Selection Committee and the Shamrock Hills Design Team. He supports social safety nets and workers’ rights, and is committed to “serving with integrity, putting people first, and making tomorrow better than today.”

We encourage you to support Daniel Hor for Dublin City Council.

Emeryville City Council

Continued from Page 1

Rarely have we seen a politician’s demeanor be so at odds with their realpolitik as with Councilman David Mourra. Here, a soft-spoken easy-going persona hides a rapacious heart and a self-dealing public record. Mourra, an incumbent who calls himself a progressive, has not shied away from blocking public policy that would serve to protect the least protected in the community. From stopping renter protection to promoting favoritism in the application of Emeryville’s Code of Ethics (in order to help himself) to stopping a cease-fire resolution in Gaza while supporting one for Ukraine, to rallying against a vacancy tax on retail businesses and more, Mourra has always followed the council majority’s “Corporate Democrat” path.

A self-styled bike advocate, Mourra has for four years refused to support bike safety on the city’s bike boulevard network. There are far too many vehicles on the boulevards, that, according to the city’s own general plan, are required to be quiet streets. Helping developers and the business community who don’t want traffic calming on Emeryville’s streets, Councilmember Mourra has never once sought to lower car traffic to acceptable and safe levels as he is required to do. Mourra has instead taken his cues for how

to govern from the business community. In his personal life, David Mourra may be a progressive but he doesn’t show it on the council. On the city council, he is a reliable “go along to get along” vote with the conservative majority. He has protected his job that way but he has not protected his constituents who need his help.

After voting Priforce, progressives have a choice: Brandon Soublet or Corry Frydlewicz. The choice for progressives is not clear here because both candidates expound their progressive bonafides but one seems more credible: Brandon Soublet.

Soublet’s answers to our questionnaire were unequivocal on Emeryville’s Active Transportation Plan: he fully supports it, including provisions to limit vehicle traffic volume to less than 3000 per day on bike boulevards. Frydlewicz on the other hand equivocated, suggesting that settled number should not be deferred to. But more importantly, we have a problem with her take on housing which defers to real estate developers. Tacking to a simplistic “supply and demand” argument favored by YIMBYist developers, she says the problem with Emeryville is the city council has not built nearly enough housing and prices will come down if we just lower regulation on real estate investment trust corporations. It’s an absurdist top-down argument that belies the real world, especially in Emeryville where proportionately more housing has been built than any city in the East Bay over the last 10 years resulting in the highest rent in the East Bay. Corry needs to factor in how American style capitalism actually works, not just repeat baseless YIMBY talking points.

While Soublet makes good points in his questionnaire and on his website, because he lacks a strong track record on many important issues, we’ve decided to endorse him with reservations. But given Priforce’s impressive work over the past four years, we give him our unqualified endorsement and strongly urge you to make a point of voting for him.

Emery School Board

Skip this race

Emeryville’s school board election is unusual this year because a registered Green is running AND he says he doesn’t want to be elected. Green since 1993, Brian Donahue, the well-known editor of the online news source the *Emeryville Tattler*, is running for school board because he says Alameda County regularly cancels Emery school board elections due to a notorious incumbent advantage at Emery that disincentivizes challengers, leaving incumbents commonly to be re-installed without a challenge. This year is different: two incumbents dropped out after Donahue entered the race. One former board member, who recently quit the board, moved back in to try to re-capture her seat.

So Donahue is running, not wanting to win, but in order to force an election. He says he thinks voters should select the two new challengers because they are new and might be good. That’s a pretty low bar but he makes a point. Three seats are in contention with five people running; one incumbent (Regina Chagolla), one back again after a brief absence (Kimberly Solis), Donahue, and two newbies (David Ridlehuber and Christopher Keith Allen).

Donahue showed us how Chagolla and Solis do not respond to questions from the community as board members, including even questions from parents with children enrolled in the district. This lack of accountability comes despite Chagolla claiming full community accountability and accessibility in her Green questionnaire (Solis did not answer our questionnaire).

Donahue shows how Emeryville is a terribly run school district, dropping down to last place academically in the East Bay while remaining the district that spends the most of any district in the East Bay (\$17,598 per student). He explained, “Four years ago, Emery was the worst school district in the whole East Bay but they changed it around a little two years ago, moving up to third from worse. This year Emery dropped back down to last place out of 16 districts, all while continuing spending the most money per student.”

We recognize test scores mostly show students’ home affluence (or lack of it) but we agree Emery’s lowest position among districts with similar demographics speaks to a lack of efficiency of the district’s goal to educate students. We agree with Donahue, a dropping district is a failing district. For this reason alone, we cannot endorse Chagolla or Solis who have been part of the problem. The two newbies, who also didn’t answer our questionnaire, are untested and they haven’t indicated they have a particularly progressive vision of public education, so we are left with Brian Donahue who is going around actively telling people not to vote for him.

This looks like an election to punt on. And that’s a sad conclusion for a dysfunctional school district that’s in desperate need of a new (progressive) vision.

Emeryville City Measure • Oakland City Offices

Emeryville Measure BB—YES Business Tax Cap Increase

Emeryville’s Measure BB is a baby step towards fair taxation. It seeks to ameliorate the terribly regressive business tax that has been in place in the town for decades. In a nutshell, Measure BB would raise the threshold for the city’s unprecedented tax cap, that being the amount of gross receipts over which are tax free. The maximum annual business tax cap would be increased from \$300,000 to \$800,000 but it leaves in place the tax cap that guarantees the biggest businesses will still pay a lower rate than the smallest businesses. What can we say? We’re not impressed with Measure BB but it’s better than doing nothing we suppose.

Emeryville’s hyper-regressive tax cap means every dollar of gross receipts over the cap is tax free, meaning the bigger the business, the lower their tax rate. Most towns in the Bay Area have a flat business tax, meaning every business large or small pay the same rate. Emeryville is one step more regressive than that. Pixar/Disney and other large corporations love this pro-corporate tax scheme that comes at the expense of Emeryville’s small businesses of course. But the problem isn’t the placement of the cap threshold. The problem is the cap itself. Call us underwhelmed with Measure BB.

We have a better idea than BB: get rid of Emeryville’s unprecedented business tax cap entirely and let every business, big and small, pay the same rate. But that’s a fight for a different day with a different city council more amenable to small business concerns.

Oakland Mayor No endorsement

Our recommendation for this Oakland Mayor’s race is to either abstain, or to definitely not vote for Brenda Grisham or Mindy Pechenuk. Unfortunately, incumbent Barbara Lee is not someone whom we should feel enthusiastic about keeping in office for a full term no matter how much she is to be admired for her vote 25 years ago against the war in Afghanistan, and then a year later, against the war in Iraq. As a mayor she is not offering much in the present. Despite the fact that Lee seems targeted by the reactionary Empower Oakland forces, that is not a sufficient justification to endorse her.

We acknowledge she not only came into a difficult situation like those facing all urban America, but one troubled by the recall of a legally challenged mayor. But now she has opted for a full term. Admittedly, Ms. Lee has had more energy as mayor than her mentor and much earlier predecessor, Ron Dellums, who also based his appeal on his congressional record, but considering how little he achieved, that is a very low bar.

Clearly, the other candidates do not present an appealing alternative. To start, Brenda Grisham is a business owner and one of the people behind the dishonest 2024 recall campaign against District Attorney Pamela Price. Ms. Grisham is part of a significant local right wing that includes some groups that you might confuse with progressives but who are opposed to police accountability or much in the way of social spending or public schools.

Mindy Pechenuk is an educator/researcher. She invites us to “Rebuild Oakland the American Way.” She is probably as right wing as that sounds. Her endorsers are Republicans and she ran for State Assembly in 2024 as a Republican.

Julius Robinson, community investment executive, is the type of technocrat who would probably do the city some good if he was in the administrator’s office. His candidacy for mayor is credible except that he has not been involved in Oakland government in any way. He has some very informed observations on fiscal accountability and program evaluation. His is the only campaign to submit a questionnaire response. His answers are in favor of police oversight, but otherwise seem center-right private sector biased. In addition, with just 5 endorsements on his website as we go to press, he lacks critical community connections and support.

Barbara Lee’s description of what she thinks are the city’s problems and solutions sound like the same things city staff spout when they are finding someone else to blame. Early on she decided to come down hard on people with unpaid parking tickets. Who are those people if they are not the urban poor? Has she not heard the term “predatory enforcement”? Oakland, akin to Ferguson, Missouri, makes money ticketing, towing and impounding the automobiles of poor people. That is one of many things that we do not hear her administration talking about.

Lee is currently getting kudos for an end to judicial oversight of the police. Do we think that the new situation with the police is one of successful police oversight? Is the abuse

over? Old solutions to perennial problems are put forward as some kind of new success. We have the never-present Macro program for the mentally unstable people living on the streets. Other programs to “clean up encampments” do not seem to provide any long-term housing or shelter. And we have big claims made about the success of the Cease Fire anti-crime programs, again.

All of these programs, and others like them, have been around for a long time. At least one has been closed down at least once. Their effectiveness is very questionable. Oakland city departments have the reputation of being incompetent and unwilling to help. For people who live in Oakland the idea that the city will help with the person living behind your trash cans, or smashing windows on the parked cars is laughable. What most people experience is that nobody ever comes, not even to fill a pothole.

This election seems to be another example of needing someone to urgently come help, but nobody came.

Oakland City Auditor Michael Houston

Michael Houston, incumbent City Auditor, is running unopposed for re-election. However, his principles and objectives as auditor are instructive and worthy of examination.

Mr. Houston was designated the acting city auditor in 2020 when auditor Courtney Ruby resigned mid-term. Widely popular for championing the independence of the office, Courtney strongly endorsed Mr. Houston to succeed her. In 2022, Michael was elected as City Auditor, and is “running for re-election to promote transparency, accountability, and integrity within the City of Oakland’s government, with the objectives of: 1) continuing to issue timely and relevant audits that shed light on City operations and identify needed improvements; 2) relentlessly rooting out fraud, waste, and abuse; and 3) promoting performance metrics for transparency and responsible decision-making.

Michael’s dedication to excellence, transparency, and accountability is demonstrated in his recent release of the audit of City contracts to third-party contractors. The report issued 18 recommendations and found that a small group of construction companies received 61% of the lucrative business. The audit examined \$330 million in contracts issued by the city over three years from 2022 to 2025 for roads, buildings, traffic lights, sewers, and other construction projects. According to the report, the city lacked adequate controls over payment processes, was slow in issuing payments to contractors producing high interest costs, provided insufficient oversight of voter-approved bond funds, lacked mandated audits for bonds, utilized on-call, non-competitive procedures that fail to comply with adopted goals for small, minority, women firms, and failed to adopt a long-term plan for capital projects, which results in higher costs to the city,

Mr. Houston values and protects the independence of the Office of City Auditor, including the City’s Whistleblowers’ Ordinance for “its ethical culture and awareness of fraud, waste, and abuse,” which he handles discreetly and anonymously. He diligently “investigates allegations of retaliation regarding whistleblower complaints.” He accepts campaign contributions only from individuals and maintains strict social separation from officeholders, administrators, and development interests. He strictly avoids potential conflicts with the independence of the office.

Mr. Houston summarizes the responsibility of his office and its duty to the people as “identifying ways to increase and expand revenues and contain costs consistent with the Office of the City Auditor’s vision, which is to achieve an effective, efficient, equitable, ethical, and accountable City government that is data-driven, responsive to the most pressing needs of residents, and supportive of the collective well-being of Oaklanders.

City auditor Houston is doing an excellent job and we endorse him for re-election.

Oakland City Council, District 2

Continued from Page 1

She won’t take “Coal Money” but she is part of the inside group that holds sway in Oakland and Alameda County and their methods are personality politics, endorsements, no small amount of spending and above all, a close relationship with segments of the Democratic Party.

Oakland is run by a web of cultivated relationships that serve as a de facto obstacle against anything that would hurt the economic interests, mostly real estate, vendors and entrenched, highly paid city staff. The DSA works to take such power away from people putting our money into their pockets. Most Democratic Party factions, much less so. To add to our problems in Oakland, we have a new right wing using names that no longer deserve a good reputation. That is how we had those well-funded recall votes. Adams

knows to oppose this move to the right and Wang has been way to close to it.

It was good news that the DSA was willing to put up a candidate in our local election. What Oakland needs is a progressive opposition to our local government clique that plays progressive on TV. The Nate Adams campaign has moved us to an election between the left and right and away from elections between the pretend centrists and pretend progressives. Vote for and support Nate Adams for Oakland City Council, District 2.

Oakland City Council, District 4 No endorsement

The Oakland City Council is failing to aggressively solve the city’s problems and thus far, incumbent Councilmember Janani Ramachandran hasn’t distinguished herself from the status quo mediocrity. We were also disappointed with her vote last December for the mass surveillance contract with Flock, although this past May, she did vote against a much smaller contract with Cellebrite, but unlike Councilmember Carroll Fife, she didn’t speak out publicly about it. In addition, we note that she ignored the concerns of the Oakland Tenants Union during the first part of her term, and we’re concerned about potential conflicts of interest involving the nonprofit she founded, Tiger Arts. In particular, according to *Oaklandside*, she solicited money last year for Tiger Arts from a subsidiary of Waste Management which had business before the City.

However, Ramachandran is unopposed on the ballot, and unless an amazing write-in candidate appears extremely soon, she’s going to be re-elected to another term. Nevertheless, we’re not supporting her until she can turn around and become the thoroughly solid progressive leader our City so urgently needs.

Oakland City Council, District 6 No Endorsement

District 6 covers the Coliseum area (with major development potential), Eastmont and the Skyline strip. There is no one close to meriting an endorsement (though we are told there is a write-in campaign, of which we know little). Usually, if we say, “don’t vote for,” it indicates some possible alternative. This is not the case in District 6. We have posed much of Oakland local politics (including the school board) as a divide between a growing conservative bloc, built around the “Empower Oakland” network and a moderate, if inconsistent “progressive” bloc, going back to the Ron Dellums (in Congress) days, with some newer additions. Such is not the case here, though the incumbent (and current city council president) Kevin Jenkins is a prime representative of the conservative bloc and he wishes to ultimately replace Barbara Lee as mayor.

Jenkins was an interim mayor, after the removal of Sheng Thao. He stresses fiscal conservatism but says he would not “slash” jobs; despite submitting, as interim mayor, a budget cutting 400 jobs (“only” 220 of which were unfilled positions) even while increasing police funding. Jenkins, along with many others, advocated for a parcel tax (which later emerged as Prop E) to cover costs of social services but was defeated at the polls. He hardly has vision of a more pro-working class, pro-tenant and pro-homeless Oakland.

Nancy Sidebotham, who was the only candidate who did return our questionnaire, is not a real alternative. A tax preparer by profession, she seems someone who wishes to stay in the limelight by running for office; in 2022, she ran for the at-large council seat. She says the two key priorities in Oakland are infrastructure (which could mean potholes) and public safety, in which she includes public health. She boasts of her community involvement, but much of it centers on relations with the Oakland Police Department. She is ambiguous at best, around “No Coal in Oakland”; and opposes Oakland continuing as a “sanctuary city.” Sidebotham also opposes ranked choice voting and proportional representation, so she is hardly a candidate we can pose as a real alternative to Jenkins. Thus, our position on District 6 is No Endorsement.



Oakland School Board

The reason for a single article here is twofold, first, nearly all the candidates returned our questionnaire and the majority returning our questionnaires answered on most key matters with very similar responses. These included not only broad issues such as safety and student achievement, but more specific matters such as charters, colocation, tech ed and electives, community schools, school closures, sale of district property and reduction of central administration. Then there were the overriding matters of fiscal stability and debt reduction, to prevent another state takeover, while trying to maintain site programs and stability

Which leads us to the other key question, the political basis for dealing with all these matters. This is also the prism for considering the city council. All the school board incumbents make it clear, their goal is to create a functioning majority. The other candidates must be aware of such a reality, especially the two who did not return their Green questionnaires.

Oakland School Board, District 2 Jennifer Brouhard, with qualifications

We support Jennifer Brouhard with qualifications. Regarding the matters listed above, there is a generally a negative view of charter schools, school closures and co-location and the sale of district property, and a positive view on community schools, more tech-ed and electives.

Brouhard has served on the Board four years, and currently is Board president. She has stressed local stability and has sought to communicate through neighborhood meetings. Being a former teacher and union site rep herself, Brouhard stresses local control and strong communication with the Oakland Education Association (OEA) and other union bargaining units in the District. She has defended staff around academic freedom, such as the Palestine question. She has stressed restorative justice and also focused on the needs of students with disabilities.

The reason for our qualification of her is her vote for the layoffs in February, with the threat of a state takeover, rather than making a strong confrontation with the county superintendent. That said, Brouhard is endorsed by the OEA, SEIU 1021, and other district unions as well as the Alameda Labor Council. Also important is her backing by much of the local liberal establishment such as state assembly members Mia Bonta and Liz Ortega, County Supervisor Nikki Bas and City Council member Zac Unger.

We have no questionnaire from Brouhard’s opponent, Arielle Fleischer and her web site has little evidence of deep knowledge of the District beyond being a parent. She references policy determination, by which she means some experience with health clinics, but the political bloc she represents and the endorsers listed are in line with Go Public Schools and now Empower Oakland. Those are clearly part of the privatization, pro developer agenda. These included Libby Schaaf, Loren Taylor, Aimee Eng, Charlene Wang, Jorge Lerma, former/current school board members Jody London, Gary Yee, Bob Spencer, Mike Hutchinson, Patrice Berry, and others of their ilk, on the offensive in Oakland politics

Oakland School Board, District 6 Valarie Bachelor, with qualifications

Another incumbent is Valarie Bachelor; she has twenty years of experience as a labor and community organizer and has served as the director of ACCE and worked closely with the Black Organizing Project (BOP). She has headed the Board facilities committee. She has stressed reducing structural costs and developing more state funding through programs such as early childhood centers and kindergarten transition. She’s clear the District “can’t cut itself” out of crisis, but fears loss of local control. She has basically the same set of endorsers as Jennifer Brouhard. And the qualifying label she gets from us is again the same as Brouhard.

Another serious candidate in District 6 to consider is Alexandra Williams. Williams has some merit; with 15 years of education experience as a teacher and administrator, she is data and site focused. She is thoughtful around a number of issues such as community schools, but is unclear on charters, soft on ‘good’ community-based charters (though willing to advocate for a pause in accepting new charters). She is willing to sell District property; unclear on sources of new resources. Also, she’s weak on academic freedom, cautioning teachers forcing their ideas, on students. She seems to have little base in District politics.

The third candidate in the race, LeAna Powell, who did not return our questionnaire, refers to herself on her website as “Mama Bear” which suggests little public policy experience beyond being a parent. It’s nice that she supports

programs for disabled students and is concerned with school safety but this lack of experience does not show her potential impact, again tied to her endorsers, most of whom are in the same bloc as district 2 candidate Fleischer, plus others involved with public education politics like Cynthia Adams of the NAACP, and retired school administrator Jerry Wolfe.

Oakland School Board, District 4 No endorsements

We did not proceed in numerical order since District 4 is somewhat more complex. Kathryn Camp has little experience, beyond being a parent. She references managing multimillion budgets but her strength is around facility issues, wishing to keep classrooms cool and better long-term property utilization. Her support seems to be in the usually conservative building trades unions and folks Greens have long opposed like Jody London and Gary Yee. And she doesn’t seem to know what community schools are.

Sylvia Pfeiffer Williams has 18 years experience in special education and training in education finance, which seems positive. But she wants student ‘targets’ (test scores?), maintaining charters and questions extra campuses. She is backed by long term education activists (most around the Wellstone Democratic Club) like Pam Drake, Sharon Rose, and Millie Cleveland, but little else, such as labor.

Finally, we come to Mike Hutchinson. We do not see his experience, though lengthy, as meriting endorsement, and though once the champion of forces such as the OEA, the Oakland Justice Alliance, and more recently, DSA, he has lost all this progressive backing, due to his erratic and self-serving behavior. Despite challenging District wasteful spending policies, such as with consultants, and maintaining the District’s falsified figures about their financial distress. He often in more recent years backed policies which seems to favor austerity, though he did vote against the recent layoffs. And admittedly, he has spoken against policies which discriminate against people of color, flatland schools, and has taken a strong stand around academic freedom regarding discussing Israel.

But this brings us back to our earlier point, with whom does he ally? By self-admittance, his chief supporters on the Board are Patrice Berry and Cliff Thompson, both stalwarts of the pro-development Empower Oakland network. Despite maintaining his support for labor, a major goal is to remove two of the OEA/ labor allies on the Board, Brouhard and Valarie Bachelor. And he maintains a narrow vision of what can be included in contract bargaining, excluding social justice issues. Thus we cannot endorse him.

Oakland Measure EE—NO Strong Mayor Charter Amendment

It would be easy to simply say that this measure is filled with so many contradictions that we should just take no position on it—because in contrast, there are so many immediate issues facing Oakland, for us to spend much time justifying a yea or a nay position here.

Nevertheless, while we definitely opt for the latter position, we’re not framing it for the short term. Let us first note that it is hard to imagine any sitting mayor to not desire greater power to push his/her priorities/career. Already Jean Quan, who showed no ability to rein in the power of the police, and Libby Schaaf, a puppet for real estate interests, are strong supporters. We can remember Jerry Brown, who tried to keep his Presidential hopes alive by advocating for a strong Mayor system.

But it is not a question of the past, but of the current circumstances, that should guide our decision. The pressing issues facing a mayor, as well as the whole political establishment in Oakland, will not be able to be resolved by this strong mayor measure—not the lack of resources, nor affordable housing/gentrification. And while reining in some powers of the police might be possible, this measure won’t address the overall question of criminal activity.

Since 1953, the Mayor of Oakland has been directly chosen by the electorate, and so the position has a certain mandate, with a certain bully pulpit. While this is not the same as the council-city manager system in many communities, it is more of a hybrid, different from other large cities such as San Francisco (or nationally, different from New York City or Chicago). Oakland’s Mayor has only been able to push a collective vision based on what the City’s social/economic powers have been able to push as their agenda. There is no question that the current culture is moving rightward, in line with the whole country. Admittedly, Mayor Lee has done a better job than many expected, especially compared to her congressional mentor, Ron Dellums. Lee

wishes to make it clear where responsibility lies for important policy developments, especially when the Council is evenly divided.

But as already mentioned, providing her more power will not necessarily lead to progressive outcomes. And what gains may result during her term, could easily be undone, and even have rightwing results, if a conservative/reactionary Mayoral regime gets elected. Thus, this proposal should not be seen as being a vote of confidence in Mayor Lee, but as a safeguard against future abuse. Therefore, we advocate for Voting No on the strong mayor measure.

Oakland Measure FF—YES Real Property Transfer Tax Exemption

Although we unfortunately were short of volunteers to thoroughly review Measure FF, it seems to be a straightforward measure to close a loophole when property is transferred. Currently, property which involves a foreclosure is exempt from the requirement to pay the transfer tax—even if it’s a billion-dollar corporation or hedge fund which is acquiring the property. So Measure FF would close that loophole, while retaining the exemption for transfers of four units or less to individuals, as well as for certain specified uses such as converting commercial property to housing, or transferring the property to a community banking organization.

We did notice a conflict between the official “pro” argument, which says that this loophole cost Oakland \$25 million for the first 6 months of 2026, while the City Auditor’s analysis estimates that Measure FF will “only” raise between \$10 and \$14 million per year, once implemented. But regardless of the actual amount raised, it does seem to make sense to close this loophole. In addition, there apparently isn’t any official opposition to Measure FF.

AC Transit, Ward 3 No Endorsement

Both the incumbent, Joel Young (<https://www.joelyoung.org/>), and the challenger, Adrianna Valencia (<https://www.valenciaforactransit.com/>) have campaign websites. In addition, Valencia filled out our questionnaire. Valaencia is a product and project manager with a PhD. in architecture from UC, Berkeley. Among her priorities is operational reliability (reducing the percentage of late or cancelled buses), transparency, and affordability (and especially the inequity faced by those who pay their fares with cash). She is [endorsed by](#) County Supervisors Nikki Bas and Lena Tam, 2 AC Transit directors, former AC Transit director Jovanka Beckles, Oakland School Board trustees Valarie Bachelor and Jen Brouhard, 3 Berkeley City Council members, 2 Oakland City Council members, and many other current and former local elected officials.

Young has served more than 4 terms on the AC Transit Board as an At-Large Director, having been appointed by the Board in February 2009. Because AC Transit decided 3 years ago to eliminate the 2 at-large seats and move entirely to district seats, Young is now running for the Ward 3 position. His platform includes Affordable and Reliable Transportation, Adapting to Technological Change, and Clean Transportation—in particular, to have 100% zero emission buses by 2030. An incident involving Young took place a year ago and last month AC Transit published a statement that an outside investigation found that Young had inappropriately touched a fellow AC Transit Board member, leading to dozens of East Bay officials [calling for him to be censured](#). In the meantime, Young has received re-election endorsements from the AC Transit unions, ATU, Local 192 and AFSME, Local 3916, along with the Alameda Labor Union itself.

Unfortunately though, we did not have enough volunteers to further research this race in order to make an endorsement recommendation.



AC Transit • BART • East Bay MUD

AC Transit, Ward 4
No Endorsement

Neither incumbent Sarah Syed nor her opponent Gabriel Morales returned our questionnaire. Syed has a substantial list of credentials related to transit, with formal education and experience, along with the support of people who’ve worked with her. Unfortunately though, as we go to press, neither she nor her opponent have campaign websites. And beyond not having a website or returning our questionnaire, even via internet searches, we were not able to find any information on challenger Gabriel Morales. Given the lack of information on the candidates, we are not making an endorsement for Ward 4.

AC Transit, Ward 5
No Endorsement

None of the three candidates for Ward 5 returned our questionnaire. Murphy McCalley is the incumbent and is supported by those working with him. Of the other two candidates, one (Reynoso) is running for two other offices, and the other (Grcar) five other offices in the same election, so it’s hard to consider them serious candidates for this office. But because McCalley did not return our questionnaire and does not have a campaign website as we go to press, we were not able to gather sufficient information about his candidacy. Hence, we are not making any endorsements in this race.

BART, District 4
Robert Raburn

It was refreshing to read Director Raburn’s responses to our questionnaire. He took the time to answer the questions thoughtfully, with answers that reflect knowledge and an understanding of the issues. He’s been a longstanding advocate of environmental issues and goes beyond just pushing public transit as a replacement for cars. He details multiple ways BART can further reduce carbon emissions, whether through insisting on purchasing its electric power from non-carbon sources, electrifying the diesel-powered eBART trains between Pittsburg and Antioch, or other measures. His responses also show some understanding of the issues facing workers at BART and the surrounding community. He supports and has pushed for measures that reduce the cost for low-income riders and opposes the type of anti-worker behavior BART has engaged in in previous negotiations. He has realistic proposals on improving service, improving coordination with other transit agencies, addressing issues facing frontline workers, and has followed up on his proposals.

He has one opponent who is a self-identified conservative who was censured and lost his position on the Chabot—Las Positas College Board after refusing to apologize for what some considered an anti-transgender post. He is now running for three separate positions, but is not committed to any. We support and encourage a vote for Robert Raburn.

BART District 6
No endorsement

Incumbent Liz Ames is running unopposed, so therefore she will not be on the ballot. She also ran for Alameda County Supervisor District 2 this past June, but was unsuccessful (18%). She had one endorsement showing on Ballotpedia for that race, which was from former state senator Steve Glazer—who has publicly opposed BART and its unions for years.

She did answer our questionnaire and shows some familiarity with some of the issues, but after two full terms on the BART Board, some of her answers still come across as the type of platitudes you might expect from a new candidate—proposing to fix all the problems while drastically cutting expenses. We appreciate that she returned her questionnaire, but since she’s not on the ballot, we’re not endorsing for this seat.

East Bay MUD

East Bay MUD (the East Bay Municipal Utilities District) provides drinking water to much of Alameda County west of the East Bay hills (everywhere from the border with Contra Costa County south to the City of Hayward), as well as to significant portions of Contra Costa County. EBMUD also provides wastewater treatment to the northern part of Alameda County west of the hills.

EBMUD is governed by seven elected board members. Four of those board seats are up for election in November, and three of those seats include portions of Alameda County. Those seats are for Wards 3, 4, and 7. (Ward 2 is located entirely in Contra Costa County, and that seat is uncontested.)

Ward 3, which includes Piedmont, and some northern parts of Oakland in Alameda County, also includes, in Contra Costa County, the cities of Orinda and Moraga, El Sobrante, and portions of Richmond and Pinole. The incumbent director, Marguerite Young, is seeking reelection. Ward 4, which includes Berkeley, Albany, and some northern parts of Oakland in Alameda County, also includes El Cerrito and Kensington in Contra Costa County. The incumbent director, Andy Katz, is seeking reelection and is unopposed. Hence his name will not be on the ballot. Ward 7 includes the unincorporated communities of Castro Valley, Cherryland, and Fairview and portions of San Leandro, San Lorenzo, and Hayward in Alameda County. It also includes portions of San Ramon in Contra Costa County. The incumbent director, April Chan, is also seeking reelection.

While providing water and wastewater services isn’t “sexy,” it’s an important function with major issues, including climate change, keeping toxics out of our drinking water and the Bay, managing large areas of open space where our water comes from, keeping up with demand for services, and maintaining fair and equitable rates for customers.

We (the Green Party) sent out a questionnaire to all of the candidates in the three Alameda County wards. Both Ward 3 candidates provided responses, as did Gary Wolff in word 7 and Andy Katz in Ward 4. You can read the responses on our website. We can’t provide recommendations for candidates who didn’t respond, other than to note that the Green Party made multiple attempts to reach out to all candidates. Luis Reynoso (Ward 7) said he had responded in a prior election to questionnaires for several different offices, but was not endorsed, so decided not to respond. With the exception of Donald Grey, you can find them by searching the web for their names plus East Bay MUD.

EBMUD, Ward 3
Marguerite Young

Starting with Ward 3 candidates, they are Marguerite Young, the incumbent, and Donald Grey, who is a retired water district employee, having worked as an engineer at East Bay MUD for thirty years (most recently as manager of Technical and Emerging Issues).

Ms. Young points to numerous accomplishments over her eleven years on the board. They include keeping EBMUD’s water supply planning updated, tripling the District’s replacement rate for older pipelines, championing designating the Mokelumne River (the District’s primary water supply) for wild and scenic designation, revamping the District’s watershed protection plans—including better vegetation management to decrease the risk of wildfires, promoting steps to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030, including more solar power generation and electrical vehicle charging stations. She has also pushed making permanent the District’s moratorium on water shut-off for nonpayment of bills and expanded its customer assistance program for needy customers. She is currently working on doing more to make the District climate-resilient and fire-resistant and reducing how much nutrients the District’s wastewater treatment plant releases into the Bay.

Mr. Grey is focused on keeping ahead of expected water treatment regulations, which could significantly increase costs to EBMUD customers. He feels the District needs to do more to plan ahead so it avoids the need for expensive retrofit work on facilities.

Both candidates say EBMUD needs to help customers conserve water so it avoids future water shortages, especially when climate change may be reducing both rainfall and snowpack storage in the Sierra. Both say the District needs to look at innovative approaches, including more interties with other districts, more cooperative groundwater storage in San Joaquin County, and exploration of using recycled water as a drinking water source. While both candidates have similar positions on many issues, and both seem fairly knowledgeable about EBMUD issues, they differ significantly in their attitude. Mr. Grey appears to represent the traditional mold for utility district governance. That attitude emphasizes technical competence (for East

Bay MUD, that usually means engineering) and a concern for running the utility similarly to running a business.

Ms. Young, by contrast, appears to have a broader focus in her concerns. Those broader interests include environmental preservation, providing the community with recreational opportunities on EBMUD’s watershed lands—consistent with protecting water quality—and looking out for the interests of lower income EBMUD customers. Ms. Young’s broader interests seem to align fairly well with those of the Green Party. For that reason, while both candidates appear well-qualified, the Green Party recommends voting for Ms. Young.

EBMUD, Ward 7
Gary Wolff

In Ward 7, there are four candidates: April Chan—the incumbent, Joe Grcar—a retired laboratory scientist, Luis Reynoso—a university business professor, and Gary Wolff—a water resources engineer. Unfortunately, only Gary Wolff responded to the Green Party’s questionnaire. Comments on the other candidates had to be gleaned from their campaign websites and materials.

Initially, a striking fact is that both Mr. Grcar and Mr. Reynoso are running for multiple public offices in November. To be frank, this raises questions about how well they would be able to perform the duties of all these offices if elected. It also raises a legal issue of concern—conflict of position. Holding a public office brings with it a duty to act in the best interest of the public, and of the agency being represent represented. But public agencies can overlap in what they govern—particularly when they all cover the same geographic area. When two agencies’ concerns overlap, their interests may be at odds. Someone serving on both boards would have to recuse themselves from voting on either board. If this is likely to happen often, the offices are considered incompatible, and the person would need to resign from one or the other. It’s not clear that either candidate has considered this issue. It may not necessarily mean they shouldn’t be elected, but it’s a cause for concern.

More broadly, neither Mr. Grcar nor Mr. Reynoso appears to have delved deeply into the issues confronting East Bay MUD. Mr. Reynoso’s statements about EBMUD issues are limited to generalities. They provide little information about exactly what he’d like to do if elected. Mr. Grcar’s statements are a bit more detailed, but oversimplistic. For example, he suggests that the way EBMUD can get more revenue is to reduce water rates so customers will use more. He also doesn’t appear to take into account EBMUD’s need to pay capital expenses, for example to replace older pipelines before they fail.

April Chan, the incumbent, might be expected to be able to talk more knowledgeably about EBMUD issues. Her campaign website, however, says virtually nothing about the major issues confronting the District. Mr. Wolff’s campaign website did not contain a great amount of detail, but enough to indicate that he knows his way around water district issues. His questionnaire responses contained far more detail and indicated a good knowledge and understanding of the major issues facing East Bay MUD.

Especially given the lack of knowledge shown by the other candidates, there is no question that Mr. Wolff is far and away the best candidate for Ward 7.

EBMUD, Ward 4
Andy Katz
(Not on the ballot)

Finally, while there is no challenger to Andy Katz in Ward 4 (so his name will not be on the ballot), he did fill out the Green Party questionnaire, and it should be acknowledged that his responses, like those received from the Ward 3 candidates, showed a good knowledge and understanding of EBMUD’s issues, as well as sensitivity to environmental preservation and looking out for lower income customers.



East Bay Regional Park District, Ward 3

William Yragui

Ward 3 voters have three candidates who care about the East Bay Regional Park District, each bringing different backgrounds and levels of experience. Their varied professional histories shape how they would approach stewardship of the parks and the responsibilities of the Board.

Rebecca Lewington is a retired engineer, writer, and brand professional with a long personal history in the parks. She has spent 30 years hiking and biking throughout the District and volunteers to maintain trails and lead women’s mountain bike rides. Lewington emphasizes data-driven decision-making, transparency, and measurable outcomes. Her priorities include accelerating biodiversity restoration, expanding wetland and shoreline projects, supporting the Climate Smart Initiative, and increasing car-free access to parks. She favors expanding the District’s biochar program and supports prescribed burns guided by science and Indigenous practice. Lewington’s responses reflect a strong personal connection to the parks and a commitment to ecological stewardship.

William Yragui brings over 40 years of park use and more than a decade of consistent advocacy at EBRPD Board and committee meetings. As co-founder of Mission Peak Conservancy and a longtime Sierra Club hike leader, he has deep familiarity with park operations, user needs, and long-term District challenges. His professional background in cybersecurity and small-business operations informs his emphasis on risk reduction, interagency coordination, and measurable climate-resilience planning. Yragui’s priorities include expanding wildlife corridors, improving emergency readiness, strengthening public access through transit connections, and building lasting partnerships with Indigenous communities. His answers are detailed, structured, and grounded in long-term observation of District issues.

A notable distinction in this race is the breadth of support Yragui has earned. He is endorsed by multiple current EBRPD Board members, including Lynda Deschambault—whom the Green Party supported in the previous election—as well as other regional park leaders. These endorsements reflect confidence in his understanding of District operations, his collaborative approach, and his ability to work effectively with existing Board members and staff.

Joe Grcar, a retired laboratory scientist, and perennial candidate, is also running for the Ward 3 seat. Grcar did not return our questionnaire, and his publicly available campaign information focuses on multiple races across Alameda County rather than offering a clear platform specific to the East Bay Regional Park District. While his scientific background suggests strong analytical skills, he has not articulated positions on climate resilience, biodiversity protection, wildfire management, land stewardship, or park access. Without a District-specific platform or evidence of engagement with EBRPD issues, it is difficult to assess how he would approach the responsibilities of an EBRPD Board member.

All three candidates demonstrate interest in public service, but their depth of engagement with the District varies. Yragui’s long record of public advocacy, deep familiarity with District governance, and broad support from current Board members suggest he is best positioned to be an effective, proactive representative for Ward 3. His experience working directly with park agencies, his structured policy approach, and his endorsements from respected park leaders make him the strongest candidate to advance the District’s mission.

Vote for William Yragui as the candidate best suited to represent Ward 3 with experience, collaboration, and a proven commitment to the East Bay Regional Park District.

East Bay Regional Park District, Ward 5

Olivia Sanwong

Ward 5 presents two candidates with meaningful experience and strong interest in the future of the East Bay Regional Park District. Their backgrounds and priorities offer distinct perspectives on how best to steward the region’s parks and open spaces.

Bruce Henry is a retired corporate manager with over 30 years of experience at Clorox and Coca-Cola, combined with four years of service on the EBRPD Park Advisory Committee, where he currently serves as Chair. He is also a weekly park user and former member of Pleasanton’s Bicycles, Pedestrians, and Trails Committee. Henry’s priorities include expanding safe trail access, accelerating

wildfire mitigation, protecting open space, and ensuring fiscal responsibility. He emphasizes early-detection wildfire technology, cultural burning partnerships, and responsible grazing. His funding approach is strictly grassroots, refusing corporate PACs and out-of-county contributions. Henry’s perspective is practical and grounded in operational experience.

Olivia Sanwong, the incumbent Ward 5 Director, brings nine years of elected governance experience and fifteen years of civic leadership. Her background includes service on the Zone 7 Water Agency Board, giving her deep expertise in watershed management—a lens she views as critical for Ward 5, which encompasses much of the Alameda Creek Watershed. Sanwong has led efforts to refill Shadow Cliffs Lake, expand trail access, and secure major funding for wildfire-resilience projects such as the 667-acre fuels-reduction effort at Anthony Chabot. She emphasizes multi-jurisdictional partnerships, transit-connected access, biodiversity restoration, cultural resource documentation, and science-based vegetation management. Her record shows consistent preparation, strong analytical skills, and a commitment to transparency.

Both candidates care deeply about the parks, but Sanwong’s experience stands out. Her leadership on watershed issues, climate resilience, biodiversity protection, and equitable access aligns closely with the Green Party’s values. Her work with Indigenous partners, support for prescribed fire, and emphasis on measurable outcomes shows a forward-looking approach to stewardship. Sanwong’s endorsements from environmental organizations and EBRPD directors and employees further reflect confidence in her ability to govern effectively.

Vote for Olivia Sanwong as the candidate best prepared to lead Ward 5.

Regional Measure RTM— Yes, with sales tax reservations Regional Transit Measure

Yes on the Regional Transit Measure (RTM)! Save BART and public transit! For transit, this is the clearest and most important election on the ballot. It’s not enough to vote yes, we need to spread the word and make sure this passes. RTM is the Regional Transit Measure to save public transit for the Bay Area. BART, AC Transit, MUNI, Caltrain, and others all depend on this measure passing. Covid hit public transit hard across the country and ridership is slowly recovering as people return to offices instead of working remotely, but we’re still years away from getting back to the ridership we saw before Covid. BART was the hardest hit, since they relied mostly on fares and had almost no public subsidies.

Ever since the Covid pandemic, advocates and legislators have been working to design an alternate funding structure to keep Bay Area transit running for those who need it, as well as protecting the environment and reducing traffic. If the RTM doesn’t pass, there are no backup options. BART will have to cut service by 70%, eliminating multiple lines of service, cutting hours and raising fares to see if they can keep the system open, or possibly cancel service altogether. Afternoon traffic in some areas would triple. The most disadvantaged and transit-dependent would be the hardest hit.

The Green Party strongly prefers progressive taxation for such measures, and advocates did push for a progressive tax to fund transit, but business interests fought it. Legislators finally agreed on authorizing this existing tax measure. Visit [ConnectBayArea.com](https://connectbayarea.com) for information on the measure and opportunities to support it.



Proposition 1—Yes, with standard bond reservations Veterans and Affordable Housing Bond

This proposition will add language to the already existing Chapter 6 of Division 4 of the Military and Veterans Code, relating to housing, by providing funds necessary through an election for the issuance and sale of bonds of the State of California and for the handling and disposition of those funds, and declaring the urgency of these funds, to take effect immediately. Under existing law, there are programs providing assistance for emergency housing, multifamily housing, farmworker housing, home ownership for very low and low-income households, and down payment assistance for first-time home buyers.

This bill would authorize issuance of bonds in the amount of \$11 billion. Of the proceeds from the sale of these bonds, \$10 billion would be used to finance programs to fund affordable rental housing and home ownership programs. In addition to the complex set of factors influencing all homelessness - extreme shortage of affordable housing, livable income and access to health care - a large number of displaced and at-risk veterans live with lingering effects of PTSD and substance abuse. Military occupation and training are not always transferable to the civilian workforce. Nationally, veteran homelessness stands at 32,495 individuals, with California historically representing about 30% of that total.

The Green Party views housing as a fundamental human right and frames homelessness as a structural failure of capitalism rather than an individual failing:

- Housing as a Right: Every person deserves a safe, permanent home and tenant protections.
- Social Housing Expansion: Building and expanding non-market public housing.
- Anti-Criminalization: Greens oppose sweeping or arresting unhoused individuals for sleeping in public spaces.
- Rent Control: Implement strict limits on rent increases to stop evictions.
- Vacancy Taxes: Heavily tax corporate entities or private equity for leaving properties empty to force sales, to bring housing back into public use.
- Wealth Taxation: Fund social programs and affordable units by taxing the wealthy.

There is no official opposition to Prop. 1. Although we would have preferred for this program to not have been financed by bonds, because of the urgent need, we urge you to vote for Prop. 1

Proposition 2—YES Expansion of California’s “Rainy Day Fund”

California’s Budget Stabilization Account (“Rainy Day Fund”), created in 2004, and the Public School System Stabilization Account are the only two reserve accounts established under the California Constitution. They each require voter approval to make changes to how the accounts are funded. California deposits money into the Rainy Day Fund in boom years and can withdraw funds in bust years. But, California cannot deposit unlimited funds into the fund in boom years to theoretically allow excess revenues to be returned to the taxpayers. Deposits *into* the fund, currently count toward the annual appropriations spending limits. Proposition 2, if approved, will:

- Increase the cap on deposits to the fund from 10% to 20% of General Fund revenues;
- Increase the size of *mandatory* deposits into the fund when there is especially strong growth;
- Clarify that the State’s overall spending limit applies to “withdrawals from” rather than “deposits to” the fund; and
- Clarify that the fund can be used for budget loans, propositions, and federal debt for unemployment insurance.

Republicans opposing Proposition 2 argue that it enables California’s Democrats to continue their wasteful spending sprees and will create more loop-holes so the Democratically-controlled Legislature can avoid limits on State spending. They argue that excess revenues should be returned to the taxpayers in the form of rebates. Democratic state lawmakers and other proponents of Proposition 2, which include the California Professional Firefighters, assert that the fund is intended to help protect funding for schools, hospitals,

State Propositions

health clinics and public safety and prevent layoffs, health-care cuts, slashed services and tax hikes in years where anticipated State revenues fall short.

In considering the Green Party’s Ten Key Values as applied to Proposition 2, we note the Green Party value of “Social Justice and Equal Opportunity.” We, therefore, have focused our analysis on how best to ensure that all persons have the opportunity to benefit equally from the resources afforded us by society and the environment. Thus, in addition to considering the State’s fiscal health in uncertain economic times, it is appropriate to keep in mind the most vulnerable Californians when we think about the services and programs that legislators will likely be looking to cut in lean economic years.

Doubling the cap on the fund from 10% to 20% of the General Fund remains fiscally prudent. The nonpartisan Legislative Analyst’s Office has previously recommended an increase in the cap to up to 50%. Lifting the cap to 20% of the General Fund also aligns with the idea that everybody should benefit equally from unexpected revenues in boom years. That includes those whose incomes meant they had little to no tax liabilities. Hence, the idea that these members of our community should receive, as a matter of right, the benefits of California’s boom years in equal measure to the tax-paying citizens aligns with the Green Party value of “Social Justice and Equal Opportunity.”

For the reasons set forth above, we recommend a YES vote on Proposition 2.

Proposition 3—YES Extend Tax on High Incomes for Schools and Health Care

There are two legitimate progressive tax measures on the statewide California ballot this November: Prop. 3 and Prop. 40. Prop. 40 is dealt with separately, and is by far, the more controversial. Many are trying to play one against the other, but there is no reason for any who are left or liberal not to support both.

Prop. 3 is focused on income tax for the upper echelons of the wealthy. It is entitled the “California Children’s Education and Health Care Protection Act”—it is an extension of initiative-driven legislation, first passed in 2012 (Prop. 30) and continued in 2016 (Prop. 55), raising the income tax from around 10% to 12%, for upper levels of income.

Unlike the Billionaire Tax (Prop. 40), it is not a one-shot deal. In fact, it is already in place until 2031, but passing Prop. 3 will be a safeguard for public education and other public services well into the future. Though originally labeled a ‘millionaires tax’, it covers a somewhat broader swath of the populace—all Californians with recorded income of \$360,000 (single filer) or \$721,000 (joint filers), and above, are affected.

Some consider it largely a source of financial support for public schools (including community colleges); this is true to the extent that Prop. 98 (which was passed back in 1988), is still in place, guaranteeing approximately 40% of the state budget to public education. However, any funds beyond the Prop. 98 requirement will go to health care for children, and public services for seniors, the poor and even small businesses. This tax rate would generate anywhere between \$5 to 15 billion into the general funds.

Unlike Prop. 40, there is near unanimity for Prop. 3 within the labor movement, led predictably by the California Teachers Association (CTA) and the California Federation of Teachers (CFT), as well as in the Democratic Party establishment and among nearly all liberal and community organizations. There will of course be the usual resistance from right-wing “populist” groups like the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, but most of the right and even much of the center are reserving their efforts to defeat Prop. 40. That said, one must be wary of a clear anti-tax wave in California, even for local measures, such as parcel taxes, slotted for schools and other public services.

Extending this tax on the wealthy is vital for our schools and other services—vote Yes on Prop. 3!

Proposition 4—YES Fairer elections via certain public funding of campaigns

Originally introduced as California State Senate Bill (SB) 42 on Dec 5, 2024, by Senators Tom Umberg and Ben Allen with coauthors including Senators Catherine Blakespear, Josh Becker, Henry Stern, and Assemblymember Alex Lee, it passed the Senate on Sept 13, 2025 (29–8), the Assembly Sept 12, 2025 (59–20), and was signed by Governor Newsom on Oct. 2, 2025. However, it was then revised as SB 42, the “California Fair Elections Act of 2026” to

amend the Political Reform Act of 1974 to allow certain public funds for campaign purposes, and to be submitted to voters for approval on November 3, 2026, as Proposition 4.

Prop. 4 modifies the Political Reform Act of 1974, that prohibits public officers and candidates from accepting or spending public money for election purposes, except for funds earmarked for education, transportation, or public safety. Proposition 4 would:

- Allow public funds for campaign use if not earmarked for the above categories
- Require candidates to meet strict criteria and adhere to specified expenditure limits to qualify for such funds
- Prohibit using public funds for legal defense fees, fines, or repaying personal loans to the campaign
- Permit local governments (via statutes, ordinances, or charters) to set higher expenditure limits for qualified, voluntarily participating candidates under a formula
- Remove Fair Political Practices Commission oversight of local public funding systems
- Strengthen penalties for violations of foreign contribution bans: fines at least equal to the amount contributed, up to three times that amount
- Cost a few hundred thousand dollars per year to have a Commission answer questions from state and local governments

Supporters include: California Nurses Association; Consumer Watchdog; League of Women Voters of California; Mental Health Advocacy; Social Security Works. Opponents include: California Taxpayers Association; Family Business Association of California; Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association; and United Latinos Action.

Proposition 4 is a major reform to California’s campaign finance rules. It expands public funding opportunities but with safeguards against misuse and foreign influence. It is compatible with the Campaign Finance Reform platform of the Green Party of California’s platform here:(<https://www.cagreens.org/platform/campaign-finance-reform>) and is a necessary first step to stop the undue, disproportionate and corrupting influences of big money in politics and the undermining of our California democracy. Please vote YES on Proposition 4.

Proposition 5—YES Eliminates State Officer Recall Successor Elections

This proposition would change how and when replacements are found for some state officers who are recalled by a vote of the public. It would separate the recall process from the replacement process for most offices, while adjusting the replacement process for a recalled Governor. We recommend a “yes” vote.

Currently, California allows a recall election to include an election for a recalled officer’s replacement (“Do you want to recall person X, and if X is recalled, who do you want in their place?”). This has meant that recalled officers are immediately replaced, but that has led to some confusion by voters (“If I vote ‘no,’ can I still vote for a replacement?”), which reduces voting participation in already low-turnout recall elections.

This initiative would amend the state constitution to remove the second question, disallowing the simultaneous election of a replacement, and instead causing the office to be vacant until filled again by existing processes for that office (regular election, special election, appointment, or succession). It would also allow a recalled officer to run for the same office again, if a special election is held to replace them, but not allow them to be appointed back into their recalled office.

Current law also provides that a Lieutenant Governor step in whenever the Office of Governor is unoccupied (including via recall), to finish out the term. This initiative would still have the Lieutenant Governor step in, but not necessarily for the full remainder of the term.

The Green Party believes that separating the recall question from the replacement process is more democratic, because it’s clearer, because voters have more time to consider potential replacement candidates (since recall elections can be called on short timelines and often many candidates register), and because it allows for sooner – yet still voter-approved—replacement of a recalled Governor, if the recall happens early in their term. Vote Yes on Prop. 5.

Proposition 37— No, with reservations Loan Program for Middle-Income Buyers of Qualified New Homes

Summary of Prop. 37: This proposition authorizes up to \$25 billion in bonds to offer eligible buyers fixed-rate mortgages for up to 17% of the purchase price of a primary residence “qualified new home” (new construction or first sale of converted nonresidential property). Borrowers must be California residents for one year, plan to occupy the home within 60 days of closing and earn less than 200% of area median income. (For example, the Census Bureau reported a few years ago that the median income for a family of 4 in Alameda County was about \$160,000, so family income has to be below \$320,000). Borrowers must also make at least a 3% down payment.

Prop 37 requires that bonds be repaid by homeowners’ mortgage payments, not the State, so there is no direct cost to taxpayers or any direct state or local costs. The maximum sales price of the home cannot exceed 125% of the conforming loan limit for a one-unit property in the county in which the qualified new home is located.

The California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) will administer and implement the program no later than one year after the effective day of this act. CalHFA will set the interest and terms on the loans to account for the interest on the bonds and CalHFA’s administrative costs of the program. The initiative would authorize CalHFA to contract with one or more lenders to operate the lending program.

Pros and Cons

PROS: Helps the “Missing Middle Class” by serving working-class residents who earn too much for traditional down payment assistance but cannot afford the typically high down payment. There is no taxpayer burden since the \$25 billion in bonds is designed to be repaid by the homebuyers themselves through their mortgage payments, and not by California taxpayers. Builds generational wealth by enabling more Californians to purchase homes and establish roots in their communities.

CONS: California has not addressed the low-income housing crisis despite many local and federal measures—a more urgent crisis should be addressed first! There is no mention on how the administrative costs will be covered, which could be a burden on the taxpayers. This \$25 billion bond will increase the California state debt liability, even if the loans are meant to be self-funding. There is potential for artificial Market Inflation by pumping large amounts of state-subsidized capital into the housing market.

Who supports and opposes Prop. 37?: The California Coalition for Homeownership is leading the campaign in support of the initiative’s campaign and reported over \$12.7 million in contributions. Former California Senate Majority Leader and Assembly Speaker Robert Hertzberg (D) is one of the primary sponsors of the initiative. The California Association of Realtors also supports the measure. In addition, we were not able to find any organized opposition to Prop. 37. The top donors in support of the initiative are: Building a Better California (\$6 million), Homeownership for Families, sponsored by the California Association of Realtors (\$4 million), California Association of Realtors Issues Mobilization PAC (\$1 million), United Brotherhood of Carpenters & Joiners of America (\$750,000), and Western States Regional Council of Carpenters Issues Committee (\$450,000).

Conclusion: Although this proposition is not especially harmful and includes innovative methods to pay back the bond, due to the “CON” arguments mentioned above, and the lack of alignment with some of the Green Party’s values, we recommend a NO vote, with reservations. The Green Party believes that “housing is a human right” and emphasizes many other solutions to housing not addressed by this proposition, such as: renters rights, social housing, vacancy taxes, fair housing laws, ending tax breaks for developers, and funding Community Land Trusts.

With the reservations expressed above, we recommend voting No on Prop. 37.



State Propositions

Proposition 38—NO Bond for Immunology Research

This is a bond worth voting down. The backers of this pile of cash will frame it as being for or against immunology research, which is false. A no vote will be a vote against locked-in spending that we have to pay interest on. A yes vote borrows money and fixes who the recipients will be and how it will be spent independent from what exists in research funding already. An addition of another board is not the same as the oversight that our top academic institutions can provide. Those same institutions are already held accountable for their spending.

Normally we get Hobson’s choices raising bonds for things that are not being done, such as housing the homeless. This is not that. The people who are asking for this bond have the resources and political connections to find other ways to get this research funded.

There is another partially related problem here. That is how much of our research i funded begging the affluent for grants, one project at a time. This explains the distorted choices we hear about in the media. A choice is not really being made by our research institutions. It is being sold at auction before ever leaving the departments.

The solution to that is to just have everyone pay a fair, proportionate share of the taxes and fund our public universities with public tax dollars.

Vote No on Prop. 38.

Proposition 39—NO Vote-suppressing voter identification

The only serious voter fraud in the United States is the people selling us on the idea that we have an elections security problem and that it needs to be fixed.

We don’t have a problem with non-citizens voting. We have a problem with low turnout of citizens who are not allowed to vote for what we really want. Many citizens hold the reasonable opinion that voting doesn’t matter much and doesn’t change anything. In many jurisdictions this is more true than not.

The system of isolating people in strangely shaped districts where one of the two semi-official political parties has the upper hand means that millions of us cast votes that do not legally matter. The problem is not who votes. It is not how the votes are counted. Our biggest problem is what those votes are counted for and that millions of us vote, yet those votes don’t matter.

The solution for this is called proportional representation. Conservative people on the coast and liberals in the central valley deserve to have their votes count for something.

The anti-voter-fraud scam is mainly a push against liberals, especially the black and brown people who are favorable to the Democrats. This is being used as a way to stir up some kind of reaction to a scandal that doesn’t even exist while casting a negative light on immigrants, especially Spanish speakers. Getting this proposal on the ballot gives undeserved credibility to the idea that voting by non-citizens is a fact, when it is not.

Vote No and move on.

Propositions 40, 41, and 42

Continued from Page 1

Polls show approval for taxing the rich is high and increasing, so the Billionaire Tax should win easily. But it is an electoral fact that “big money opposes taxing big money.” They have enormous resources and they have practiced eroding hard won approval majorities, often in a matter of days before the elections. The rest of this article will address what to watch out for—in this and every other tax on the rich—so that when you hear the arguments you can withstand them yourself, and when others repeat them to you, you will have an answer.

The opposers often say they do agree with taxing the rich, of course, but this just isn’t the right bill. The most basic response is that this bill may not be 100% perfect, but it is definitely a perfect way to start the much-needed process toward more equality and fairness. They may say the bill is,

- “flawed” (otherwise they would definitely support it. Do you believe that?)
- “not the right jurisdiction, should be federal not state,” (Gavin, what are the chances of that?)
- “will be applied to you, even though you are not a billionaire” (false!)
- “will scare off innovation” (like AI—also false!) “one-time tax “scheme” not a sustainable budget item” (so why did Jerry Brown insist that the 2012

Millionaire’s Tax should be temporary, and not permanent?)

- “does nothing to lower healthcare costs” (good point, a system like single payer would lower costs and increase access, meanwhile Democratic Party leadership in Sacramento for 16 years has halted implementing single-payer healthcare with lower healthcare costs even when there were campaign promises and budget surpluses and pandemics with people losing jobs and healthcare benefits)
- “no safeguards, no accountability, no transparency” (again, false!)
- “does not provide funding for our sector (teachers, firefighters, sheriffs)” (Trump slashed healthcare funding to pay for billionaire tax breaks, Prop. 40 addresses those deadly healthcare cutbacks. Pass this bill, then pass others)

Their biggest argument is likely to be that it will drive affluent residents and tax bases to move out of the state. Apparently California has already lost a few billionaires. They didn’t pay their fair share in taxes while they were here. The need is to pass this bill, and then another, maybe going down to the half-billionaires, who would’ve only received a full-time wage of \$5,000 every hour for 50 years. Pass this bill, and then another at the federal level. Pass this bill, and then another that directs the funds to other public sectors.

The Green Party endorses YES, YES, YES on Proposition 40, and NO, NO, NO on the anti-tax-the-rich Propositions 41, and 42. It’s a solid start.

Proposition 43—NO Handicaps raising revenues for local services

The original title of this measure is: “The Two-Thirds Vote Requirement for Local Special Tax Initiatives and Property Tax Initiative Prohibition Amendment”. As that title implies, this proposition would amend the California constitution to do two things, both of which apply to “local special taxes” and both of which would (further) limit voters’ ability to raise taxes for local government services. Therefore, we recommend a “no” vote.

First, as things stand now, when local officials put a measure to raise local taxes on the ballot, the public must vote for it by a 2/3 margin for it to pass, while if members of the public do the same thing (via the initiative process, i.e., by circulating petitions), approval requires only a simple majority vote. This measure would extend the 2/3 vote requirement to local tax measures put on the ballot by the public using petitions. Overall, this would make it harder to pass local taxes to fund local government.

Second, this proposition would prohibit any local government or local ballot initiative from passing any taxes on real estate based on its value, except some already allowed in the state Constitution. This part would also limit the ability of local government, or local people, to raise local taxes to fund services, and particularly limits the ability to “tax the rich” locally.

This measure is sponsored by the Howard Jarvis Taxpayer’s Association, who are notorious for opposing taxes, and by Reform California, a conservative group dedicated to lowering taxes and government services.

The Green Party therefore opposes this measure, since the taxes it would affect, no matter how they get on the ballot, usually apply to more wealthy people (homeowners, for example) while often benefitting everyone, or even preferably helping more vulnerable people. Passing this measure would contradict our core Green Party value of social justice and our policies for tax reform. Please vote “no” on 43.

Proposition 44 – YES Community health clinics: More money for patients, less for CEOs

This proposition, officially titled, “The Clinic Funding Accountability and Transparency Act,” requires nonprofit Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) or community health clinics to spend at least 90% of their annual total revenue on services for patients and support services, rather than management and overhead. While their stated mission is to “provide primary and preventive care to low-income and underserved populations”, some clinics spend less than 50% of their funding on providing care.

How it would work—The measure is intended to send more funding into patient services and programs needed in addition to direct patient care. Community health clinics are

financed through a complicated mix of federal grants, Medicaid reimbursements, and other restricted dollars. Clinics would publicly report their finances and clinics that do not adhere to this 90% spending formula would be fined and the money placed in a state-operated account that could later be used for worker training and staffing programs. There are also strong provisions to maintain service with waivers of clinic compliance fees due to economic hardship. It also authorizes criminal charges for false reports and schemes to artificially increase the spending ratio. (Ideally, we should have CalCare or Medicare for All to simplify and expand health care.)

The lawsuit—The California Primary Care Association instituted an expensive lawsuit to prevent the measure from getting on the ballot. Federal regulations spell out how FQHC costs must be accounted for and reported to the overseeing federal agency (CMS), and the plaintiffs argue the initiative would disrupt that framework. The result could reshape how community clinics budget federal and state dollars and could set a template for future ballot-box limits on nonprofit operations. The proposition’s fiscal impact would increase state costs, (but would be covered by fees from the non-compliant clinics. However, a judge let this spending debate move from the courthouse to the ballot box.

SEIU-UHW (Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers) got more than 1 million signatures to qualify the proposition for the ballet, more than double the number needed. Proponents say that “clinics spend too much money on executive pay and administrative overhead and too little on patients.” In addition to Prop 44, the SEIU also sponsored the current Tax the Billionaires proposition and a CEO pay limit initiative.

Proponents (Pro)—The measure is aimed at curbing excessive administrative pay and pushing more resources to frontline care. Proponents say clinics spend too much on overhead and executive compensation, and that the proposal will boost transparency and keep patient care at the center of clinic spending. The SEIU cites high CEO salaries as an issue. Some examples are one clinic which spent \$8 million on a fundraiser that lost almost a million dollars and the CEO of another clinic who received a salary of over \$1.9 million. Workers are the ones that are dealing with the challenges on the ground. These are the people who work in these safety-net clinics.

Opponents (Con)—On the Con side is California Primary Care Association which represents business as usual and has a fancy No on Prop 44 website with allegations of clinic closures and slurs against the proponents. Its board contains many clinic CEOs. They say a hard 90% spending rule would force cuts that put services at risk.

The pro and con stances are like David and Goliaeth. On the Pro side is the SEIU (service workers’ union) which got a million signatures for its ballot measure. On the Con side are a bunch of CEOs. We’re supporting the service workers in the SEIU. Vote YES on Prop. 44.

Proposition 45—NO Guts many environmental reviews

Proposition 45 (<https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/public-display/prop45.pdf>) on the November 3, 2026 ballot will amend the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (<https://oag.ca.gov/environment/ceqa>) to accelerate environmental review for specified projects, including most housing, transportation, water, and energy projects, by setting limits on public participation, limits to lawsuits challenging project approvals, and deadlines to complete environmental review.

Bottom Line First—RECOMMENDATION: VOTE NO ON PROP 45. Prop 45 is a corporate-backed rollback of critical public health and environmental protections. It limits public participation and raises costs for taxpayers. It’s the wrong direction for California.

Do you have QUESTIONS about Registration, your Ballot, or Voting?

Please call the Registrar of Voters at (510) 272-6973 or the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights at 1-866-OURVOTE or check the Secretary of State’s website:

<https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/>

State Propositions • Special Article

Cost. The California Legislative Analyst Office found that initial costs for state and local governments are likely in the high tens of millions of dollars—potentially exceeding \$100 million—annually, partly covered by fees. (<https://lao.ca.gov/BallotAnalysis/Proposition?number=45&year=2026>).

Who is behind it? Prop 45 was initiated by the California Chamber of Commerce, which represents oil companies, developers, for-profit utilities, and other major industrial interests. It will directly weaken protections for clean air, clean water, public health, and wildlife. The measure is heavily funded by corporate PACs, for-profit utilities, and industrial interests. (<https://cal-access.sos.ca.gov/Campaign/Committees/Detail.aspx?id=1484853&session=2025&view=late1>)

Who is opposed to it? Over 300 housing, transit, labor, environmental, environmental justice, and civil rights organizations oppose Prop 45. Endorsements: (<https://peopleoverpollutersca.com/endorsements>).

How is it deceptive? The backers of Prop 45 have no shame in cynically tugging at voters’ heartstrings by asserting that Prop 45 is all about “fixing the broken system” making it easier to build housing, schools, and hospitals, to “fix” water and energy systems, and prevent wildfires. The truth is that Prop 45 harms communities by removing their ability to participate meaningfully in decision-making about projects in their own neighborhoods that impact their lives. This runs directly counter to the Green Party value of Grassroots Democracy. The projects in question are not just homes, schools, and hospitals, but include most land use and public works projects, meaning road construction & expansion, energy systems, data centers and other communications systems, and more.

What is CEQA? CEQA (<https://lci.ca.gov/ceqa/>) is foundational California environmental law. It serves as a model for defense of quality of life for residents and proactive ecological preservation, and remains a vital tool for balancing economic strength with the long-term health of California’s residents and ecosystems. It must be defended to ensure a sustainable future.

Core Benefits of CEQA are that it empowers local communities by ensuring that residents have a voice in regional development, identifying potential project harms before construction starts. CEQA promotes transparent government and requires public disclosure of agency decision-making, and advances climate goals by imposing significance thresholds that drive reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. CEQA has protected millions of acres of open space, has lowered pollution levels in vulnerable communities, and has forced developers to adopt cleaner, smarter, more sustainable/resilient, community compatible alternatives resulting in overall improved projects.

Major CEQA erosions were just enacted in 2025. Now is not the time for more CEQA erosion. Just last year Governor Gavin Newsom signed AB 130 and SB 131, forcing sweeping exemptions that bypass environmental reviews for urban housing, infrastructure, and so-called “Advanced Manufacturing” facilities, which can include facilities that impose hazardous toxic risks on communities. This 2025 legislation is the most significant CEQA rollback since the law was first enacted.

Key elements of Prop 45:

- **Definition of “Essential Projects.”** The initiative defines the kinds of projects that can be streamlined, but it is a very broad and inexact limit.
- **Prop 45 guts air, water, and health protections for polluting projects** by shifting power from public agencies to developers, and nearly eliminates the courts’ ability to prevent toxic contamination of our air and water.
- **Truncated Review.** Prop 45 imposes severe limits on environmental review of and public comment on projects. It does this by establishing maximum time periods that are arguably unrealistic. For example, an application shall be automatically determined complete if the lead agency does not act within 30 days of application submission. Prop 45 also limits the ability to propose alternatives and/or mitigations.
- **Cleanup costs.** Prop 45 forces cities, counties, and the state to absorb the long-term costs of pollution, infrastructure damage, public health impacts, and climate risks. Corporations save money, the public pays. If a project pollutes our air and water, taxpayers will have to pay to clean it up.
- **Corporate lawsuits.** Prop 45 allows corporations and developers to sue public agencies for denying polluting projects or imposing conditions that protect communities—like requiring a data center to reduce its water usage.

Defending against federal attacks on communities and the environment. Lastly, California is enduring a malicious autocratic federal regime unprecedented in U.S. history. The State should be doing everything in its power to defend its noble social and environmental standards. If enacted, Prop 45 will leave California vulnerable to the federal government’s extreme social and environmental rollbacks. Federal environmental laws that protect clean air, clean water, and wildlife are being dismantled as we speak. Prop 45 removes our state’s strongest backstop to the devastation caused by the current regime in power.

Bottom line again: VOTE NO ON PROP 45. Prop 45 is a corporate-backed rollback of critical public health and

environmental protections. It raises costs for taxpayers. It’s the wrong direction for California.

Resources:

- Ballot Label: <https://lao.ca.gov/BallotAnalysis/Proposition?number=45&year=2026>
- Yes on Prop 45: <https://yesonprop45.com/>
- No on Prop 45: <https://www.noprop45ca.com/>
- California Legislative Analyst’s Office: <https://lao.ca.gov/BallotAnalysis/Proposition?number=45&year=2026>
- Ballotpedia entry: [https://ballotpedia.org/California_Proposition_45_Expedited_Environmental_Review_Process_for_Certain_Projects_Initiative_\(2026\)](https://ballotpedia.org/California_Proposition_45_Expedited_Environmental_Review_Process_for_Certain_Projects_Initiative_(2026))

Stop Super AI before it Stops Us!

Nobel laureate Geoffrey Hinton, Godfather of Artificial Intelligence, has warned that the race to General/Super AI could cause human extinction. Most experts agree. AI offers some benefits, which narrow applications can be allowed, but the Hugging Face hack proved AI is already out of control and must be stopped. Other egregious problems include massive job loss, bigotry, intellectual/artistic property theft, psychological harm leading to suicides and mass murders, false medical and legal advice, surveillance, inability to tell fact from fiction due to ubiquitous deep fakes, fascist technocracy, data center extreme gluttony of water, land, energy, etc.

What is needed: an enforceable global ban on frontier AI models and strict regulations/limits on existing AI. Public pressure can make this happen. Amy Klobuchar’s and other proposed bills are too weak. Pausing is not enough. As we go to press, there has been big progress. This is changing fast, but Bernie Sanders will likely continue to be our best bet.

1. Please urge Senators and Reps to co-sponsor Sanders’/Casar’s bicameral Ban Artificial Superintelligence Act: (800) 826-3688 ☐. Urge candidates at all levels to support it.
2. San Francisco is the epicenter. Protests are often at Open AI (1455 Third St.), Anthropic (500 Howard St.), and City Hall (Polk St.) For updates, email: stopai.live@protonmail.com, or <https://StopAi.Live/> and <https://stoptherace.ai/>

Become a Dues-Paying Green Party Member!

A number of Green Party groups around the country have started to ask for dues, not only as a way to raise money, but also to help foster group solidarity, commitment, and the like. So we’ve decided to try it out here in Alameda County!

We’ve decided on a sliding scale amount of \$12 to \$120 per year, but with waivers for financial need. The annual deadline for sending in your dues is December 12. (Quarterly or monthly is also fine).

Please become a dues-paying member now! You can either mail a check to: Green Party, 2022 Blake St., Berkeley, CA 94704, or you can donate online at: <https://acgreens.wordpress.com/donate/> (Feel free to use the coupon on page 2, and write “For dues” on it. Note: Neither your voting nor your participation rights will be affected by the payment, or non-payment, of these dues).

Thank you so much, in advance, for your support, in becoming a dues-paying member!

Warmly, Green Party of Alameda County

HELP WANTED

...to build the Green Party

FOR OUR 2028 VOTER GUIDES

- ☒ Writing ☒ Election Analysis
- ☒ Phone Calls ☒ Production

We’ve got a LOT of races and measures coming up for the 2028 elections, so we’re definitely going to need more help to produce our next issue!

We’ll be working on the March 2028 Voter Guide starting in September, 2027, but please contact us next July or August.

The Green Party needs your help in order for us to grow!

If you can help with any of the above tasks, please contact us at: (510) 644-2293, acgreens2012@gmail.com
Green Party of Alameda County • 2022 Blake St. • Berkeley, CA 94704

REGISTER GREEN for the first time or

If you have been registered GREEN and you changed your registration for the primary election:

COME BACK: RE-REGISTER GREEN

<http://registertovote.ca.gov/>



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Green Voter Card

Clip and bring with you to the polls (and photocopy for your friends!)

State Executive Offices

Boycott the Following Races – see front–page article:
Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Controller, Treasurer, and Attorney General
Insurance Commissioner – Jane Kim *(Recommended, but not endorsed)*
Superintendent of Public Instruction – Richard Barreira *(Don't vote for Show)*
Federal Offices
U.S. Representative, District 12 – Jamie Joyce *(Recommended, but not endorsed)*
U.S. Representative, District 14 – Aisha Wahab *(Recommended, but not endorsed)*

Other State Offices

State Board of Equalization, District 2 – Sally Lieber *(Recommended, but not endorsed)*
State Assembly, District 14 – [Mark Rendon*](#)
State Assembly, District 18 – Andre Sandford *(Recommended, but not endorsed)*

Judicial Offices

State Supreme Court – Kelli Evans and Joshua Groban
State Courts of Appeal, First District – No endorsements, please see article

Special School Districts

Peralta Community College, Area 5 – Cindi Reiss

City Offices

Albany

City Council – #1 (or #2): Aaron Tiedemann, #2 (or #1): Robin D. Lopez

Berkeley

Auditor – Jenny Wong, with misgivings
City Council, District 1 – #1: Moni Gangopadhyay, #2: Daria Wrubel, #3: Laura Babitt, with strong reservations
City Council, District 4 – Majdi "Gaihi" Abuhamdiel
City Council, District 7 – Aidan Hill and Syrak Micael *(both endorsed with no preference)*
City Council, District 8 – #1: Mari Mendonca, #2: Michael Wallman *(reluctantly ranked, but not endorsed)*
School Board – Ka Diah Brown and Jennifer Shanoski
Rent Stabilization Board – Avery Arbaugh, Ida Martinac, Nathan Mizell, Ylma Ortiz, and Derek Rodriguez

Dublin

City Council, District 2 – [Daniel Hor*](#)

Emeryville

City Council – Kallmah Priorforce – and Brandon Soublet, with reservations
School Board — Skip this race, please see article

Oakland

Mayor – No endorsement, please see article
City Auditor – Michael Houston
City Council, District 2 – Nate Adams
City Council, District 4 – No endorsement, please see article
City Council, District 6 – No endorsement, please see article
School Board, District 2 – Jennifer Brouhard, with qualifications
School Board, District 4 – No endorsement, please see article
School Board, District 6 – Valarie Bachelor, with qualifications

*Candidates shown in green are Green Party members.

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Green Voter Guide

A publication of the Green Party of Alameda County,
an affiliate of the Green Party of California.

Alameda • Albany • Berkeley • Dublin • Emeryville • Fremont
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Pleasanton • San Leandro
Union City

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Election Day:
November 3, 2026



for the thinking voter