

Please return completed questionnaires to greg@eastbayforeveryone.org by Th, Jun 3 11:59 pm.

EAST BAY FOR EVERYONE

Candidate Questionnaire Assembly District 18 Special Election

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Please respond to each question with 300 words or fewer.

1. Why are you running for this seat and what are your priorities if elected?

I'm running to give a voice to East Bay children and working families who have been left behind by the pandemic — all while millionaires and billionaires have gained unprecedented wealth. In Sacramento, I will further advance the progressive legacy of our district in fighting for social, racial, environmental, and economic justice, and seek structural change for communities that for too long have been denied the resources and opportunities to thrive.

After moving to Alameda more than 20 years ago, I worked for and led several nonprofit organizations focused on improving outcomes for low-income children. I've been proud to serve as President of the Alameda Unified School District Board, especially in this time of crisis caused by the pandemic.

As the CEO of Oakland Promise, a cradle-to-college and career preparation initiative across Oakland public schools, I have seen firsthand how the systems in our state — from education and the criminal justice system to health care and housing — often fail to provide for all Californians. As a community leader, I've worked to translate the needed change we seek into statewide policy.

My top priorities are educational equity, womens' economic justice, and the protection of our rights as working families. I will work to make sure that the nearly 50% of the state budget that goes towards education will be used to ensure that our schools are recognized as the essential hubs of support for

children. For too long, women's health has been undermined and undervalued in our health policy and systems. I will seek to protect our right to organize within the workplace, to protect our right to organize for political power-building, and to ensure that we have affordable housing and tenant protections so that we do not get displaced from our communities.

2. Why do we have a housing crisis in California, and how do we solve it?

We have a housing crisis in California because for decades cities have been adding jobs but not corresponding housing, influenced by the perverse property tax incentives which date back to 1978's Proposition 13, where commercial property provides more tax benefits to cities than residential property which require additional public services. Combined with the racist legacy of single-family zoning, which continued the traditions of redlining and exclusionary covenants that banned home sales to people of color, new housing was pushed further and further from jobs while existing neighborhoods and cities were slow to build. Additionally, what limited housing has been built in employment centers has become the target for speculators and international investment, adding further demand to an already constrained supply which views the housing market as a place for money to live as opposed to people. Lastly, we have also not been constructing sufficient affordable housing, and we have been forcing tenants out of their homes due to insufficient protections from Costa-Hawkins and the Ellis Act. We solve the crisis, at least in part, by making it easier to build more affordable housing in more types of zoning to increase density while also protecting existing tenants from displacement and gentrification through protecting them from evictions and rent gouging.

3. What policies will you put in place to reduce the number of people who experience homelessness and return them to stable housing?

Addressing homelessness is a top priority for me, as someone who had to move 13 times in 16 years. And we know that the face of homelessness has changed--with more children and families finding themselves one paycheck away from a home, and more of our folks needing mental health supports being disconnected from their families. I believe in a "Housing-First" approach, which to me means preventing people from becoming homeless in the first place, getting homeless individuals housed again as quickly as we can, and then focusing on wraparound services in order to keep them off the streets. The Newsom Administration's embrace of Project Roomkey and Project Homekey have been positive steps--allowing the state to expand the number of beds available for the homeless virtually overnight by housing them in largely vacant motels wracked by the pandemic. And we need to take the next step by taking some of these motels off the market entirely and turn them into permanent transitional housing or permanent very low income housing. Regarding new housing, infilling and upzoning to promote housing production, without assurances that we are building affordable housing will not fulfill our need in California to promote affordable housing that keeps members of our community from being displaced.

4. How do you plan to increase the production and preservation of affordable housing and the production of market-rate housing?

I believe that, with amendments to make them more renter-friendly and affordable, a number of bills in the Senate's housing package will be able to boost production and protection of affordable housing. We must upzone, build additional granny units, build additional housing units along transit corridors and in job centers, but above all else, this construction must be centered in the need for the new construction, the new units, to have elements of affordability and tenant protections baked into them.

5. What additional protections and assistance for renters do you support?

I support repealing Costa-Hawkins and implementing a state standard for rent control as well as allowing local governments to enact stronger renter protections. I support repealing the Ellis Act and, if landlords are still allowed to exit the rental market, placing additional conditions on that exit. While the 5%+ CPI rent control of AB 1482 was an important start, the exclusions in the act, including the first 15 years of occupancy for all units, could have done more to prevent renters and help ensure rents do not continue to outpace wage growth. I support extending the COVID-19 eviction moratorium. I believe we should expand the renter's tax credit and raise the income eligibility threshold to account for high cost of living regions such as Alameda county.

6. Do you support ending single-family zoning? That is to say, should gentle density housing such as duplexes, triplexes, or fourplexes be permitted wherever single-family homes are allowed, including high-income neighborhoods?

In general, new housing should be built 1.) in traditionally single family neighborhoods which held exclusionary zoning ordinances that discouraged growth and discriminated against people of color, and 2.) near transit hubs as a form of transit-oriented development to address the nexus between the climate crisis and transportation / vehicle miles traveled to and from employment. However, above all else, it is critical that new housing developments not fuel displacement and gentrification. Infilling and upzoning to promote housing production, without assurances that we are building affordable housing will not fulfill our need in California to promote affordable housing that keeps members of our community from being displaced.

7. Do you support re-prioritizing transit and pedestrian infrastructure over cars? Have you worked on any measures to support pedestrians, mass transit, travelers with disabilities, or bike infrastructure, or to reduce traffic deaths and injuries?

I absolutely support re-prioritizing transit and pedestrian infrastructure as we move to decarbonize our economy and move away from fossil fuels to more sustainable and mass transit. I have been active in the campaigns for Alameda County's sales tax hikes which have funded mass transit and promoted alternative transit infrastructure.

8. Please indicate whether you support the following current legislation (yes/no preferred):

- a. YES - AB 71 Corporate tax rate increase for housing and shelter for the homeless
- b. YES - AB 328 Divert savings from upcoming prison closures to house people coming out of incarceration
- c. YES - AB 339 Require localities to allow remote participation and comment of legislative meetings after end of pandemic
- d. YES - AB 387 To establish state housing authority to directly develop mixed income rental and limited equity homeownership housing at scale (as introduced)
- e. YES - AB 455 Bus-only lanes on the Bay Bridge
- f. YES - AB 854 Ellis Act reform
- g. YES - AB 946 Eliminate mortgage interest deduction on second homes to assist first-time homebuyers
- h. YES - AB 1322 Prevent city charters (like Article 26 in Alameda) from blocking cities from having housing elements meeting their obligations
- i. YES - AB 1401 Eliminate parking requirements near transit or in low vehicle-miles-traveled areas
- j. YES - AB 1487 Funding eviction defense
- k. YES - ACA 1 Constitutional amendment so localities can fund housing, transit, other infrastructure with 55% vote instead of current 67%
- l. YES - SB 2 Information-sharing on and decertification of unfit police
- m. YES - SB 5 State affordable housing bonds
- n. SB 6 Require cities to allow housing in commercial zones
- o. SB 8 Extend sunset of Housing Crisis Act to 2030
- p. Needs Amendments to protect renters and promote affordable housing - SB 9 Allow duplexes or lot splits for two homes in single-family-zoned areas
- q. Needs Amendments to protect renters and promote affordable housing - SB 10 Allow city councils to choose to rezone up to 10 homes per parcel
- r. YES - SB 271 End law reserving office of county sheriff to police
- s. YES - SB 478 Prevent cities from using certain design standards to make 2-10 units infeasible on land they have officially designated as for 2-10 units
- t. YES - SCA 2 Repeal Article 34 of the California Constitution, racist measure from 1950 that made it harder for cities to build affordable housing

9. Is there anything else you would like to convey to East Bay for Everyone?

I was born to activists of the Young Lords Party as a Boricua of New York, Puerto Rico and the East Coast. I transplanted to CA 20+ years ago to continue my life of service and activism. I was raised by a single mother, who dedicated her life to provide workforce training and opportunities to thousands of Black, Latino, and API members of our community, who took on a lifelong fight for economic justice through work. She raised me to be a strong Black Latina, and I have dedicated my life, through non-profit service and working in education and for children and youth, to disrupt the school to prison pipeline and to ensure that Black, Latino, API and children experiencing poverty could be assured that their schools had an education, health supports, mental health supports, and career technical education and pathway programs. Through the many sacrifices of my mother and her family, financial aid, and by

working up to four jobs, I was able to go to Yale, then Harvard Graduate School of Education for a Ed.M program, and then Yale Law School. I currently serve on the Alameda Unified School District School Board, as the third term president.