



Democratic Socialists of America - *Los Angeles* *Electoral Politics Committee's* Voter Guide for November 6th, 2018

GOVERNOR / LT GOVERNOR / UNITED STATE SENATE / ATTORNEY GENERAL
SECRETARY OF STATE / STATE TREASURER / INSURANCE COMMISSIONER
STATE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION / FEDERAL CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS
CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE / CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY
STATE SUPERINTENDENT / LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF / LOS ANGELES
COUNTY ASSESSOR / STATE PROPOSITIONS / COUNTY MEASURES / AND MORE!

CONTACT US AT ELECTORALPOLITICS@DSA-LA.ORG

HELLO, AND WELCOME TO THE DSA-LA ELECTORAL POLITICS COMMITTEE'S VOTER GUIDE TO THE 2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS!

There's a lot to vote for this year, so we decided to do the research on *every race on the ballot* (OK, almost every race) so you could know who and what you're voting for when you mark those little dots in the polling booth. Given the huge number of races in LA county, we decided to create a cheat sheet with our recommendations—many of those represent “lesser evil” calculations, and in some cases, there simply isn't anyone else to vote for.

None of these candidates are endorsed by DSA-LA. We require our whole membership to vote to endorse a candidate, and a full endorsement would likely include a commitment for the chapter to devote time and money to that campaign. But our chapter has voted to endorse **Prop 10—Yes on 10!**—and **Measure B—Yes on B!**—and you can help us support renters across the state and a public bank in Los Angeles by **joining one of our canvasses or phonebanks** as we hurtle towards November 6.

Other than the **Prop 10** and **Measure B** endorsements, these recommendations are just what a few dedicated DSA members in the Electoral Politics committee came up with after hours of researching the races through a pragmatic leftist lens. We'd also recommend you read more about specific races and ballot propositions to get more context on what you're voting for.

If you scroll down to a particular race, you'll see that the level of detail varies between races—this was a long and communal effort, but we decided to share as much information as seemed useful for you to make a considered choice. In some uncontested or barely contested races, we just wrote a blurb. In others, we went a little deeper to give you some background on the incumbents who are ambling into yet another term. Often, we just found a funny detail or two about Republican or Libertarian candidates—if you're reading this, we don't imagine you'd vote for them anyway.

You might also notice that a surprising number of these races are either literally or practically uncontested and that most of the candidates seem bland, hazily defined, and mildly corrupt. This is a consequence of our big-money political system that rewards machine candidates and incumbents and drastically hampers the democratic process. We've chosen not to make recommendations in races where a Democrat is running against a non-Democrat and is expected to coast unless we thought the

Democrat was particularly worth recommending. It is our collective duty to make sure these uncontested candidates face true challenges from the left in future elections.

That being said, especially for the down-ballot and local races, your vote and the votes of your friends and family can make a big difference in our collective lives, so please vote on November 6.

If the choices seem dispiriting, we invite you [join us in DSA-LA](#) to work towards building a better future. Our government, our economy, and our society have been stolen from us by a venal mob of mediocre plutocrats. We can take it back if we band together and fight.

You can look up your district here: <http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/>

And find your polling place here: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/polling-place/>

And if you'd like to find out more about any of these candidates or races, feel free to email us at electoralpolitics@dsa-la.org, and we can either answer your questions, point you towards more information, or help you learn how to do this research yourself

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STATEWIDE

GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA

Back in June, we explained that this race was effectively **Gavin Newsom's** to lose. The real race of the primary was whether pro-Trump Republican businessman and proto-fascist **John Cox** would beat out sold-his-soul-to-the-charter-school devil **Antonio Villaraigosa**, while other candidates with actually good politics would finish far behind. And lo, it was so. Now the California GOP is hoping a base energized by this candidacy might propel deliver some of their more insidious policy goals.

There's not too much to discuss in this race. John Cox's platform is classic Republican business – he's endorsed by Trump, he supports building a border wall, he's anti-abortion, and he opposes sanctuary state policies. If you're reading this, you're not going to vote for him.

So instead, let's talk about why you shouldn't trust Newsom, even if you should vote for him. Prior to this governor run, Gavin Newsom was a "wine shop entrepreneur" in the early 1990s, backed by a family friend and Getty oil heir. Trading on those family connections, he was appointed by famously corrupt mayor Willie Brown to the San Francisco board of supervisors, touting himself as a "dogmatic fiscal conservative".

In 2004, Newsom made a slight shift in his "dogmatic" ideology to become a moderate Democrat and win the San Francisco mayoral race. Calling himself a "centrist in the Dianne Feinstein mold," he helped facilitate San Francisco's gradual transition into a techno-capitalist dystopia by focusing housing development exclusively on subsidies to market-rate developers and other pro-business policies while using social-liberal issues like support for gay marriage to stave off progressive revolt. In 2011, Gavin Newsom took office as Lt. Governor and continued his pro-business liberal evolution, becoming a proponent of "smart government" and publishing a book touting technology as the solution to partisan gridlock and citizen disinterest.

There's a bit of a pattern here: Gavin Newsom's positions and ideologies have continuously shifted depending on what power he could gain and what influence he could benefit from. So, although his governor platform is very, very good, and includes sanctuary state policies, ending private prisons, creating a state bank, single-payer healthcare, and universal preschool – frankly, we don't trust him. Newsom's candidacy and platform are about his recognition of the progressive Bernie-Sanders-inspired

revolt within the California Democratic party, using California labor's justified disgust with charter school fiend Antonio Villaraigosa, and, above all, Gavin's thirst for power.

Fun random note: Newsom's ex-wife, Kimberly Guilfoyle, is currently dating Donald Trump, Jr.

Meanwhile, Newsom himself is the current Lieutenant Governor of California since winning the seat in 2010. Before getting into politics, he was a businessperson, running a wine shop in the Bay Area. He was on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors from 1998 to 2004 and was the mayor of San Francisco from 2004 to 2010. His endorsers include Sen. Kamala Harris, Rep. Ro Khanna, the California Teachers Association, the California Nurses Association, SEIU, and many others.

Newsom's platform includes being pro-choice, supporting California's status as a sanctuary state, providing universal preschool, starting a college savings account for every incoming kindergartener, free tuition for two years of community college, repealing the death penalty and the three-strikes law, ending cash bail and for-profit prisons, supporting a California state single-payer health care system, creating a state bank, and expanding earned Income Tax Credit for low-income earners.

Newsom currently has \$17,643,132 in his war chest. Also, wondering why Gavin's *punim* isn't in your official Candidate State Voter Guide? [In order to have your picture included, election law dictates that campaigns must agree to a cap in spending.](#) In the California Governor's race, that cap is \$14.5 million. Gavin Newsom's campaign went way over. So he's gone all high school "didn't go to picture day."

John Cox is a lawyer and businessperson. He is endorsed by Donald Trump and running on an anti-immigrant platform with strong overtones of fascism—campaign slogans include "Reclaim California" and "End the Sanctuary State." His platform includes repealing the gas tax increase, defending Prop 13, ending sanctuary cities, and outlawing abortions. The Cox campaign has \$1,206,691 on hand. John Cox is a bad person.

RECOMMENDATION:

Plug your nose and vote for Newsom, but don't expect him to deliver on any of his promises unless we fight for them.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

What does the Lieutenant Governor even do? We asked **Gayle McLaughlin** when she spoke to us for her primary run for the position back in June, and even *her* answer was “honestly, not much”. More seriously, Gayle explained that the Lieutenant Governor, besides being there to replace the Governor in an emergency, holds mostly soft power – using their role as a bully pulpit. Our current Lieutenant Governor is none other than gubernatorial favorite and sleazeball Gavin Newsom. Newsom has used his time in office to write a book about using technology to magically solve the problems of governance. He has also done other (slightly nicer) things like advocating for the decriminalization of marijuana.

Had Gayle McLaughlin won, she would have used her position to travel around the state, drawing attention to progressive and socialist causes and pushing other elected officials to support those causes and actually serve the people. Unfortunately, Gayle didn’t make it past the primary, so we’re now faced with the choice between two much-less-exciting Democrats.

Ed Hernandez is a 12-year state legislator and optometrist representing the San Gabriel Valley. He has primarily focused his legislative work on public health issues, passing good but relatively minor reforms like banning Medicaid work requirements. He voted in favor of SB-562 to establish single-payer healthcare in California earlier last year, although he hasn’t gone on the record supporting single payer healthcare more generally. Hernandez’s support has primarily come from labor unions; he’s endorsed by the California Labor Federation, the California Nurses Association (CNA), UNITE HERE, California Teachers Association (CTA) and a [bunch more](#).

Overall he’s *fine*, if boring.

On the other hand, we’ve got **Eleni Kounalakis**. Kounalakis is the daughter of a prominent Sacramento-area real estate developer who is a major donor to the Democratic party and has been fined by the EPA for violations of the Clean Water Act. Kounalakis served as the head of her father’s development firms, reaping massive wealth before trading that wealth for some political influence and being appointed as U.S. Ambassador to Hungary. She’s now running for Lieutenant Governor with a bunch of predictable machine endorsements like Dianne Feinstein, Nancy Pelosi, and Barbara Boxer. Kounalakis’s campaign has raised a lot of money... primarily from herself, her father, and their realtor friends.

Based on the money behind Kounalakis' run, we fully expected her campaign to be more of the same neoliberal "I'm a businesswoman so I can run the government efficiently, like a business" muck. And some of it is, touting her reputation as "one of Sacramento's most prominent business women". Kounalakis's platform actually has (marginally) more substance than Hernandez's. While Hernandez's website mostly cites his record in the legislature, Kounalakis calls explicitly for free community college in California and astoundingly, Bernie Sanders's Medicare-for-all plan.

Honestly, that last one was kind of a shocker. It was absolutely *not* what we expected from Kounalakis, and it was otherwise going to be an easy recommendation for the labor-backed candidate who *isn't* a real estate developer.

RECOMMENDATION:

Ultimately, we still lean towards **trusting our union allies and voting Hernandez**, but man do we wish that Ed had given us a real platform to work with.

UNITED STATES SENATE

Dianne Feinstein has been a mainstay of the California Democratic party machine for decades. She joined the Senate in 1992 after previously serving as mayor of San Francisco. Feinstein's record in the Senate reflects her establishment status: she supported the Iraq war, co-sponsored an extension of the PATRIOT Act, voted for Medicare means-testing, and has been a major power in pushing for the war on drugs. After getting elected by proudly touting centrist cred, Feinstein's shifted her official positions to be more liberal over the years, but she still considers marijuana a gateway drug, opposes single-payer healthcare, and only recently changed her position on the death penalty. In short, Dianne Feinstein represents the worst of the insider-influence centrist Democratic party that precipitated Trump and should be removed from power.

Opposing Feinstein is **Kevin de León**, a candidate who is far to Feinstein's left. De León is the child of a working-class immigrant family. He entered politics through a job as a labor organizer with the California Teachers Association, won Jackie Goldberg's former seat in the Assembly, and then moved to the State Senate in 2010. He supports single-payer healthcare, a shift to renewable energy, strong gun control, and supporting labor. He has won the endorsements of a large swath of the California labor movement. De León even sought DSA-LA's endorsement in this election by submitting answers to our candidate questionnaire. Although the chapter will not formally endorse him and his answers don't perfectly align with our priorities, his willingness to engage with DSA and the viewpoints reflected by his answers are very good indicators of his stance.

De León faces extraordinarily long odds in this challenge. He made the general with just under 12% of the vote compared to Feinstein's 44%. Early polls showed him down by up to 40%, a gap which has since closed to a still-intimidating 20%. Nevertheless, de León's candidacy has been notable for being the first time Feinstein has faced a progressive challenger with any clout. De León's [endorsements](#) include many Democratic representatives from the progressive wing of the party, a huge slew of unions, and in a surprise upset, even the California Democratic party.

Given Feinstein's longevity and name recognition, she's still quite likely to win the race. If she does, the California Democratic party machine will rumble on – smart money is on Feinstein retiring sometime in the next four years, allowing likely-governor Newsom to appoint another party stooge in her place (some rumors have it that our very own Mayor Eric Garcetti is a frontrunner for that appointment). Kevin de León is

certainly imperfect – his time and connections within the Democratic party make him solidly a part of the party establishment – he did endorse Clinton in the 2016 primary – but he’s as far left as possible while having this much clout within the party.

RECOMMENDATION:

We must be better than business as usual if we’re to challenge the barbarism of Trump’s GOP. Fight the centrist business-as-usual machine: **vote for Kevin de Leon.**

ATTORNEY GENERAL OF CALIFORNIA

Back in June, we recommended a vote for **Dave Jones** – an insurgent progressive from the Bernie wing of the Democratic Party who just barely missed out on the CDP endorsement. Jones refused to take campaign contributions from big industries and challenged the appointed incumbent **Xavier Becerra** for neglecting to define any platform beyond trading on his opposition to Trump. Jones was endorsed by a wide variety of progressive unions, but ultimately came in third, 10 points behind Republican **Steven Bailey**.

Becerra's platform continues to be uninspiring. He refuses to endorse single-payer healthcare and avoids specifics about improving conditions within California by trading exclusively on a campaign of #resisting Trump. Still, his opponent, Republican Steven Bailey, is just about the most heinous "tough on crime" Republican possible. His endorsements include major police unions, the NRA, and the Pro Life Council.

Xavier Becerra grew up in a working-class family in Sacramento, got his BA and JD from Stanford, and then jumped straight into politics. In 1990, he won an eastside LA seat for State Assembly, and then went on to become the congressman for a broad chunk of the east side of the city in 1993. He returned to California in 2017, when Jerry Brown appointed him Attorney General to fill the seat left open by Kamala Harris when she became a US Senator. Since taking office, Becerra has devoted much of his time to filing lawsuits against the Trump administration's policies targeting immigrant communities.

Besides opposing Trump, Becerra's platform is not clearly defined and lacks many specifics. He mentions exploring options for bail reform, supporting sanctuary cities, and building "trust and communication between Californian families and law enforcement." He has publicly supported a Medicare-for-All system in California in the past, but his current campaign website does not advocate for single-payer. He also supports the death penalty.

As of May 10th, Becerra leads all other candidates with \$3,712,962 in his war chest. Most of his biggest donations come from centrist (or outright conservative) unions such as the SEIU, the ILWU, and the Laborers' International Union of North America.

Becerra's opponent is Republican Steven Bailey. Since 2009 Bailey has been a Judge in the El Dorado County Superior Court of California. He is endorsed by the Pro Life Council, the Gun Owners of California, and Three-Strikes Sentencing Laws advocate

Mike Reynolds. *Yeesh*. Bailey is light on specifics but publicly state he is against "Reducing sentences, realignment, and early release." Bailey has \$12,977 cash on hand.

RECOMMENDATION:

You can probably safely expect Becerra to win easily, but remember that a Bailey Attorney General would see a redoubling of California's policy of mass incarceration, the war on drugs, and the oppression of our most vulnerable communities. **Vote Becerra.**

SECRETARY OF STATE OF CALIFORNIA

There's not too much to say about this election. The Secretary of State has control overstate elections, the campaign finance system, and a host of business regulatory and licensing bodies. The Democratic incumbent, **Alex Padilla** is uninspiring – he's fairly police and prison friendly, was a big Clinton booster, has basically no interest in taking on real campaign finance reform, and he's been sued by the ACLU twice. On the positive side, Padilla has helped pass legislation to expand ballot access by extending the early voting period and automatically registering voters who get drivers licenses. Republican **Mark Meuser** has been heavily campaigning against Padilla's wins, using the highly-successful Republican bogeyman of voter fraud.

Alex Padilla is the incumbent candidate for Secretary of State. In his time as SOS he has been sued twice by the ACLU: once to allow voters to take/post "ballot selfies" and once to question why 45,000 voters weren't notified of mismatched signatures on their ballots. Padilla campaigned heavily for Hillary Clinton during the last election cycle.

Padilla was raised in Pacoima, a city in the east San Fernando Valley. He graduated from MIT and made the switch to public office at the age of 26 when he was elected to the LA City Council to represent the east Valley. His nearly 20-year political career has shown him to be the most police- and prison-friendly of the Secretary of State candidates (aside from the Republicans, of course). Padilla interviewed and helped select Bill Bratton to be Chief of Police and drafted legislation to stop the sale of illicit cell phones in prisons. He has also drafted legislation to help English Language Learners in schools statewide, one good and nice thing he's done for the community.

Padilla initially ran on a platform to modernize voting and increase voter participation; he has not abandoned those promises. He has also pledged to protect California voters from the Trump administration and their voter intimidation. Padilla sponsored legislation that automatically registered folks as voters when they received or renewed a drivers license and a bill that expanded the early voting period to 10 days. Unlike his progressive counterparts, he is not calling for publicly owned voting systems or an end to top-two races. Padilla accepts corporate donations. He has raised \$1.3M from nearly 700 donors.

Mark P. Meuser was one of two Republicans running and is the top vote-getter of the two. He wants to modernize voting, bringing it "from the 19th century to the 21st century." Meuser has quite the colorful history. As a young boy he sold cherries he

stole from his neighborhood; this sparked his interest in operating a small business. He got a law degree in his 20s and opened a law firm with the aim to help small businesses navigate state regulations. Meuser loves the outdoors and completed an Ironman (on his third try!) He also collects rare books.

Meuser is explicit in his desire to “modernize” voting in the state. He wants to institute a PIN system where folks input a 4 digit number in addition to signing their ballots to prove their identity. Meuser has raised nearly \$93K from just over 300 donors.

RECOMMENDATION:

If Meuser were to win, you can expect to see “reforms” targeted at purging and suppressing the vote in California to artificially boost Republican vote share, just as we’ve seen from the rest of the GOP. **Vote for Alex Padilla.**

STATE TREASURER

This is another race where there's not much to say. The California State Treasurer has a bunch of narrowly-defined responsibilities for administering state finances. These responsibilities are almost entirely procedural, and there are *relatively* few significant explicit ways in which a treasurer could enact a particular agenda. Neither current candidate is likely to, for example, divest California state money from shitty banks and investigate the possibility of a state bank – as the Peace and Freedom Party candidate, Kevin Akin, pledged to do during the primary. That said, the Treasurer *does* have the ability to place representatives on a number of significant regulatory commissions.

In this general race we've got a typical boring Republican, **Greg Conlon**, who worked as a big-business accountant for decades and is likely to push to relax regulations and reduce taxes on businesses, running against a fairly boring but very accomplished Democrat who's quite a bit less likely to do that. The Democrat, **Fiona Ma**, has an extensive and impressive legislative history. She has served on the SF Board of Supervisors, the California State Assembly (where she co-authored a much-earlier state single-payer healthcare bill), and the Board of Equalization (where she pushed for stricter tax collections against big businesses such as Amazon, creating legal banking mechanisms to collect taxes from the marijuana industry, and initiating several sweeping audits and reforms of the board to promote transparency and proper handling of public funds).

Greg Conlon is the Republican candidate for Treasurer. He ran unsuccessfully for the same seat in 2014. He also ran unsuccessfully for State Assembly and Senate in 2010 and 2016 respectively. He's also the former President of the California Public Utilities Commission.

Conlon's website states that his priorities are to "Reform State Public Pensions by starting a defined contribution plan for new employees and keep the present pension plan for current employees. Work to eliminate the \$800 minimum State income tax to help start-up companies get on their feet. Improve the State's credit rating from fourth to last to an acceptable rating of AA or above." Conlon has raised \$30,000 in small donations, including \$6,756.69 from himself.

Fiona Ma is the chairwoman of the California State Board of Equalization. She is endorsed by the California Teachers Association. Ma previously served in the California State Assembly from 2006 to 2012 and the San Francisco Board of Supervisors from 2002 to 2006. A member of the Democratic Party, Ma was the first

Asian American woman to serve as California Assembly Speaker Pro Tempore, the second highest ranking office in the California Assembly. She was selected as Chairperson of the California Board of Equalization in 2016, ordered three external audits of the agency, and helped lead the biggest reforms for accountability and efficiency in that agency's history. She is also a CPA with a Master's degree in taxation.

On her website she states, "As Treasurer, I will make sure we have access to the capital necessary to complete the projects Californians deserve while also helping to create good jobs and keep our economy growing. This includes securing the financing necessary for California's infrastructure projects; transportation, public schools, housing, water quality, and pollution reduction." She has also publicly stated her support for the idea of creating a California State Bank. She has raised \$3.5 million in campaign funding. Her top contributors are trade and public-sector unions.

RECOMMENDATION:

The choice is simple: **vote Fiona Ma.**

STATE INSURANCE COMMISSIONER

This race is actually close, unlike other Democrat-vs-non-Democrat races, so pay attention! The California Insurance Commissioner oversees much of California's insurance industry, although most of the health insurance industry is, confusingly, regulated by a different executive department. However, the commissioner does license and regulate all manner of other insurance companies, including property and auto insurance, and plays a major role in statewide consumer protection. Incumbent **Dave Jones** is term-limited, so the seat is open.

Millionaire and former Republican **Steve Poizner** is a fierce opponent of single-payer healthcare. He served briefly as a White House Fellow within the Bush administration, joined Bush in 2008 on a delegation to Jerusalem to celebrate Israel, was a founding member of the California Charter Schools Association, and campaigned for Governor in 2010 as an anti-immigrant Republican (although he's since [walked that back](#)). Much of Poizner's campaign has been focused on cybersecurity and going after individuals for insurance fraud. It's hard to trust that individualized insurance fraud approaches the scale of injustice as is committed legally and unchecked by insurance companies themselves.

A tech entrepreneur, Steve Poizner previously served as Insurance Commissioner from 2007 to 2011. Back then he was a Republican, but after a failed run for governor in 2010 as an anti-immigrant hardliner he's reinvented himself as an independent technocrat. The strategy seems to be working: a recent poll shows him with a huge lead among Republicans and a significant lead among independents, putting him in first place overall with 21% of the vote. If he wins in November, he would be the first No Party Preference candidate elected statewide.

Poizner wants to push the legislature to make the Insurance Commissioner position nonpartisan, and he's pledged to refuse insurance industry contributions. He is a strong opponent of single-payer healthcare. Poizner has generously donated half a million dollars to his own campaign and raised almost \$400,000 more, almost all in large contributions from individuals.

Ricardo Lara, a state senator representing Long Beach and part of the Gateway Cities, is trailing Poizner in polls by single digits. Lara has been a reliably progressive vote in the Senate and has most of his backing from unions and progressive orgs. The son of undocumented immigrants from Mexico, Lara would be the first openly gay Latino elected to a statewide office. He co-introduced the single payer healthcare bill in the

State Senate last year. He's pushed to expand Medi-Cal to undocumented immigrants. Polls show him in second place behind Poizner, and he's been endorsed by the lion's share of California Democrats, including Senator Kamala Harris, Governor Jerry Brown, and the nurses' and teachers' unions. The Sacramento Bee, in the course of endorsing Poizner, referred to Lara as "far too joyful a labor partisan." That has a nice ring to it.

Lara has been reliably progressive in the Assembly and State Senate, but he hasn't articulated much of a platform in his Insurance Commissioner run. His issues page heavily leans on the bills he sponsored in the state Senate and very specifically avoids taking specific stances about what future policy positions he'd champion. Instead he's pitched himself as against Trump, the billionaire class, and pharmaceutical and insurance corporations. Though he was an author of SB-562, the California single-payer healthcare bill, he's pivoted away from pushing single-payer since the bill was shelved in the Assembly and doesn't include any mention of improving the healthcare system in his "Why I'm Running" page. In a [recent interview](#) with the San Diego Union-Tribune, he framed single-payer healthcare as more of a threat to insurance companies to get them to negotiate than as a true policy goal. Lara has raised over \$1.2 million, thanks in part to unions and Native American tribes.

RECOMMENDATION:

Lara's certainly not a perfect candidate. His campaign page is incredibly (and likely intentionally) vague on his policy or campaign positions beyond resisting Trump, but he's got a far better record than Poizner. **Vote Lara.**

STATE CONTROLLER

What does the State Controller do? Is it a giant Nintendo 64 controller that decides whether we jump or run? Sadly not. It's an ex-officio member of the California's Board of Equalization, which holds purview over a bunch of different types of taxes. Sales and use taxes, property taxes, federal taxes, etc. etc. **Betty Yee** is the Democratic Incumbent, is is running for a second term. She's up against Republican **Konstantinos Roditis**. Yee got 62% in the primary, Roditis got 34%, and Peace and Freedom Party candidate Mary Lou Findon failed to make top-2 status with only 4% of the vote.

As our past coalition partners KNOCK LA [said in their voter guide](#) that this race is "adequate Dem versus cartoonishly awful Republican," and we basically agree. Yee's platform is pretty boilerplate - it's not exactly a race where she'd under any pressure to come up with radical proposals. Maybe we can change that in the future. She's been endorsed by seemingly every liberal and progressive group in the state, including (but not limited to) AFSCME California, California Democratic Party, California Nurses Association/National Nurses United, EMILY's List, and NARAL. However, she's also endorsed by the California Association of Realtors, who are big enemies of Prop 10. Unsurprisingly, Yee hasn't taken a position in favor of Prop 10. We couldn't imagine they'd endorse her if she idd.

Like KNOCK LA said, Roditis is cartoonishly evil. He has some idea for "trickle up taxation" where local communities would only pay taxes to municipalities --- look, we're going to stop here. It's a way to stop the government taxing individuals and paying for basic needs. It's just as bad as trickle down. The only tax he makes an exception for is property taxes with Prop 13 protections. Somehow that's still okay for Roditis. He's also against public high-speed rail. **Who doesn't like trains?**

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote for Yee. The primary show's that this race isn't completely uncontested, and Roditis is no good.

STATE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION - 3RD DISTRICT

California has the country's only elected tax board (although there have been attempts to dismantle it nearly since it was created in 1879). Last year, most of its responsibilities were taken away when [Governor Jerry Brown signed a bill](#) that removed most of the board's employees and distributed its duties to other agencies in the wake of a scandal. Now the board's five members--the State Controller and four members elected by district--retain miscellaneous tax-related functions: they set rates for gas taxes and pipeline levies, oversee property taxes, and assess taxes on alcohol and insurance companies. District 3, which covers Ventura and most of Los Angeles Counties, is currently represented by Jerome Horton, who was implicated in some of the board's [unsavory activities](#). He is term-limited and will be leaving the board after this year.

Tony Vazquez has a good deal of money and support and might be the front-runner if he hadn't been investigated for conflict of interest by the District Attorney's office. Vazquez has served on the Santa Monica City Council since 1990, where he's been an advocate for smart growth. The DA's office started investigating him and his wife, who serves on the Santa Monica-Malibu school board, last November after the L.A. Times reported that the couple had failed to disclose various conflicts of interest. In particular, Vazquez was paid to lobby school districts, including the Santa Monica-Malibu district, on behalf of several companies that Vazquez's wife then voted to award valuable contracts. Despite the ongoing investigation, Vazquez has been endorsed by numerous elected officials and unions in Santa Monica and nearby cities, as well as Dolores Huerta and Rep. Maxine Waters.

Vazquez pledges to support small businesses and "slam shut special interest tax loopholes." Aside from \$50,000 he gave his own campaign, Vazquez has received over \$200,000 in donations from local businesses.

Rick Marshall, the lone Republican running in this reliably Democratic district, lost a race for this seat in 2014 and is unlikely to win this round. A former computer consultant, Marshall now works in the IT department at the University of California, Irvine Medical Center. He has served on the Torrance Planning Commission and the Torrance Water Commission.

Marshall is against abolishing the Board. He is in favor of lower taxes and describes himself as a "strong supporter of Proposition 13," the 1978 statewide initiative that has slowly starved California governments of revenue for education and other local needs.

The "Seven Principles" section of his campaign website lists only a single principle: "The Free Enterprise System, not Government, is the most productive supplier of human needs."

RECOMMENDATION:

Look, Vasquez is clearly no peach, but this seat is purely a stepping stone, and Republicans should be discouraged from building a bench wherever possible. **Vote for Vasquez.**

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

What does the superintendent do? In the 2014 midterm elections, this race was actually the most expensive in the entire state, despite being fairly far down the ballot and not having all that much power. It's proving to be [quite expensive](#) this year again, and when a race is expensive, the wealthy see it as an opportunity to exercise their power. Don't sit this one out.

Why? The charter school lobby is the largest in California, regularly outspending developers and Big Oil, all with the ultimate goal of privatizing one of the few remaining public goods we've got. Spending a few hundred million in independent expenditures to funnel LAUSD's \$7.5 billion annual budget into private hands is a pretty good ROI.

The office doesn't have a lot of direct power over local schooling choices, but it can shape required state curricula, juke the data on local performance, modify or champion specific education bills in Sacramento, and monitor compliance tied to funding—which could be huge for advancing the charter agenda across California.

Marshall Tuck: big money, big charter. He was the CEO of Partnership for Los Angeles Schools, co-founded the Green Dot charter network, and before that, he worked on Wall Street.

Tuck has raised more than \$24 million, thanks to maxed out contributions from Michael Bloomberg, Alice Walton (Walmart), Jim Walton (Walmart), Eli Broad (of course), venture capitalists, real estate moguls, and the creepy Govern for California PAC of "nonpartisan" Silicon Valley billionaires. The Charter Lobby has also spent many millions of dollars in independent expenditures to support him.

Tony Thurmond is a longtime East Bay politician, where he's currently an assemblymember for the 15th district. He is not a lefty by any means—his assembly campaign was funded by Chevron and Phillip Morris, and Gayle McLaughlin's Richmond Progressive Alliance (which now runs that city) regularly clashed with him while he sat on the Richmond City Council.

He is, however, the public school champion in this race and has worked to improve public school funding and make it easier for kids to get free school lunches. All the unions (SEIU, CTA, AFSCME, IBEW, SNA, etc.) are backing Thurmond, but Tuck is still outraising him 2:1, and the Charter Lobby seems to have bottomless pockets to spend on independent expenditures for Tuck and against Thurmond.

RECOMMENDATION:

Public education is one of the few areas where socialist thinking has won real, significant, and lasting victories for the public good. The wildcat teacher strikes of last year, followed by the non-wildcat teacher strikes of this year (and the [upcoming one for UTLA](#) in Los Angeles), are among the most significant political actions for organized labor in the past decade. We should do our best to defend teachers and public education from the capitalist vultures. **Reject capitalist commodification of education and vote for Tony Thurmond.**

CONGRESS

CALIFORNIA'S 23RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Kevin McCarthy (R, incumbent) and **Tatiana Matta (D)** made it to the general election following the top-two primary in which they received 68.79% and 12.59% of the vote, respectively. Kevin McCarthy was the only Republican running in the primary; all other candidates were Democratic. Assuming all Democratic votes from the primary transfer to Matta, she would get about 31% of the vote. This district is safely Republican and has been represented by McCarthy since 2013. In 2016, he won the general election with 69.2% to his opponent's 30.8%. This district, which includes parts of Kern, Tulare, and Los Angeles counties, will be a steep uphill battle for Matta. Vote for Matta.

Tatiana Matta is the daughter of a public school teacher. She is a military spouse and political consultant who lives at Edwards Air Force Base with her husband and son. A large part of her career has been in nonprofit advocacy for military families. She currently serves on the governing board for Muroc Joint Unified School District and as a board member of the Military Spouse Advocacy Network. In 2016, she supported former Governor of Maryland, Martin O'Malley, in his bid for Democratic presidential candidate. She was part of his Veteran's Task Force, which researched national policy recommendations to help military families. Matta is running for Congress because she believes people should not have to work multiple jobs to survive, seniors deserve a dignified retirement, children should not go hungry, and there should be healthcare for all (although she is light on the details of how to achieve each of these goals).

Matta's platform mixes general goals and principles with some specific policy ideas. She sticks to domestic policy with the aim of pushing for legislation that will provide affordable housing, criminal justice reform, food security programs, equal pay, paid family leave, and access to childcare for working families.

Matta supports a federal minimum wage that ensures no working American lives in poverty. To revitalize the economy, she proposes funding an infrastructure plan to modernize the nation's water systems, roads, bridges, ports, and power grids. She would also focus on creating partnerships between labor, government, academia, and industry leaders to help economic growth in her district. She hopes her policies will help small business owners.

In order to improve our healthcare system, Matta supports Medicaid and Medicare expansion. Although she doesn't provide specific policy recommendations, she wants to remove barriers for small businesses to offer health insurance, increase funding for hospitals in her district, hold insurers/providers accountable, solve the opioid crisis, expand healthcare access for women (especially in rural areas), and increase access to mental health programs.

Recognizing the impact of environmental policies on the health of her constituents, Matta recommends investing in water infrastructure and enforcing regulatory measures for protecting water supplies at their sources. She wants to lead initiatives in clean energy technologies, including solar and wind, so California can gain energy independence. She is against drilling in California's waters.

Matta's education platform includes increasing funding for primary and secondary education programs, ensuring public school access and equity for all students, allocating funding for schools to provide mental health resources, supporting universal early childhood education, and making free community and technical college tuition available (although she doesn't specify how available). To help with the student loan crisis, she wants to expand public service forgiveness programs and improve the oversight of federal funds aiding state educational programs.

Her immigration policies include preventing spending on the border wall, but also "modernizing border security." She supports immigration reform and a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants and also specifically mentions providing legal assistance to young immigrants from Central America.

Matta's ambitiousness is most well seen in her plans for military, service members, and their families. She wants to protect veteran and military programs from budget cuts, although she does not specify which programs she has in mind. Additionally, she plans on pushing for legislation to cut down healthcare wait times, fund mental health programs, reduce administrative waste, and reform the military discharge system. Notably, she plans on introducing an element of social justice into the military in increase funding for military sexual trauma survivors and having the backlog of rape kits processed. She also wants to eradicate veteran homelessness, provide comprehensive healthcare for female veterans, expand family leave for service members, and ensure educational and employment opportunities for military families.

Matta's platform has nothing outlined for foreign policy. Most of the local coverage around the Matta campaign has focused on her status as underdog and her grassroots

organizing style. Events she has hosted include a town hall and canvassing in her community with campaign supporters.

As of June 30, 2018, Tatiana Matta has raised \$33,974.57, all of which came from individual contributions.

Kevin McCarthy's political career started in 2002, when he entered the California State Assembly. After entering the House of Representatives in 2007, he worked his way up to Majority Whip. In 2015, he made a bid for Speaker of the House, but dropped out of the competition when it appeared his political career was about to be derailed by an affair with a colleague. Now, as House Majority Leader, Kevin McCarthy is the second most powerful man in the House of Representatives and is running in a safely Republican district. He has the upperhand. Paul Ryan has handpicked him to be the Speaker of House when he leaves in 2019 (if Republicans keep control of the House). He is Trump's close ally, voting to promote Trump policy goals in the areas of healthcare (i.e. repealing the ACA), tax reform (Trump tax cuts for the rich), and immigration (building the wall). Interesting fact: Kevin Spacey shadowed McCarthy in preparation for his role as Francis Underwood in *House of Cards*.

McCarthy's platform offers standard-issue Republican economic conservatism and fascism. He believes that the American economy can be revitalized by slashing regulation, reducing government spending, and paying off the national debt. His stance on education is that parents should have the right to send their children to the best schools. In other words, he wants to run education as a [free market](#). [He literally made an analogy comparing schools to grocery stores selling milk and people having to buy state owned sour milk](#). He supported the Success and Opportunity through Quality Charter Schools Act and wants to support more legislation to clear the way for charter schools.

McCarthy also wants to increase domestic energy production and supports bills that would slash environmental regulation. One of the bills he supported last year was the Regulatory Accountability Act, which, among other things, would end the "Chevron doctrine" that directs judges to defer to a regulatory agency's interpretation of its own rules. Yikes. He also thinks that the water crisis in California is mostly because of "complex" laws regarding California's water supply and a lack of scientific innovation regarding water infrastructure.

His foreign policy aligns with Trump's. He applauded American airstrikes on Syria and opposes the Iran Nuclear Deal. He fear mongers on the national debt as an excuse to

cut “inefficient programs” that “waste” taxpayer dollars. That’s code for Social Security reform, which is itself code for privatizing Social Security and [pushing retirement savings plan schemes as an actual retirement policy for everyone](#). He also wants to lower taxes and make the government find “more efficient” ways to use its funds— you know the snake oil these people peddle already.

McCarthy supports the creation of physical and electronic barriers to “secure” our borders. He is also against amnesty for undocumented immigrants. He wants to increase the enforcement of current immigration laws to reduce the undocumented immigrant population.

Space travel is very important to McCarthy. He introduced the SPACE Act to remove regulatory barriers for entrepreneurs to do capitalism in space. He wants commercial space flight innovation for his constituents in Kern County. Something tells us he is a fan of Trump’s Space Force idea.

Two good things about his platform, if taken at face value: 1) He wants government spending for revitalizing our infrastructure. 2) He supports efforts to fight Valley Fever. But on the whole, his platform is bad, and he should feel bad.

McCarthy’s news coverage has been mostly regarding his close relationship with Trump. [He gave Trump a jar of Starburst with the non-pink and blue colored ones picked out](#). Also, he might be the most powerful man in the House next year.

McCarthy has raised a whopping \$6,583,490 of which \$3,594,651.59 are transfers from other authorized committees and \$2,541,400.00 come from other committee contributions. \$437,991.45 come from individual contributions. Some groups that have given to him include GAP Inc PAC, the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences PAC (AKA - the Grammys Fund for Music Creators), Farmers Insurance PAC, Millercoors PAC, Power PAC of Edison Electric Institute, Warner Media PAC, BP Corporation North America Inc. PAC, and Safeway Inc PAC.

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote Tatiana Matta.

CALIFORNIA'S 25TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

The 25th Congressional District takes up the relatively sparsely populated northernmost third of Los Angeles County, the only part of the county represented in DC by a Republican. The past three presidential elections have been tight in the district — President Obama won by one percent in 2008, while Romney recovered it by 1.9 percent in 2012. Trump proved too much for upscale exurbanites here, so Hillary triumphed 50.3% to 43.6%.

CD 25 contains four cities of with populations that range from 125,000 to 200,000 people— Lancaster, Palmdale, Santa Clarita, and Simi Valley—all historically conservative. Lancaster and Palmdale are adjacent, separated by miles of scrubland from Santa Clarita and Simi Valley. Simi Valley, in Ventura County, is isolated from the other cities by miles of mountains. Notorious as the site of the “Not Guilty” verdict in the Rodney King beating that sparked the 1992 LA “riots”/rebellion, Simi was then a monochromatic bedroom community epitomizing white flight. As of 2010, it had become 23% Latino and 9% Asian. Hosting the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library (and RR’s burial site), Simi Valley has been rated among the 20 most conservative cities in the US by two studies. Its median income is 25% above the California median.

The twin cities of Lancaster and Palmdale are outside the Los Angeles Basin and share a demographic character with adjacent Kern County. Median income is below the state’s median, by 28% and 20% respectively. Latinxs are a growing force and a plurality in both cities since 2010, although not much represented in city government. Palmdale now has one Latino council member; Lancaster has none, but there is an African-American woman.

Shifting demographics combined with recent presidential results have brought the spotlight on this district as a key “flippable” district, which has brought in support from the Democratic party nationwide. During the primary, no fewer than three viable Democrats emerged to challenge Republican **Steve Knight**. In that primary, we recommended a vote for Jess Phoenix, who finished with 6% of the vote. **Katie Hill** emerged from that primary after vastly outraising other candidates, primarily from establishment Democratic groups. Since then, she’s become quieter about some of the most progressive positions she and her Democratic opponents took, pivoting from Medicare-for-All to Medicaid expansion and tax cuts for small businesses and middle-class families, at least on her website. Maybe she’s just doing what she thinks she needs to do to win a historically red district, but *blech*.

Still, Knight is awful, and the race between Hill and Knight is pretty close. One recent poll from UC Berkeley found Hill favored over Knight, 50% to 46%, while another from the New York Times favored Knight over Hill, 47% to 45%.

If elected, Katie Hill would be the first openly bisexual Congresswoman from California. As Executive Director of PATH (a homeless support agency), she presided over a growth period from a \$5M budget to yearly operations of over \$50M. She supported ballot initiatives Measure H and Prop HHH to help alleviate homelessness in LA County. Hill has the support of numerous national and regional women's and reproductive rights groups, including Emily's List, NARAL, Planned Parenthood Action Fund, Feminist Majority, and California NOW, as well as many local elected officials – County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Reps. Judy Chu, Nanette Barragan, Linda Sanchez and Jimmy Gomez, plus former California first lady Sharon Davis and Randy Newman. Some activists consider her gun-owner rhetoric to be opportunistic and objectionable, though it resonates in parts of the district that were until recently "country" and rural.

Hill supports "strengthening the ACA and laying the foundation for a Medicare For All system," though she's been slower to commit to voting for Medicare For All than her Democratic opponents. A lifelong gun owner, she supports banning assault weapons, high capacity magazines, and bump stocks, as well as raising the minimum age to buy guns and expanding background checks. She supports a path to citizenship for Dreamers. She also hasn't taken a position on Proposition 10 that we could find.

Hill has out-raised Knight, with over 2.4 million dollars as of the end of June. Her biggest contributor Swing Left, a liberal/Democratic political group gave \$60,699. She also raised over \$30,000 from Lombard Securities, a brokerage firm. She's also raised \$25,000 from J Street, which is anti-BDS, but somehow still "to the left" of the American Israeli scene.

Steve Knight is awful. Let's run it down quickly: he's against abortions. Voted for the 2017 tax bill. Doesn't believe in climate change. In favor of the Jerusalem embassy in Los Angeles. Called Social Security a "bad idea." Come on, do we need to keep listing these? Knight's raised over 1.7 million. His biggest contributors include defense contractor Northrup Grumman (\$19,000), defense contractor Honeywell International (\$12,899) and AT&T (\$12,700). AT&T also gave \$15,814 to Hill's campaign which is... weird?

RECOMMENDATION: Katie Hill isn't the socialist or maybe even the left-progressive we need, but she's going to be a massive improvement over Knight. **Vote Katie Hill.**

CALIFORNIA'S 27TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

The 27th Congressional District is made up of the the West San Gabriel Valley and the Foothills, including parts of Alhambra, Altadena, Arcadia, Bradbury, Claremont, Glendora, Monrovia, Monterey Park, Pasadena, Rosemead, San Gabriel, San Marino, Sierra Madre, Temple City, and north Upland. The district is 37% Asian, 27% Latinx, and 29% white. It's got a median voter income of \$77,629, which is substantially higher than the Los Angeles median as a whole, which is \$55,909. The district was previously represented by Brad Sherman, who was redistricted into the 30th District. The primary earlier this year was between two Democrats — incumbent **Judy Chu** and **Bryan Witt**. Out of 104,118 total votes, Chu received 83.5% of the ballot (86,932 votes) while Witt got 16.5% (17,186 votes.) No other candidates ran, so both made it to the general election.

Judy Chu has been the Representative for the 27th District since 2009. Before that, she served on the 4th District of the California State Board of Equalization from 2007 to 2009, and even before that, she was a Member of the California State Assembly representing the 49th District from 2001 to 2006. She was the first Chinese American woman elected to the U.S. Congress, and serves on the House Small Business Committee, House Judiciary Committee, and the Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Tax and Capital Access. In 2013, she co-signed a letter Barbara Lee against engaging in the military conflict in Syria. She's also married to Mike Eng, former member of the California State Assembly from the 49th district, and currently running in the 22nd District.

Her website is sparse on campaign platforms. Sorry, did we say "sparse?" We meant barren. There are actually no policies on her campaign website. Based off her past record, [she votes with the Trump administration's policies just 13% of the time](#), which is pretty on par with a Justice Democrat member like [Ro Khanna at at 14.3%](#). She's got a long list of endorsements, though, including (but not limited to) the California Federation of Labor, California Association of Highway Patrolmen, California Federation of Teachers, California School Employees Association, California Teachers Association, National Education Association, National Nurses United, San Gabriel Police Officers Association, SEIU California, Teamsters Joint Council 42, United Auto Workers, United Farm Workers, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 770, the California Democratic Party, J Street PAC, Sierra Club, National Organization for Women, National Women's Political Caucus, Planned Parenthood Action Fund, and NARAL Pro-Choice California.

That said, Chu's record in Congress is quite good for a prominent Democrat. She's a strong supporter of abortion rights (graded 100 from NARAL), has opposed blanket surveillance as well as other terrorism-inspired civil liberties-degrading bills, pushed immigration reform bills and opposed immigrant detention centers even under the Obama administration, and was a founding member of the Congressional Medicare-for-All caucus. Although she fell in line behind Clinton in the 2016 primaries (ugh), she's outlined support for the [People's Platform](#) – College for All, \$15 minimum wage, Equal Access to Abortion Coverage, Automatic Voter Registration, a Wall Street tax, a fossil fuel drilling ban, and private prison ban – at an event earlier this year with local AAPI progressive group PANA.

Chu's campaign has raised a lot of money, especially for a campaign without a well-known competitor. As of this writing, she's raised over \$2,500,000, with most of the money coming from real estate and health professionals and companies. Her campaign has an extremely small number of Small Individual Contributions (under \$200), clocking in at \$54,493 for 4% of her campaign funds. She's also... funded by the Iranian Mojahedin. Wait, *what?*

A [2015 investigation by The Intercept](#) found that supporters of the Mojahedin-e Khalq (MEK) have donated over \$300,000 to various members of Congress. Chu's offices topped the list of MEK-associated campaign contributions along with John McCain receiving \$11,350 and \$11,150, respectively. When you dig a bit deeper, it starts to make a bit more sense: the MEK is a long-running paramilitary organization, at one point Islamo-Marxist (!?) organization that basically decided that any enemy of the current Iranian regime is a friend. After successfully lobbying the U.S. to stop designating it a terrorist organization, the group has been funding think-tanks across western nations to push for regime change in Iran. Weird.

Now, oh, boy. Bryan Witt. Strap in, folks. Keep your hands, arms, feet, and legs inside the ride vehicle at all times. Because we're about to go on a bumpy ride. Let's start with the simple stuff: Witt's campaign has only raised \$11,000. Witt claims to have been inspired by the Bernie Sanders 2016 Presidential Campaign to run for public office. Which, good! First, he decided to run for City Council in Pasadena, which he didn't win. That's okay! Before that, though, he worked for New York Life Insurance Company, and a... Navy facility in Southern England. It was there that he "saw first-hand the delicate balance of action and reaction that was necessary with a potential foe like the Soviet Union." That might... seem notable to you! He also served in the Marines and... was a reserve police officer with the city of South Pasadena. So he's actually A Cop... If that means anything to you.

His campaign is all over the place. He's running an unholy hybrid of the 2008 Ron Paul campaign and 2016 Bernie Sanders campaign. On the Ron Paul side, he does stuff like retweet Rand Paul and repost memes with "inspirational" quotes from Henry Ford, who was Extremely Racist and a Literal Nazi. He also hates, what he calls, uh, let's just take a deep sigh here... the "alt-left." He recently wrote how "I'm not sure how the election results will come out on Nov. 6th... but I'm done with most of these so called 'progressives' and many Democrats. I refuse to be affiliated with violence." I think it's fair to say he's not an Antifa fan.

Oh, and he doesn't like socialism! Bryan Witt is the result of, I can only assume, a science experiment similar to the [2000 movie "Life-Size,"](#) where an inanimate object is brought to life. But instead of Tyra Banks, he's the human transmutation of the [Matt Bors' "Mister Gotcha" comic.](#) A recent Facebook post contains "a brief tutorial for all the ding dongs out there who are promoting Socialism. Capitalists are the ones that do this amazing and complicated process because they have an incentive to do it." The article's image is a picture of a copper toilet. I'm sorry, I can't click it... I just can't.

"Wait," you're probably saying, "Voter Guide writer, I thought you said he was a Bernie Sanders type? He doesn't sound very Bernie Sanders." Like I said: bumpy ride. Here's where the roller coaster throws you for a loop. Here's some of his campaign proposals: universal healthcare, ending for-profit prisons, "Closing most of the 800 military bases we have in over 80 countries," an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that will grant LGBTQ citizens equal rights, legalizing Cannabis at the federal level, and canceling student debt and free college tuition... I know, I know. My head hurts too, dear reader. But before you get too excited, he also supports "legislation to abolish the FED and restore that power to an independent authority within the Department of the Treasury." Which he suggests was the belief of President John F. Kennedy, "the last president to do this... and ironically, he was assassinated shortly thereafter." Is Bryan Witt suggesting the Fed killed JFK? He's **not** not suggesting it.

RECOMMENDATION: Judy Chu certainly isn't our ideal candidate; she's no socialist. She takes quite a lot of money from our enemies, and not much enough regular voters. The MEK thing is definitely... something. Despite that, Chu's record is actually fairly good for Congress and her recent trend of listening to local left- and progressive groups is even better. If there were a viable candidate with a *coherent* left ideology running against her, we'd consider recommending them, but the Witt campaign is... less-than-coherent. **Vote Judy Chu.**

CALIFORNIA'S 28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

The 28th Congressional district includes much of North/Northeast LA, including North Hollywood, Burbank, parts of Pasadena/Glendale, as well as much of Hollywood, Echo Park, Silver Lake, and Los Feliz. It's an area that includes a lot of ostensibly progressive young millennials, but also many wealthy landed centrists, including large Armenian populations, which trend conservative.

DSA-LA protested against **Adam Schiff** back in June for his support for (and creation of) ICE. He's been in Congress since 1997. Since 2016, Schiff has become a frequent target for #Resistance adulation for [tweeting about Russia a lot](#). Perhaps it goes without saying, but we think he should focus on the material issues affecting his constituents instead. We also think his concerns about Russian meddling in foreign affairs should be rooted first in a concern for the way America meddles in foreign affairs, but unfortunately [his local defense contractors are too deep-pocketed for that](#). It's been a bit interesting to see him [rediscover Saudi Arabia](#) as evil since the murder of journalist Khashoggi, a pretty sharp turn from his proud [support of the Saudi invasion of Yemen](#). He also voted for the invasion of Iraq.

Schiff also votes more with Trump than he should - FiveThirtyEight shows him voting along with Trump's agenda 21% of the time. But other than that: generic Democratic pabulum. Schiff doesn't support abolishing ICE, and he's a big supporter of increased youth policing (as long as it's paired with community programs). He did sign on as a co-sponsor for Rep. Conyers' Medicare-for-All bill, although he doesn't mention it on his campaign website, which touts "improving affordability." He's a mediocre Democrat.

Schiff's raised over 4.6 million dollars, and his top contributors include AT&T, Disney, defense contractors like Raytheon, Northrop Grumman, and Parsons, the National Association of Realtors, and conservative unions like IBEW.)

Johnny Nalbandian is a former "seafood magnate," and his campaign website says that "Johnny loves capitalism." His website has recipes for baked lobster tails and more. Nalbandian believes there's a "war on law enforcement." He asks to for you to "Make the 28th District Awesome Again" and invites "all aboard the Johnny Jet." We ask you do not get on the Johnny Jet. Johnny Nalbandian has only raised \$17,791.

RECOMMENDATION:

Adam Schiff will win this race easily. He sucks. **Write in a famous anti-imperialist.**

CALIFORNIA'S 29TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Tony Cardenas's platform is boilerplate Democrat. He's been in this House seat since 2013. Before being in the House, Cardenas was on the Los Angeles City Council for a decade. The incumbent congressman is also currently the target of a lawsuit alleging that he sexually abused a 16-year-old girl in 2007 after drugging her. He denies the allegations and has not stepped down from his seat.

Cardenas talks about a "balanced approach to our debt and deficit." We're not so sure that's a great thing. He supported Obamacare, but hasn't spoken out in support in Medicare for All. He's a fairly average House Democrat who only votes along with Trump 17% of the time. Cardenas has only raised 1.2 million dollars for this congressional cycle.

His opponent, **Benito "Benny" Bernal** has one campaign website that is apparently just a blog where he talks about refurbishing his bathroom. The only analysis seems to be that "Since our bathroom was a bit outdated, we have considered a dual flush option toilet because those are allegedly the best of the best these days and aside from that, we are looking to save money."

His other campaign website isn't much better. He's in favor of repealing the gas tax, increasing charter schools, and providing "law enforcement with the tools to remove chronic and habitual offenders off the streets and out of our neighborhoods," whatever that means. Bernal has only raised \$3,800.

RECOMMENDATION:

We're not going to recommend somebody facing the heinous allegations that Cardenas is, and given who his opponent is, he's going to win anyway. Gross. **No recommendation.**

CALIFORNIA'S 30TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

This district, which contains the western San Fernando Valley and small parts of Ventura County, is in many ways a stronghold of the more centrist tendencies of the Democratic Party. Incumbent **Brad Sherman** (D) has represented it since 2013. For the past two elections, Sherman has beaten his opponent **Mark Reed** (R) by margins of over 30%. This time around, in the 2018 top-two primary, Sherman and Reed beat out former Democratic candidate Raji Rab and progressive Democratic candidate Jon Pelzer, who we recommended during the primary.

Brad Sherman's background is in tax law; he is a CPA. He has audited large businesses and governmental entities. His career in government began when he was on the California State Board of Equalization (1991-1996). One of Sherman's main focuses as a member of the House has been to push for protections for consumers from Wall Street firms. Most recently, he has stood with Senator Bernie Sanders to [re-introduce the Too Big to Fail, Too Big to Exist Act](#) in the House and Senate respectively.

[On human and civil rights](#) within the US, Sherman's record is not terrible. He is against the separation of families at the border, voted against re-authorizing the warrantless tapping provisions of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), supports net neutrality, supports advancing voting rights, and is against Trump's Muslim ban. He also seems to be moving in the direction of more progressive healthcare solutions. He was one of the many Democrats who co-sponsored former [Representative John Conyers Jr.'s Medicare for All bill in early 2017](#).

Sherman is the second ranking Democratic member on the House Foreign Affairs Committee which is where he falls very, very short. His platform offers a mix of centrist to progressive domestic policy and conservative foreign policy. He wants our economy to be free of financial institutions that are too big to fail. He is [against Republican tax policies](#). He is against right-to-work laws and even worked with Senator Elizabeth Warren to try to pass [a law to eliminate them](#). He also opposes the Janus decision recently made by the Supreme Court. He is also [against "free trade"](#) deals such as NAFTA and TPP, on the grounds that they cause jobs to be relocated to countries with cheaper labor. Indeed, he mostly [sides with organized labor](#) when it comes to economic and labor policy. He recently [introduced a law to keep Wells Fargo from](#) using forced arbitration clauses to prevent their customers from suing them for opening fraudulent accounts in their names. He opposes Social Security privatization.

Sherman takes a centrist approach on education, choosing to try to make it affordable by doing things such as voting to keep [student loan interests rates low](#) and securing [federal funds for schools in his district](#). His progressive primary opponent, Jon Pelzer, [tells a story of Brad Sherman's support for his pro-charter opponent in a past LAUSD race](#).

He agrees with the Obama-era style policies of trying to develop national energy independence and increasing investment in renewable energy, but he falls far short of advocating for the transformational energy policy that we need. [He opposes the Trump Administration's climate agenda](#). He disagreed with our exit from the Paris Agreement and opposes Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's termination of Obama's moratorium on offshore drilling, especially off of California's coasts. There is an animal rights component to his platform regarding the regulation of canine mills, animal torture, and the treatment of horses. He is a supporter of Obama-era poaching and hunting regulations - many of which the Trump Administration has done away with.

He is in favor of gun control measures such as background checks, restricting people who have committed domestic abuse from obtaining guns, and banning bump stocks. Sherman is [in favor of DACA](#) and protecting DREAMers. He voted against the Homeland Security Act of 2002, which created ICE. He is also in favor of providing refuge to Syrian refugees. Sherman has a very hawkish foreign policy agenda in the Middle East. He voted for the invasion of Iraq and supports the Saudi assault on Yemen. He wants the US to have strong relationships with Israel. He is also explicitly against the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Movement. He was among the House members who introduced the [Israel Anti-Boycott Act](#). He favors antagonistic approaches to interacting with Iran. He was adamantly [against the Iran Nuclear Deal](#), although he opposed [Trump's decertification of the deal](#). He [is also in favor of Trump's](#) plans to punish entities that do business with Iran's technology companies.

Sherman [has ideas for strengthening democracy](#) domestically. He wants to introduce a "Democracy for All Amendment" to reverse the Citizens United Supreme Court decision and put forward a host of campaign finance regulations. Sherman also wants to abolish the Electoral College, so that the president would be elected by a popular vote and to introduce a "Redistricting Reform Act" to fight gerrymandering by mandating that states have independent redistricting commissions made up by citizens (similar to how California already does its redistricting).

In the 2018 cycle, Sherman has raised \$1,157,511.26 and has \$2,041,737.87 cash on hand. He's primarily funded by big investment banks, the real estate lobby, and the defense

industry – gross. Some of his top contributors include Capital Group Companies (\$15,400.00), Northrop Grumman (\$13,250.00), Royal Business Bank (\$13,100.00), Allied Wallet (\$12,500.00), American Institute of CPAs (\$10,000.00), American Land Title Association (\$10,000.00), Credit Union National Association (\$10,000.00), Data Exchange Corp (\$10,000.00), and Internal Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (\$10,000.00).

This will be Mark Reed's third time running against Brad Sherman for this district. In between his congressional campaigns, Reed also tried to run for LA City Council in District 7, but also failed to win that race. Reed studied Architecture Drafting at Pierce Community College and appears to be a jack-of-all-trades. He has been an actor, small business owner, rancher, and activist. He believes the national debt is a major problem. Indeed, he has a national debt counter on his website.

Reed's [plan](#) for the economy is to lower taxes, shrink big government, and eliminate wasteful spending in order to advocate for "free enterprise." His plan for healthcare is to remove the ACA and hand the reins over to the existing private market. He's strongly pro-gun. Reed says he "welcome[s] legal immigration" but opposes laws that will "encourage illegal immigration." He is against providing driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants. He believes children of undocumented immigrants should not be considered as citizens. He is against sanctuary cities, in-state tuition assistance for immigrant families, and amnesty for immigrants. Instead, he believes that the border should have more enforcement and that stiffer penalties should be placed on employers who hire undocumented individuals.

Reed's platform claims that he is very worried about how pollution will affect future generations. In the same paragraph, he says that the Department of Energy should be abolished and that the country should drill wherever it can to achieve energy independence, so he's probably lying. He also wants to develop solar, wind, nuclear, hydroelectric, and geothermal energy solutions. Similarly, he claims he's very worried about improving the quality of public schools, a lie revealed by his plan to abolish the Federal Department of Education. He also supports charter schools and the voucher systems that prop them up. Yikes. Additionally, he wants investment in trade and military schools to offer alternatives to academic secondary education.

Lastly, Reed is possibly even worse on US-Israel relations than Brad Sherman. He believes that Israel is our closest ally in the Middle East and supports the "security barrier" erected by Israel. He believes that Brad Sherman is weak on this matter for tacitly approving Obama's Israel policy. [He has a whole page on his website](#) subtitled

"Mark Reed condemns Anti-Semitic Behavior of the Obama Administration! Where is Brad Sherman? Financial information for Mark Reed was not available.

RECOMMENDATION:

If this race was a little bit closer, Sherman's *OK* domestic positions – Medicare-for-all, breaking up the biggest banks, against free trade agreements – might persuade us to look past his terrible foreign policy. The race is not close, though – Mark Reed has already lost to Brad Sherman twice, and there's no reason to suspect this year will be any different. **No recommendation.**

CALIFORNIA'S 32ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Let us keep this one short! **Grace Napolitano** has been an incumbent in Congress since 1999. Due to redistricting, she's represented the 34th District, the 38th District, and now the 32nd District. In congress, she only votes with the Trump administration priorities 14.1% of the time. She's endorsed by the California School Employees Association (CSEA), California Teachers Association / National Education Association (CTA/NEA), US Senator Dianne Feinstein, US Senator Barbara Boxer, US House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, US House Democratic Caucus Chair Xavier Becerra, and pretty much every Democratic politician in California. In this year's primary, she ran unopposed. Well, except for a write-in candidate who qualified for the ballot. Napolitano got 56,674 votes. Her write-in opponent is **Joshua Scott**. How many votes did he get? 42.

Now, 42 might be the the ultimate answer to life, the universe and everything. But it's not the answer to "is the candidate running against her any more to left?" Joshua Scott is a 25-year-old Republican and has no extensive background, besides being extremely online, liking tweets about #walkaway, wanting to repeal the gas tax, and retweeting Horrible Human Being, Dinesh D'Souza.

RECOMMENDATION:

[FiveThirtyEight has the odds of Napolitano winning at "greater than 99.9%."](#) We hope that in 2020 there will be a candidate to push against Napolitano and towards a greater socialist future, but you (nor Napolitano's campaign) don't need our support. **Don't vote for Joshua Scott, though.**

CALIFORNIA'S 33RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

The 33rd Congressional District consists of much of the west side Los Angeles County and goes down to almost Long Beach. It includes Agoura Hills, Bel Air, Beverly Hills, Brentwood, Calabasas, El Segundo, Fairfax District, Hermosa Beach, Holmby Hills, Malibu, Manhattan Beach, Marina del Rey, Pacific Palisades, Playa del Rey, Rancho Palos Verdes, Redondo Beach, Rolling Hills, Santa Monica, Venice, Westwood and is the home of UCLA. (DSA-LA officially takes no sides on the UCLA/USC rivalry.) The district almost 70% white, 3% black, 13.5% Asian, and 11% Latinx - which is very different than Los Angeles County as a whole, which is over 47% Latinx. It's also richer than most of LA - the 33rd's median income is over \$61,000, which is more than the county's median of about \$56,000. Democrat Henry Waxman represented the area for over 40 years, before retiring in 2015. Democrat **Ted Lieu** replaced him and has been the incumbent since.

Ted Lieu's co-signed the Medicare For All bill in the US House, supports the ERA, and is a vocal opponent of paid bail. He also created something called the Cloud of Illegitimacy Clock (catchy) that "keeps track of the seconds, minutes, hours, and days that Trump is operating outside of the law. At some point, the Clock is going to catch up to Trump." This sounds like a press release from the classic Batman villain [The Clock King](#).

Back in the spring primary, Lieu made the top-2 along with Republican **Kenneth Wright** (with 61 percent of the vote for Lieu and 30 percent for Wright.) Wright is horrific, and his plan for our unhoused neighbors is horrific. It's some dystopian nightmare called "The Village" that is essentially a ghetto. He's been endorsed by Darrell Issa and Ben Shapiro, and the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association Political Action Committee - Howard Jarvis being the anti-tax capitalist behind the passage of Proposition 13. He's attacked Ted Lieu for defending Linda Sarsour and retweets Sebastian Gorka a lot, but never a response from the Lion of Budapest asking for an endorsement.

RECOMMENDATION:

Ted Lieu spends a lot of time on Twitter. We respect a man who can never log off. He's also a fairly progressive Democrat, although he's in no way perfect (and needs to focus on his residents and stop writing op-eds.) Kenneth Wright is a greater danger to our housing crisis. FiveThirtyEight gives Lieu **a greater than 99.9% chance of winning**, so he doesn't need our help. **No recommendation.**

CALIFORNIA'S 34TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Jimmy Gomez, the incumbent congressmen, is almost certainly going to win this race. But we would recommend that you vote for DSA ally and corporate-free candidate **Kenneth Mejia** in solidarity with his platform, which largely aligns with DSA values.

Jimmy Gomez won a special election to Congress last year and is now running for a full two-year term. Gomez served in the California State Assembly from 2012 until he was elected to replace Xavier Becerra in the House of Representatives in 2017. In the Assembly, he co-authored the Healthy California Act, which would have created a single-payer healthcare system for California.

His platform is one of the more progressive ones from Democratic congressional candidates. Gomez wants to protect the Affordable Care Act and eventually move toward single payer for California. He supports DACA and comprehensive immigration reform. His platform backs "debt-free" rather than free college. Also, he endorses a \$15/hour minimum wage in California and wants to raise the national minimum wage. He has, however, taken campaign contributions from private prison, health insurance, and charter school interests.

Kenneth Mejia is both the clear underdog and the clear progressive choice in this race. Mejia has run for this seat twice before, as a write-in candidate in 2016 and in the 2017 special election. He graduated college in 2010 with B.S. in accounting and is a CPA.

Mejia wants to move to 100% renewable energy by 2030. He supports both a federal job guarantee and universal basic income. Other aspects of his platform include a \$15/hour federal minimum wage, worker-owned cooperatives, a 30-hour workweek, reinstating modern-day Glass-Steagall, Medicare For All, free public college and university, canceling student debt, ending corporate subsidies, universal rent control, and taxing capital gains, corporations and the wealthy. He also supports providing healthcare for all immigrants, ending for-profit detention centers, citizenship for Dreamers, and full legal status for all immigrants.

Additionally, Mejia wants to lower the voting age to 16, overturn Citizens United, ban corporate lobbyists, institute public campaign financing, and end the Electoral College. He wants to demilitarize the police, mandate representational community policing requirements, and end mandatory minimums and the war on drugs.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend that you vote for Kenneth Mejia. He is a socialist who has a record of organizing community action on issues that are priorities of DSA-LA. As a Koreatown neighborhood councilmember, he has organized for the rights of renters and homeless people, including winning a vote to endorse Proposition 10. He has also organized marches and rallies for immigrant rights and single-payer health care, and he supports teachers' unions against charter schools.

CALIFORNIA'S 37TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Karen Bass supports Medicare for All, supports DACA and the DREAM ACT, and worked on Proposition 47. She started the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth, "a vehicle to organize members of Congress to come together to work for passage of legislation to improve the child welfare system." Karen Bass is a pretty decent "progressive" Democrat, if nothing especially special. She's only voted with the Trump administration 10% of the time. Back in June, Karen Bass won with 89.18% of the 111,138 votes against Republican **Ron Bassilian's** 10.82%.

Ron Bassilian's campaign website starts saying that, "I interned for the Democrats in DC in 1994, and I was a part of MoveOn's protests against the Iraq War in 2003, at least until I saw them devolve into the Democrats' propaganda arm. This began a long line of disappointments with the Democrats, until Trump's victory made me decide it's time for a switch." ... A switch to socialism!?

No.

He's against Prop 10, and in favor of Prop 6. He's on Gab, which is Twitter, but for racists. Wait, that's Twiter. Gab is for the small subset of racists that even Twitter thought were too racist. He's friends with Mike Cernovich. He went to Politicon, which should be disqualifying for any politician in America. He's part of the "Liberalist" Party, which was started by Carl "Sargon of Akkad" Benjamin. Who is this you might ask? To which I say: Look, you don't need to know. You can stop now, you don't really have to go down this rabbit hole. You don't want to know about all the terrible right-wing YouTube personalities.

Are you so very sure? Fine. [Watch this great hbomberguy video about what "Liberalists" are about and who the hell Sargon of Akkad is.](#) It'll explain it all better than we can.

RECOMMENDATION:

Don't vote for the Gamergate guy.

CALIFORNIA'S 38TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

The 2018 Top-Two Primary winners in the district, **Linda Sánchez** (D) and **Ryan Downing** (R) received 62.67% and 37.33% of the votes respectively. The fact that the district is the 80th-most Democratic in the nation makes it a safe race for the incumbent, Democratic candidate. Sánchez beat Downing by a healthy margin when they previously faced off during the 2016 election cycle.

Linda Sánchez's political career began when she got her degree in labor law from UCLA. She is a card-carrying member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 441 and worked for the union as a labor lawyer.

Sánchez's issue sets and policy prescriptions do not stray very far from the standard Democratic line. She is a supporter of anti-discrimination legislation such as the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. Notably, she would like to see the increase of protections for voting rights, supporting John Lewis's Voter Rights Advancement Act.

As far as education policy goes, Sánchez suggests a host of very, very modest improvements to our current system including federal student loan refinancing and making the first two years of community college free. In terms of healthcare policy, Sánchez clings to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) mentioning that the ACA needs some improvements but does not specify any. She also believes that Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid should all be protected from privatization.

Sánchez is very specific when it comes to labor policy. She is a supporter of the Jones Act and National Labor Relations Act. She voted against giving then-President Obama the ability to fast-track international trade deals. She was against the TPP on the grounds that it could offshore American jobs and that some of the countries in the agreement had egregious labor and human rights laws. She believes in a livable minimum wage and supports paid parental and medical leave for all. Unfortunately, one of her few specific foreign policy prescriptions is for close security partnership with Israel, calling it "the only true democracy in the Middle East." That's bad, not good.

Sánchez has most recently been in the news for being among the first to voice a desire for a change in House Democratic leadership, which has ruffled Nancy Pelosi, Steny Hoyer, and other House Democratic leadership feathers. She has also announced that she wants to replace Joe Crowley as head of the House Democratic Caucus once he leaves office.

Linda Sánchez has raised \$1,390,205 coming from groups such as UNITE HERE Tip Campaign Committee, Transport Workers Union PCC, DGA-PAC The Political Action Committee of The Directors Guild of America INC, NEA Fund for Children and Public Education, The Home Depot Inc PAC, and Raytheon Company PAC.

Having never served in an elected position, Ryan Downing's political career is the more obscure of the two candidates. According to his website, he began canvassing after losing his job during the early part of the Great Recession and developed his skills into being a political consultant.

Downing's issue mixes traditional Republican policy prescriptions with some policy ideas that cater toward the large Latinx demographic in his home of Whittier. He supports law enforcement; wants to win funds for revitalization projects in his district; and would like to increase public school funding. Notably, his plan for immigration reform involves strictly enforcing the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act such that all states provide amnesty to undocumented immigrants who can prove that they have been living in the U.S since 1982. In addition, he proposes the implementation of strict immigration measures which he did not specify. However, based on his Twitter content he supports increasing border enforcement and further empowering the police state in sanctuary cities. There are no FEC disclosures available for Ryan Downing.

RECOMMENDATION:

Linda Sanchez is going to win anyway. **No recommendation, but obviously don't vote for Downing.**

CALIFORNIA'S 39TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

California's 39th district is currently represented by Republican Ed Royce, and it includes a big chunk of East Los Angeles, including Diamond Bar, Fullerton, Chino Hills, Hacienda Heights, and Anaheim Heights. In the past, it's been a big Republican stronghold, leaning on the landed conservative families in the area – it went for Romney in 2012, but Clinton in 2016. Now, thanks in part to California disdain for Trump, this district is very flippable, and what's more, the Democratic candidate is actually running a strong progressive campaign, thanks to his ability to self-fund without needing to rely entirely on the Democratic machine.

Gil Cisneros won the lottery a few years back, and used that money to become a prominent local philanthropist focusing on the Latinx community and public education. He's a navy vet, and prior to winning the lottery worked as a shipping and distribution manager at Frito-Lay. He's been endorsed by most of the major unions in the region—SEIU, UFCW, UNITE HERE—and the LA, OC, and statewide federations of labor. While there hasn't been an official Democratic party endorsement in this race, the DCCC seems to be backing him. He was a registered Republican until 2008, so we're pleasantly surprised to see so many left-democrat positions on here.

Cisneros says he supports the ACA and Medicare for All, is big on expanding veterans housing assistance to non-vets but doesn't have a clear stance, is into a transition to clean energy, supports sanctuary policies, isn't taking corporate PAC money, and seems to be an advocate for public schools—not charters. Cisneros has raised over \$4 million, including at least \$2 million of his own money. Prominent funders include the veteran-supporting Serve America Victory Fund and Eva Longoria, and the DCCC, House Majority PAC, and Vote Vets have spent nearly \$600,000 in independent expenditures to back Cisneros (and more to attack the Republicans in the race).

Young Kim was a one-term member of the California State Assembly 65th District from 2014 to 2016, before losing re-election to Democrat Sharon Quirk-Silva. Kim is running in favor of repealing the ACA, wants to make the 2017 tax break bill permanent, revoke anti-sanctuary city statuses, and in favor of ask businesses what they think "over regulation" exists, to help to determine which government regulations to cut. Cool!

RECOMMENDATION: This district is actually very close – 538 has it as a 50/50 toss-up. The Democrats *could really win this one*, and with a candidate that backs Medicare for All and isn't taking corporate PAC money. **Vote Gil Cisneros.**

CALIFORNIA'S 40TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

California's 40th Congressional District is the largest Latinx district in the country, representing 86% of the over 720,000 residents. The South Los Angeles district includes Downey, East Los Angeles, Commerce, Paramount, Bell, Bell Gardens, Bellflower, Cudahy, Huntington Park, Maywood, and parts of Florence, Florence-Graham, Historic South Central and South Park. The District has been reliably blue for years - **Lucille Roybal-Allard** has been the incumbent since the district was redrawn in 2012. Before that, the area was part of the 34th Congressional District. The district lags behind Los Angeles and California as a whole on many key metrics. Recent studies found the the median income for members of the district was \$42,902 - compared to \$55,909 for Los Angeles as whole, and \$67,739 for the state of California. Only 57% of the members have a high school diploma or higher, compared to 77.7% of greater Los Angeles and 82% for the State.

The primary in May between Roybal-Allard and **Rodolfo Cortes Barragan** - they weren't just top two, but the only two to run. Roybal-Allard won 80.30% (35,636 votes) to Cortes Barragan's 19.7% (8,741). FiveThirtyEight says that CA-40 is the 18th-most-Democratic district in the country, and is one of 39 U.S. House districts where a Republican is not running in 2018. There have been no polls in the district.

Lucille Roybal-Allard has been a Congresswoman for Los Angeles for a long time. From 2013 on she's been representing the 40th District. Before that, she represented the old 34th District from 2003. And before that, she represented the old 33rd District from 1993. (Redistricting is fun!) And even before that, she was Member of the California State Assembly from 1986 to 1992! She's been around a long time! She was also the first Mexican-American woman to serve in Congress. She's also a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee, which is an extremely powerful committee on the Hill.

Her campaign has been pretty quiet - and her campaign policies are pretty spare. She's said that her main focuses are lowering the cost of healthcare and prescription drugs; making a good higher education more accessible; and enacting comprehensive and humane immigration reform. How she defines those things is a little harder to parse! She hasn't had serious competition in years. She's got a ton of support though - she's been endorsed by SEIU Local 721, NOW, CTA, AFSCME, California Labor Federation.

As of 9/30, Royce-Allard's campaign has raised \$482,335, with most coming International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, National Air Traffic Controllers Association, Operating Engineers Unions, and more... building trade unions. Only only 1.21% of her donations have come from small donors (under \$200.)

Dr. Rodolfo Cortes Barragan is running a campaign for political office for the first time - and as a member of the Green Party. He also claims to be a member of DSA, but we couldn't confirm if he pays national dues as of the time of this writing. He's also endorsed by the The Peace and Freedom Party. In a statement made to the Electoral Politics Committee, Cortes Barragan said that that he identifies as a socialist, saying that "I am committed to working peoples' democracy. (Social)ism means an emphasis on meeting the need of people rather than the needs of capital(ism)." Cortes Barragan moved to the district in 1999, and gained US citizenship soon after. He likes to point out that he was 6 years old when Roybal-Allard was first elected to her seat. He works as a psychologist with degrees from UC Berkeley and Stanford.

Cortes Barragan stands with DSA and DSA-LA on many issues. He described his top three campaign priorities as Medicare for All, a federal jobs guarantee, and student loan forgiveness. He supports both Prop 10 and Measure B - and beyond that, universal rent control. He supports banning private prisons, decriminalizing sex work, the BDS movement, and stopping the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles. He believes that housing is a human right. When asked about the abolishment of ICE, he said that "I believe borders have always been flexible constructs and that human civilization will benefit from ever closer union. To that end, I do not support ICE, and more generally, I do not support its anti-Constitutional parent organization known as the Department of "Homeland Security." Nations should defeat the surveillance apparatuses erected by neoliberal politicians, and then come together as one people." He also wants to abolish the Senate! As of the time of writing, reports show that his campaign has raised \$12,957, with 63.86% coming from small individual contributions.

RECOMMENDATION:

While the Electoral Politics committee ultimately decided against suggesting endorsement for this campaign to the chapter, (read more about what DSA-LA's bylaws define "endorsements" under [Article VI, Section 2](#)) Dr. Cortes Barragan's campaign's ideology and policies are extremely in-line with the beliefs of DSA-LA and our members. Roybal-Allard isn't the most corrupt Democrat in the House and has done a lot of work she should be applauded for. But Cortes Barragan is right there with us on the issues. **We easily recommend that you vote for Rodolfo Cortes Barragan.**

CALIFORNIA'S 43RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Maxine Waters has been representing the area surrounding the 43rd Congressional District since 1991, although it's been redistricted a few times. The 43rd currently contains parts of Los Angeles, Carson, and Torrance, and the entirety of Hawthorne, Lawndale, Gardena, Inglewood and Lomita. Water's has been the 26th most senior member of the House. Just weeks after her first election, "Do The Bartman" was released. So it's been a while. (Honestly, we just take any chance we can to invoke 'Do the Bartman.')

Since then, Waters has been re-elected eight times. This year she's up against Republican **Omar Navarro**. It's not the first time the two have tangoed. Waters beat Navarro in the 2016 general election with 76.1% to 23.9% of the vote. She also beat Navarro in that 2016 primary with 76.1% to 23.9% of the vote. (We had to triple check that - same percentages, different vote totals!) This spring, she fared slightly less - with only 72.3% of the vote, but so did Navarro, with only 14.2%. We see no reason to really worry this race should be any different.

Omar Navarro was recently investigated by the FBI (who we are no real huge fans of, but now's no the time) after he tweeted a fake letter implicating Waters trying to **"to resettle tens of thousands of refugees in her Los Angeles district."**

Maxine Waters, on the other hand, has endorsed Prop 10. (Only one of two California congress members to do so - the other being Barbara Lee.) She's co-signed on Medicare For All. Maxine Waters is pretty good.

RECOMMENDATION:

Maxine Waters doesn't need our recommendation, but she gets it for standing on the right side with Prop 10. **Vote for Waters.**

CALIFORNIA'S 44TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Incumbent Democrat **Nanette Barragán** is running functionally unopposed. Her opponent on the ballot, Compton Mayor **Aja Brown**, dropped out months before the June primary. But after Brown dropped out, she remained on the ballot, and still beat two Republicans, Jazmina Saavedra and erstwhile-*Clueless* star Stacey Dash. (Would we call Dash selfish for running? No, not to her face.)

Because of quirky California laws, though, Brown still made it to the top-2 in a general election race... A race where she dropped out over 6 months ago! Democracy! Brown never displayed a clear difference between her and Barragán, she said that her running was "not about Congresswoman Barragán at all — [it's] about raising the standard for what congressional representation can be in my district." In the House, [Barragán is pretty much your average Democratic California Congressperson](#). She scores 100% ratings from Planned Parenthood, The Humane Society, the NEA, and AFL-CIO. She's spoken out against ICE, saying that "ICE is overstepping its authority in a clear act of retaliation by an administration intent on deporting as many people as it can.

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote for the person who hasn't dropped out. Or maybe do!? It'd be weird!!!

STATE SENATE

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE - 18TH DISTRICT

This district covers the eastern half of the San Fernando Valley, from Sherman Oaks and Noho up to Sylmar and San Fernando. Democratic Incumbent **Bob Hertzberg** is running against Republican challenger **Rudy Melendez**. Hertzberg has been in politics since the 70s and Sacramento, on and off, since 1996. He'd called himself a New Democrat in the Clinton mold, but hasn't been as obstructionist or pro-business as the Assembly "mod squad," and has generally been an ally to labor, which heavily backs his candidacy.

Hertzberg also has a reputation as an aggressive hugger, which became public during the #MeToo wave that swept his valley legislative colleagues Matt Dababneh and Raul Bocanegra out of office in early 2018. He avoided censure, but the allegations are fairly creepy: non-consensual bear hugs and enthusiastic celebratory grinding.

RECOMMENDATION:

Rudy Melendez doesn't stand a chance—this is a Democratic district, and he's unlikely to top 25% on November 6. **No recommendation, Hertzberg's gonna win.**

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE - 22ND DISTRICT

The San Gabriel Valley district is currently represented by Sen. Ed Hernandez, who is getting termed out of the state legislature next year and is running for lieutenant governor. The two major candidates vying to replace him in this diverse, heavily Democratic district are Susan Rubio—sister of Assemblymember **Blanca Rubio**—and former State Assemblymember **Mike Eng**. Statewide Democrats have split their endorsements between the two, but Eng has raised more than twice as much money as Rubio.

Susan Rubio is currently a City Councilmember in Baldwin Park and a 3rd grade teacher in the Monrovia public school district, where she's worked for the past 15 years. She was born in Juarez, and has spent her adult life working in the San Gabriel Valley. She's the sister of the sitting Assemblywoman Blanca Rubio—who's a member of the centrist Democrat "mod squad" in Sacramento—and made headlines in 2016 when she filed a restraining order against her estranged husband, then Assemblymember Roger Hernández (no relation to Ed).

She's been endorsed by the state Women's Legislative Caucus and a number of women-focused PACs, and has the backing of Secretary of State Alex Padilla and a handful of state senators (including Holly Mitchell, Ricardo Lara, and Scott Wiener).

Rubio hasn't made many public statements on many issues, but as a lifelong teacher her stance on public education is clear: she promises to make community college free "for qualifying students," opposes cuts to state financial aid, and says she will fight against tuition hikes at the state colleges. She is also a fan of business, and touts her record of supporting the police.

Major donors include the Orange County landlord lobby, Monsanto, Anheuser Busch, and Chevron, which is also shelling out for huge independent expenditures to support her (as it did her sister).

Mike Eng is a Los Angeles Community College District Board Trustee and former state Assemblyman who's worked as an immigration lawyer for most of his life outside of public office. He's also married to Congresswoman Judy Chu. He has longstanding connections to the Democratic-Labor machine—he's been endorsed by a huge majority of local, statewide, and federal Democratic politicians, and almost every union in the region, including the California Teachers Association and UTLA.

Eng's public statements are light on content, and mostly cites incremental changes he's sponsored in the state government—smog check process overhaul, registering people for the ACA, assessing district needs for student homeless and hunger. With over \$1,00,000 raised, Eng is the heavyweight in the race, and the largest pool of funds comes from unions like SEIU, UFCW, UNITE HERE, and AFSCME.

RECOMMENDATION:

Even though Mike Eng's platform is light on content, his deep connections to Los Angeles labor and his history as a fairly progressive legislator make us inclined to support him. Rubio's donors in particular are like a laundry list of DSA's enemies, and her campaigning on support for the police is gross. It's disappointing to see ostensible progressives like Mitchell, Lara, and Wiener support her. Vote Mike Eng.

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE - 24TH DISTRICT

This California state senate seat opened up when Kevin de León announced he would try upgrading to the United Senate, and run against Dianne Feinstein ([Read more about that race here!](#)) de León had been the Senator in the district since 2014, but because of redistricting, he had represented parts of the area since 2010. The 24th District encompasses much of the unincorporated East LA and Central LA proper. Just some of the neighborhoods included are Arlington Heights, Atwater Village, Boyle Heights, Chinatown, Cypress Park, Eagle Rock, East Hollywood, Echo Park, El Sereno, Elysian Valley, Glassell Park, Harvard Heights, Highland Park, Koreatown, Larchmont, Lincoln Heights, Little Armenia, Little Tokyo, Los Feliz, Montecito Heights, Mount Washington, Silver Lake, Thai Town, Westlake.

The 24th's purview also includes the very UTLA building where DSA-LA holds their Central Chapter Meetings. (You should come visit! Especially if this is your state senate seat!) **Maria Elena Durazo** and **Peter Choi**, both running as Democrats, ran against each other in primary otherwise unopposed - so they automatically made it to the general election. Back in the primary, Elena Durazo won with 69.80% (nice) of the 91,285 total votes. Almost 60% of voters in the 27th are registered Democrats -just under 9% are Republicans.

So, it's not surprising no Republicans ran.

As soon as Maria Elena Durazo announced she was running for the seat all the way back in April 2017, the race was essentially over. Durazo has been a key figure in the creation of Los Angeles's labor-backed political machine, she's run out of the LA County Federation of Labor, and served as the president of one of LA's more radical unions, UNITE HERE Local 11, for 17 years.

Her political experience also includes conventional involvement in electoral politics. In 2016, she served as a superdelegate during the Democratic National Convention. While her politics are far from perfect – she's notably supported LA's bid for the 2028 Olympics, and sits on the Democratic National Committee – she's dedicated her life to fighting for working people and immigrants in Los Angeles and will continue to do so in state government. She was also behind a minimum wage law that required a higher minimum wage for larger Los Angeles hotels to pay their workers \$15.37 an hour.

Maria's platform comprises a set of policy goals and principles (although it is sparse on details about how to achieve them). Her priorities in office will be achieving affordable healthcare, affordable college, housing security for seniors, equality for women and defending same-sex marriage. Additionally, [her work with unions has led her to view immigration and organized labor as intrinsically linked together](#). We agree!

She's also endorsed Prop 10! Yay. She also has a ton of union support backing her, including California Nurses Association (who lead the way for Senate Bill 562, which would've established single payer in California), the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, Planned Parenthood, AFSCME, and SEIU locals 721 and 2015.

Her campaign's received \$1.2M in donations mostly from unions, insurance companies, telecommunication companies, and developers. Her three biggest donors are maxed out at \$26,400 each - the California Faculty Association, California Federation of Teachers and SEIU California.

Peter Choi is a good guy with strong progressive politics. He leans into his experience as a union member and small business owner for part of his political perspective. He is a member of the Directors Guild of America and owner of a small retail shop in Silverlake. He served on the Silverlake Chamber of Commerce, a position he used to promote small business development in his neighborhood. He marched in support of SB 562 and believes in delivering healthcare to every Californian. He claims that Durazo is against SB 562, but there's no evidence to support that.

The goals of Choi's platform are to achieve equality in the economy, in health outcomes and for all genders; protection from pollution in the air and water; a reduction in government corruption; environmentally friendly energy production; and animal welfare. His campaign talks about how healthcare is a right for all Californians, fighting climate change by banning fracking and replacing it with clean/green energy jobs and protecting public schools from privatization .

Choi has written that he's also "campaigning to end the For-Profit Prison system which is modern slavery and unfairly targets young men and women of color from low income neighborhoods. " He wants to promptly introduce cannabis production regulations to even the playing field for smaller businesses and independent growers. He also wants to legislate statewide workplace protections especially for women and members of the trans community.

The campaign's raised \$11.7K from primarily individual donors. His biggest donation of \$4,000 comes from the McMullen Company, which is the personal business of "Forensic Fire City Attorney Expert Witness James McMullen." [It's extremely lit.](#)

RECOMMENDATION:

Peter Choi is running a campaign presenting himself as running to the left of Maria Elena Durazo, but there isn't as much daylight between the two of them as you might think. Maria Elena Durazo is a labor hero in the area and has actually delivered on many of her promises in the past. We're going to trust our local union allies here. She's going to win no matter what, but we recommend voting for Maria Elena Durazo.

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE - 26TH DISTRICT

The 26th Senate District covers the beach cities from the Palos Verdes peninsula up to Santa Monica, and then jogs east to cover Westwood, Beverly Hills, West Hollywood, and the chunk of LA north of Pico and west of Gower (Miracle Mile, Hollywood, the Grove, etc).

This race is functionally uncontested—incumbent Democrat **Ben Allen**'s only opposition is the independent candidate **Baron Bruno** (real name), who ran as a Libertarian for State Assembly in 2016. Allen is a consistently progressive democrat in the State Assembly.

RECOMMENDATION:

Allen is going to win no matter what, but still, **you should vote for Ben Allen (obviously don't vote for Baron).**

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE - 30TH DISTRICT

The 30th Senate District encompasses Culver City, Inglewood, Ladera Heights, Crenshaw, South Central, and some of Downtown LA. It's been represented by **Holly Mitchell** since 2014, who had previously served as executive director of Crystal Stairs, one of the largest childcare agencies in the state.

Mitchell has a history of advocating for the poor and working class within the state legislature, particularly drawing on her experience with social services and child care agencies, helping expand welfare and funding for social services while pushing criminal justice reform. She can be considered one of the most progressive state senators. She's running unopposed, and her popularity with both the party and progressives in California means she's unlikely to face a viable opponent in the near future.

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote for Holly Mitchell, not that it matters since she's running unopposed.

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE - 32ND DISTRICT

This one's a doozy!

The race is to fill the seat vacated by Tony Mendoza, who resigned after allegations of past sexual harassment became public—only to change his mind and throw his hat back in the ring to run for the seat he just vacated. What a move.

10 people ran for this seat (8 Dems, 2 Republicans) in the primary, most of whom were former mayors of one of the Gateway Cities (Montebello, Bellflower, Artesia, Pico Rivera) that make up this district. And of the Democrats, 6 actually raised a good bit of money, which made it an officially certified shitshow.

In the end, former Pico Rivera mayor and Democrat **Bob Archuleta** and former Montebello mayor and Republican **Rita Topalian** got top-two, and are facing off on the 6th. Archuleta has the backing of the California Teachers Association, the Democratic Party, the LA Federation of Labor, and most of the other power players in the district.

The former mayor of Pico Rivera, Archuleta is leading the pack in finances, mostly from individuals and local businesses—Manhole Adjusting Contractors, Inc threw in \$4,400. He's a veteran and a former cop, supports public education and business, and is against graffiti. Most of his endorsements were from local city electeds, plus the ominously named "Traditions Homeowners Association," in the primary, but the democratic-labor machine has since lined up behind him.

The former mayor of Montebello, Topalian has the support of the local police and is the founder of a real estate development company. She's raised a good amount of money, unsurprisingly from landlords and developers, and has been the beneficiary of huge independent expenditures by the charter school lobby and Chevron. She opposes the gas tax, opposes Prop 13 reform, wants to increase mass incarceration, and opposes Prop 10.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend you **vote for Bob Archuleta.**

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE - 32ND DISTRICT

This district is mostly in Orange County but includes small parts of Los Angeles County, in the Long Beach area. The incumbent, **Janet Nguyen** (R), will be serving her second term if she beats **Tom Umberg** (D). The district includes some of the more conservative sections of Orange County as well as some of the more working class areas in Santa Ana. Janet Nguyen won her first term back in 2014 with 58% of the vote, and local Democrats are hoping that they may be able to reclaim the district, which was represented by Democrat Lou Correa prior to his ascension to Congress in 2014. Still, it doesn't seem to be working: Nguyen again won 58% of the vote in the primary, while Democrat Tom Umberg beat out several more-progressive Democratic candidates with 26% of the vote.

Since the primary, Nguyen has been following a fairly nasty Republican playbook – smearing her opponent as much as possible. Umberg recently sent out a cease-and-desist for a mailer funded by the Nguyen campaign that called Umberg a communist – file under “things reactionaries say that would be awesome if they were true”. Sadly, Umberg is not even a progressive, but a bog-standard “small business”, “law-and-order” Democrat who has already lost an election in this district when he ran a decade ago.

Tom Umberg is a long-time “New Democrat” politician – he was a colonel in the Army in the late 70s/early 80s, and then was elected to the California Assembly in a moderately Republican district in 1990. He was then appointed Deputy Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy under the Clinton Administration – the Democratic administration office primarily responsible for perpetuating the disastrous War on Drugs. Umberg has also served as federal prosecutor in the O.C. Since then, he's run multiple times as a “law-and-order” Democratic legislator, serving three terms in the California State Assembly, helping create punitive laws on drug and gang-related felonies.

He was awarded Legislator of the Year Award by California Police Chiefs. Umberg has also authored bills that toughened hate crime laws, provided some consumer protection, and crime victim protection. He currently owns a [small law firm](#) in the OC. All in all, he's the worst type of Democrat and if he weren't running against a Republican, we wouldn't even consider recommending him.

Umberg's platform is ever so slightly to the left of his opponent, Nguyen. He also wants to ban high capacity weapons and ammunition, and to prioritize the opioid crisis –

although given his Drug Czar history this could easily be really bad. On the slightly positive side, Umberg advocates for a series of modest reforms and for defending existing Democratic “wins” – defend the ACA and DACA, “expand healthcare coverage”, “lower prescription drug prices” – basically generic Democratic incremental Democratic reforms.

His plan for the economy is to deregulate to help small businesses. Umberg also wants to bring higher wage jobs into the economy as a means for increasing healthcare coverage and retirement security. Lastly, he does not want to expand oil drilling off of the Californian coast and plans to fight the Trump Administration's destruction of the EPA. All in all, he's basically a Blue Dog Democrat and could easily have been a Republican in another age. Maybe that's what's needed to win in this district, but we don't think so.

Umberg has raised \$669,340.63. His top contributors include the California Democratic Party (\$340,041.85), the California Teachers Association (\$6,700), California Nurses Association (\$6,700), California State Employees Local 1000 (\$10,000), American Federation of State, County, & Municipal Employees (\$17,600), and the California Pipe Trades Council District 16 (\$6,700).

Janet Nguyen is the highest-ranking Vietnamese-American legislator in California and has built much of her career on traditional conservatism and leaning into the more reactionary elements of local Asian-American communities. She particularly focuses on her status as a Vietnamese refugee, and [in early 2017 she was forcibly removed from the senate chamber while making statements criticizing late California State Senator and anti-Vietnam War activist Tom Hayden](#). Interestingly, she uses footage of the event in her [2018 campaign video](#) to imply that she was dragged off of the chamber floor for speaking up for her constituents. She has a deep love of [patriotism](#), veterans, and [police](#). She boasts many awards from veterans' groups, Latinx groups, and women's groups and boasts community involvement in her district.

A lot of her platform seems to be really good in comparison to her Republican (and indeed many Democratic) colleagues. It's only when one looks closer, into the types of legislation she supports and the types of lobbying groups that are pleased with her, that one sees that [the platform on her website](#) fits within a much more complex and mixed context.

Let's start with the not-so-bad in Nguyen's platform. Her website boasts the [millions in grants she has secured](#) for public schools in her district. She also doesn't take an

oppositional approach to funds going to the CSU and UC system, and argues for reducing the cost of tuition at the [UC system](#). However, she was one of the state legislators that tried introducing a Senate Constitutional Amendment, back in 2015, to [prohibit state funds going to schools](#) which restrict/prohibit displaying the American flag.

Nguyen also supports DACA and believes that children brought to the US by their parents should be allowed to stay and apply for citizenship, reflecting a far softer immigration stance than today's GOP, but she still voted against Kevin de León's California Values Act, which enacted some sanctuary state provisions in California. Her platform points out the skyrocketing rent prices in the state. In the past, she co-authored a bipartisan bill to [increase the renter's tax credit](#)

She is strictly anti-taxation. She is against the California gas tax. [In 2017, she received an A rating from the Howard Jarvis Taxpayer Association](#). While her platform says that she has helped pass legislation to expand health care for the homeless, mentally ill and for lower-income families, she is [against single-payer health care and opposed SB 562 last year](#).

Janet Nguyen has raised \$1,934,949.20. Some of her top contributors include the California Republican Party (\$72,066.39), unitemized donations (\$48,209.48), California Association of Realtors (\$17,600.00), California Dental Association (\$13,200), Farmers Insurance Group (\$9,900), Astrazeneca (\$8,800), AT&T (\$8,800), Chevron Corp (\$8,800), United Health Group (\$8,800), Santa Ana Police Officers (\$8,800), and Blue Cross Blue Shield of California (\$8,800).

RECOMMENDATION:

Even though Umberg isn't a great candidate, or even a good one, at least he's not a self-described "strong supporter" of the generational-wealth-destroying Proposition 13. **Vote Umberg, but we fully expect him to screw it up** – he's basically battling Nguyen for the "moderate Republican" votes, and if 2016 taught us anything, it's that the Democrats lose those battles. Next time, let's get somebody who can actually inspire the growing working class communities in these areas.

STATE ASSEMBLY

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 36TH DISTRICT

This district is split between LA County and Kern County with a little sliver in San Bernardino County. It's demographic is mainly comprised of Black, Latinx and White. In 2014, Tom Lackey, the Republican incumbent, took this seat from Democrat Steve Fox with 60% of the vote. Steve Fox ran against him in 2016 and only lost by a little over 6%. So now in 2018, this dueling twosome is back at it again.

Lackey is a retired sergeant of the CHP and a special education teacher, currently has over \$650K, and he his platform appears to be expected for a Republican: lower taxes, community protection and more jobs. Fox, an attorney, has very little information about what his platform is on his website: his issues are ["Job & the Economy"](#), ["Public Safety"](#), ["Education"](#), and ["Veterans"](#), but none of the links are working at this time. In [2017 the California Assembly agreed to pay \\$100,000](#) to one of Steve Fox's former legislative staff member to settle a claim of harassment, discrimination and retaliation that happened back when Fox was in office. When it comes to fundraising, Fox has a little under \$60K primarily self-funded.

Recommendation:

Not really any great options here to be honest. **No recommendation.**

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 38TH DISTRICT

This district is primarily in Los Angeles County, in Santa Clarita, with a little bit in Ventura County with a demographic of primarily White, then Latinx and Asian. **Dante Acosta**, the Republican Incumbent, is running again against Democrat **Christy Smith**, having competed against each other once before in 2016. The 2018 primary has them 7% apart, but the 2016 general was only 5% apart. Acosta has over \$1.1M in funds for this race and Smith has over \$1.4M with additional independent expenditures from Planned Parenthood and the Labor Federation. The California Democratic Party has sent over \$400K to Smith.

Acosta is a typical Republican, [supporting lowering taxes, less government spending, against any changes to Prop 13, securing borders, strengthening jails and against teacher unions](#). However, Acosta prides himself on his [bi-partisanship](#) and appears to be pretty progressive on things such as women's equality rights (although this is [disputed](#) by Christy Smith), environmental protection, and strong support for tuition freezes for UC schools.

Surprisingly Smith's [platform](#) has a lot in common with Acosta's; she supports less regulations on small businesses, supports giving more money (including revenue from cannabis tax) to law enforcement to help with crime, drugs and gangs (she actually [accuses](#) her opponent of not voting to give more funds to law enforcement). She wants to lead with women equality, sexual harassment protection, reproductive health protection and equal pay, is a strong supporter of environmental protection (relating to Aliso Canyon and Landfills), renewable energy solutions. She is [against any changes to Prop 13](#).

More progressively, Smith supports a cap on prescription drugs, but she does not appear to support single payer healthcare, rather she wants to "develop and find a comprehensive workable solution to provide health coverage to every Californian." Smith is also a member of a local school board and supports making statewide higher education more affordable. Smith is [endorsed](#) by many unions CWA, CTA, CNA as well as the California Democratic Party and Los Angeles Democratic Party.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend you vote for Christy Smith... Because Acosta is a Republican, and this seat is actually up for grabs.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 39TH DISTRICT

This district encompasses the northeast San Fernando Valley, is one of the most Latinx districts in LA County, and was one of two assembly districts in LA County with special election runoffs and a general election primary happening at the same time. AD-39 Assemblymember Raul Bocanegra [resigned from office](#) in November 2017, after details of past allegations of sexual harassment came out in the press. Bocanegra denied the allegations, but still stepped down. On June 5, 2018, Democrat Luz Rivas won the special election with over 70% of the vote and began serving in this seat. At the same time, the primary for the November general election happened, and Luz Rivas and Republican Ricardo Benitez got the two highest number of votes (without either getting an outright majority, Rivas got 42.9% and Benitez got 20.1%), and are again facing off in November to see who gets the seat for the next two years.

Benitez runs a small contracting business, has no prior political experience, and has run for state assembly twice before. A fairly standard Goldwater Republican type, Benitez uses [keywords](#) like upward mobility, corrupt government, Constitution, and free enterprise in his candidate statement. He is also against warrantless wiretapping and GMOs. He has no finances on record with the state. Benitez has not reported any campaign donations to the state.

Rivas grew up in the district, is an electrical engineer with degrees from Harvard and MIT, and has founded a nonprofit in the Valley to promote women in STEM fields. She was appointed to the Board of Public Works for Los Angeles by Eric Garcetti, and got the Democratic party endorsement—and the endorsement of almost every state Democrat in office. Unfortunately, she's also received hundreds of thousands of dollars in independent expenditures supporting her from the Charter School lobby. Rivas has taken [vanishingly few public positions on anything](#), but scored 16.5 out of 17 on an ACLU scorecard earlier in the spring. As the presumed winner of this seat, money has poured into her campaign coffers—landlords, unions, Pepsi, cops, you name it and they've probably contributed something. As of October 2018, she has over \$900K. She's also received hundreds of thousands of dollars in independent expenditures supporting her from the Charter School lobby.

RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendation. Rivas is likely going to win, and we hope the next election has her facing against somebody to her left and not another Republican.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 41ST DISTRICT

This district city centers are Pasadena, Monrovia, San Dimas, La Verne, Upland and Claremont and includes the communities near the San Gabriel mountains. The population is primarily White and Latinx, with a smaller demographic of Asian and Black. Although this district is mostly in Los Angeles County, a small portion of it sits in San Bernardino County.

Chris Holden has been in this seat since 2014, and is a member of the California Legislative Black Caucus. Holden was Mayor of Pasadena from 1997-1999 and before that was a Pasadena City Council member for 18 years. He comfortably won the seat in 2016 against Republican Casey Higgins, and is now up against Independent Alan Reynolds. Chris Holden received almost 60% of the vote in the primary and will likely have an easy time winning this election.

Holden's [platform](#) includes more accessibility for loans for small business, lower tuition for middle class students, investment in infrastructure that will bring more jobs (Gold Line Expansion), investing money into public schools, protecting natural resources and the environment. He's gone on record saying that disadvantaged communities are the hardest hit with regressive taxes, but voted yes on the gas tax. Holden has raised over \$777K for this election (and another \$164K in independent expenditures contributions). He's received thousands from Telecommunications, Health Insurance, Real Estate, Charter Schools, Chevron and other petroleum energy companies (Sempra, PG&E, NRG, NextEra), and Monsanto.

Independent candidate **Alan Reynolds** recently termed out after two terms on the South Pasadena Freeway & Transportation Commission, previously he was the Independent/Americans-Elect candidate for California Lieutenant Governor in 2014. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Aerospace Engineering and grew up in the district and is now raising his children in the local public school system. There's not much to say about Reynold's platform, beyond the fact that he is choosing to focus his campaign on anti-corruption, electoral and campaign-finance reform; he's a strong supporter of third parties and [wants to fight the 2-party system](#). According to the secretary of state website, he has reported no money for this race.

RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendation. All in all, Holden will most likely win reelection, and we hope the next election has him facing against somebody to his left.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 43RD DISTRICT

This district is in the eastern end of the San Fernando Valley comprised of Burbank, Glendale, and parts of Los Angeles (East Hollywood and Los Feliz). The demographics of the district are primarily White, with a large percentage of Latinx and Asian constituents.

Laura Friedman is running unopposed for her second term as Assemblymember. She won her first race against Ardy Kassakhian in 2016 with over 64% of the vote. Friedman is a big advocate of the [environment](#) and seems to have made this her top issue working on bills such as moving off of fossil fuels onto renewable energy systems. She has also been a supporter of clean elections and she signed onto the Disclose Act. She co-sponsored SB562 (Single Payer Healthcare for CA), and she served on the [Health Care Delivery Systems and Universal Coverage Select Committee](#) where she was one of very few people to advocate for the [concept of single payer healthcare](#). She's been a [prolific legislator](#): between 2017 and 2018 she's authored 44 bills (4 passed) and co-authored 26 (13 passed). Her voting record has achieved [high scores](#) from many progressive advocacy groups.

Some of her more disappointing positions, however, involve her support of Charter Schools and her reluctance to see rent control as a affordable housing conduit, preferring instead to advocate for developers in building more housing to drive down market costs. Despite these positions, Friedman is generally seen as accessible to her constituents and willing to consider and listen to progressive grassroots activists, unlike many of her colleagues in the Assembly.

Friedman has raised almost \$750K despite being unopposed. Some of her donors include Charter School PACs, Apartment & Building Owner associations, the Telecom industries, Correction officers and Health Insurance Companies.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend you vote for Friedman. But to be fair, she's running unopposed.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 45TH DISTRICT

The suburban district resides in the western San Fernando Valley with a demographic of primarily White and Latinx. Just like Assembly District 39, this district had a simultaneous special election and general election primary back in June, resulting in Democrat Jesse Gabriel getting a six-month term in office and advancing to the general election against 18-year-old Republican Justin Clark.

In late 2017, former AD-45 Assemblymember Matt Dababneh [stepped down from office](#) after details of past allegations of sexual harassment (specifically, allegations of chasing a Sacramento lobbyist into a bathroom and masturbating in front of her during a group trip to Las Vegas) came out in the press. Dababneh denied the allegations, but still stepped down. That triggered a special election to fill the empty seat for the rest of the year. The primary for that election happened on April 3—Democrat **Jesse Gabriel** and Republican (and 18-year-old) **Justin Clark** got the two highest number of votes (without either getting an outright majority), which Gabriel then won in the general.

Unsurprisingly given the simultaneous elections, the same two candidates again advanced to the general election.

A corporate defense attorney and Ventura County native, Jesse Gabriel began his [political career](#) as counsel and senior advisor to Indiana senator, Blue Dog Democrat, former Fox News commentator, and private equity lobbyist Evan Bayh.

Gabriel's [platform](#) lists that he wants to bring more resources to the valley, pass more stringent gun controls, investing in public schools, making college more affordable, finding a solution to homelessness, protecting the environment, making neighborhoods safe by working with law enforcement, protecting Dreamers, and investing in the economy. He stated in the [ACLU questionnaire](#) that he supports single-payer healthcare but recently when activists approached him to publicly support medicare-for-all, he smugly declined stating that it would never happen. He supports bail reform (though not the abolition of cash bail) and he is approaching the housing crisis by promoting a "housing first" model and championing affordable and permanent supportive housing.

Gabriel's [money](#) has come from the pockets of Palantir employees, corporate lawyers, oil companies, and Big Dental (along with a handful of unions), but the largest proportion of it has come from real estate developers, realtors, and landlords. He's raised a combined total of \$1.5M for his special and general elections this year with

another \$500K from independent expenditures including money from charter schools and Govern for California, an anti-labor coalition of bay area millionaires and billionaires started by former Schwarzenegger advisor and public pension opponent David Crane, Walmart board member and major Republican donor Greg Penner, and tech mogul Ron Conway, who's given thousands to Republicans like Darrell Issa and Orrin Hatch.

Justin Clark, a CSU Northridge student, is the only Republican in the race. He is 18 years old. He won 25 percent of the vote on April 3, to Jesse Gabriel's 32 percent. His [platform](#) includes all the regular Republican dribble including stopping illegal immigration, clearing out homelessness encampments, protecting Prop 13, stopping welfare, etc. He does surprisingly support LGBT families, corporate-free candidates, and more government transparency. There are enough Republican voters in this district that Clark will get a chunk of the vote.

RECOMMENDATION:

Jesse Gabriel is highly likely to win this election, having just defeated Clark by 38 points in June. **No recommendation.**

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 46TH DISTRICT

This district is in the southern part of the San Fernando Valley, it includes Studio City, Van Nuys and dips a little into the Hollywood Hills. The largest demographic is Latinx and White, as well as many other ethnicities. Incumbent Democrat **Adrin Nazarian** is running against Republican **Roxanne Beckford Hoge**, Nazarian had 79% of the vote in this year's primary and will likely win the general.

Adrin Nazarian, an Iranian-Armenian immigrant who came to the US as a child, is known to [play it safe](#) on legislation and doesn't really like to publicize his positions if he can avoid it, but he has also been known to vote positively on progressive issues. Nazarian supports additional funding for Homelessness solutions and increased development of affordable housing. He passed [legislation](#) that requires savings from pharmaceuticals to be given to consumers and he was a [co-author](#) of SB562 (Single Payer Healthcare in CA) as well as [AB249](#) (the Disclose Act). He supports making California a sanctuary state. Nazarian is an advocate for protection of women from domestic abuse and even hosts [self-defense clinics](#). Cannabis activists have gotten his support for coordinating an expungement clinic for cannabis convictions. Disappointingly, Nazarian serves as Chair of the Assembly Select [Committee](#) on 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games and is a supporter of [charter schools](#).

Of the \$528K raised for his campaign, he's received thousands from big pharma, telecommunication companies, police pacs, energy companies and building trade unions. Just some of those include over \$38K from Big Pharma, over \$130K from Building Trades, Apartment Associations and Developers, over \$17K from Health Insurance, over \$29K from Hospitals and Doctor Groups, over \$20K from Oil & Gas Companies, over \$16K from Police and Officer Associations, over \$8K from Pawnbrokers and Predatory Lenders and over \$10K from Telecommunication Companies

Republican Roxanne Beckford Hoge, like Adrin Nazarian, is an immigrant, born in Jamaica and moved to the US in the 1980s. She's been a working actor and is a small business owner. She stands for reduced power for federal government. She has a lot to say about the 2016 election and seems to be in complete denial about Trump's [racism-among other things](#)-on her candidate page. She's raised a little over \$22K mostly from individual donations. She really doesn't have a chance here.

RECOMMENDATION: No recommendation. Our prediction: Nazarian will safely win reelection. Hopefully, next time he'll face a true left challenger.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 48TH DISTRICT

Assembly District 48 covers the eastern side of San Gabriel Valley and the surrounding foothill communities. It is primarily Latinx with pockets of White and Asian residents.

[Democrat and incumbent Blanco Rubio](#) is running unopposed for her second term in this Assembly seat. Rubio was born in Juarez Mexico and immigrated here as a child and became a public school teacher.

Blanco Rubio is a supporter of the protection and assistance of immigrants, victims of domestic violence, and for children in foster care. She is also an advocate for supervised pretrial release in criminal cases and women's equality. She has also obtained money for needed upgrades to infrastructure in her district.

Despite running unopposed, Rubio has raised over \$1.1M for this election. Her campaign account will most likely keep this money and doled out to others in future elections (because that is how this political money funneling works after all). Over 70% of her funds are from the following questionable sources:

- Amway - Betsy Devos
- Over \$7K from Bail Bond Companies
- Over \$53K from Big Agriculture
- Over \$81K from Big Pharma
- Over \$133K from Building Trades, Contractors, Developers
- \$8.5K from Charter Schools
- \$5.4K from Defense Contractors
- Over \$11K from Dialysis Companies
- Over \$54K from Financial Companies, including Check Cashing and Predatory Lenders
- Over \$48K from Health and Dental Insurance Companies
- Over \$51K from Hospitals and Doctor groups
- Over \$29K from Apartment, Housing, Realty and Mortgage groups
- Over \$36K from Insurance Companies
- Over \$94K from Oil & Gas Companies
- Over \$43K from Police & Correctional Officer Groups
- Over \$28K from Telecommunication Companies
- Money received from Monsanto, Walmart and McDonalds

RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendation. Rubio is running unopposed.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 49TH DISTRICT

This district is the western side of the San Gabriel Valley and has a demographic that is primarily Asian, with a strong Latinx population. Democrat and Incumbent, **Ed Chau**, is running for reelection for the assembly seat he has held since 2012. In every race he has run against a Republican. This year it is **Burton Brink**, a retired law enforcement officer.

Ed Chau doesn't appear to have a campaign page as far as we can see, but he has this [very strange blog-type page](#). It describes Chau as a champion of public education, securing a bond that helped with needed repairs to ageing schools and overcrowding. On Ballotpedia, his sponsored bills include Motorcycle Awareness Month, Compost Awareness Week, Sexual Assault Awareness Month (aka "Denim Day"), Citrus Strong Month and even Sunshine Week.

Chau has raised \$420K for this race, his contributions include many from individual donors as well as:

- Over \$52K in Building Trades, Housing and Contractor Associations.
- \$17.5K from Hospitals, Doctors and Pharmacy Associations
- Over \$8K from Oil and Gas
- \$6.7K from Telecommunication Companies
- \$7.7K from Police and Officer Associations

Burton Brink is definitely running a negative campaign against Chau; even his [campaign page](#) displays attack ads against the incumbent. Brink wants to reduce gas taxes, fight crime, balance the budget, produce more jobs, improve student performance and oppose any changes to Prop 13.

Although Brink calls out Chau for bad air quality, the housing crisis, poor infrastructure investment, and uncontrolled pensions, he doesn't offer any alternative solutions to those problems. Brink has raised almost \$45K for this race: his contributions include over \$15K from Police and Officer Associations and the rest are mainly individual donors.

RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendation. With this being a pretty heavy democratic district (Chau got almost 70% in the primary to Brink's 30%), Chau is extremely likely to be reelected.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 50TH DISTRICT

This district is pretty much the wealthy westside. It's comprised of Santa Monica, Malibu, Beverly Hills, Brentwood, Topanga and also covers parts of Weho through to Koreatown. The district is overwhelmingly White. Incumbent Democrat **Richard Bloom** has safely held this seat since 2012 and he is currently running unopposed.

Bloom is a solid progressive democrat, with all the flaws that implies. He has been relatively strong on housing issues and introduced the bill to repeal Costa-Hawkins legislatively (before we had to resort to a ballot measure) in the Assembly earlier this year. According to Bloom's [website](#) he "focuses on a broad range of priorities including fostering economic development and job creation, improving public school funding and outcomes, providing services for seniors and the disabled, ending homelessness, and protecting California's environment."

Bloom did vote yes on AB249 (the Disclose Act) but we do not know his stance on SB562 (the CA Single Payer Bill) as it was shelved by Assembly Leader Anthony Rendon before there was a vote, but he didn't sign on as a co-author. He was, however, a co-author on Senate Bill 822 (Restore Net Neutrality). Bloom unfortunately sits on the [Select Committee on the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games](#). Although he says on his campaign website that he supports "public school" funding, he's [abstained](#) from implementing common sense regulations on charter schools and he's been endorsed by [CCSA](#).

Bloom's raised over \$594K in Campaign money including thousands from Big Agriculture, Big Pharma, Charter Schools, Building Trades, Developers, Housing Associations, Dialysis Companies, Hospitals, Doctors and Health Insurance Companies, Oil & Gas, Police and Correctional Officers, and Telecommunication Companies.

RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendation. Bloom is running unopposed.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 51ST DISTRICT

There's not much to talk about in this race. After Democrat **Wendy Carrillo** won an actually-contested special election back in 2017 (to replace Jimmy Gomez, who had won a special election to fill Xavier Becerra's vacated seat in Congress when Becerra was appointed California Attorney General...yes we agree it is too complicated), this district quickly became uncompetitive. Carrillo had previously run on an "outsider" campaign against Jimmy Gomez, but has since become the party establishment's favored candidate. She's backed by SEIU and earning several establishment endorsements and PAC donations.

Carillo promptly backed away from single-payer healthcare (instead touting baloney [universal health care](#)), is [pro-charter](#), and recently refused to endorse Prop 10 ([she supports less stringent regulations for developers](#)).

She's raised over \$911K which includes thousands from Big Pharma, Charter Schools, Building Trades, Developers, Realtors, Health Insurance Companies, Doctors, Hospitals, Oil & Gas, Telecommunications and Police Groups.

Carillo's general election opponent is a libertarian-party candidate, **Christopher Stare**, who advanced with four – literally, four – write-in votes and about \$4.4K raised.

RECOMMENDATION:

It honestly doesn't matter if you vote in this election. Just have fun, write in Karl Marx or something. Next time there's a primary, let's make sure Carrillo faces a real left challenger. **No recommendation.**

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 52ND DISTRICT

District 52 is primarily in San Bernardino County, however, it covers the city of Pomona in LA County. It's 70% Latinx, with White, Asian and Black constituents. Democrat Incumbent and member of the so-called "Mod-squad" **Freddie Rodriguez** has held this seat since 2013 when he won a special election after Norma Torres moved over to the Senate. He now is challenged by Republican **Toni Holle**, having received 48% in the primary against Holle's 35.5%.

Rodriguez is a moderate Democrat from Pomona, served on Pomona City Council and worked as an emergency responder--which is likely why he's a strong supporter of law enforcement. While in the Assembly he passed a bill (AB69) which provides best practices for download and storage of police body cam footage. Rodriguez [supports](#) more funding for "public schools" (we are assuming he means public charter schools), increasing well-paying jobs in his district, protecting the ACA and lowering prescription drug costs, and is an advocate of fighting air pollution (four freeways run through this district). He also supports the expansion of the Gold Line to San Bernardino County.

Rodriguez's campaign chest, however, is quite disturbing. He's raised over \$920K from some of the most nefarious sources; thousands of dollars from Big Pharma, Real Estate Developers, Dialysis Companies, Predatory Lenders/Pawn Brokers, Health Insurance Companies, Oil & Gas, Police Associations and Telecommunication Companies. He's also gotten max donations from other candidates--over \$100K worth. If you want to see an example of how political money is moved around, take a look at his coffer.

Holle has no campaign donations or IEs according to the SOS site. She's a typical Republican: supports jobs, lower taxes, charter schools, increased policing and gun rights. Although she got 35% to Rodriguez's 47% in the primary, it's hard to imagine she has a chance here.

RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendation. Rodriguez is likely to win, and ideally he'll be facing off against a challenger from the left in 2020.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 53RD DISTRICT

This majority-Latinx district covers Koreatown, Westlake, downtown Los Angeles, Boyle Heights, Vernon, and some of Huntington Park. The incumbent, Democrat **Miguel Santiago**, is seeking reelection to a third term running against another Democrat, **Kevin H. Jang**.

Miguel Santiago is a child of immigrants and the first in his family to graduate from college. A practicing Catholic, he says he was considering going to seminary before he got drawn into politics in the wake of statewide propositions in the 1990s. These propositions denied immigrants public services and ended race-conscious admissions in California state schools. Before the Assembly, Santiago served on the Los Angeles Community College District's board of trustees. Santiago was first elected in 2014 to succeed his former boss, Assembly Speaker John Pérez. He won reelection by a relatively close margin in 2016, beating challenger Sandra Mendoza by only 4 points in the primary and 16 points in the general election. This year he's been endorsed by all the big names in state politics, including Governor Jerry Brown, Attorney General Xavier Becerra, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, and the state and county Democratic parties. He's also been endorsed by the local Planned Parenthood, Sierra Club California, the local landlords' association, and nearly 30 unions. Santiago doesn't face a competitive challenger this year, and he's been a decently reliable vote for progressive priorities.

Earlier this year, Santiago achieved internet fame and was given his own hashtag [#SellOutSantiago](#) for introducing amendments which would severely weaken the Net Neutrality Bill SB822 (meant to protect CA from the dreadful FCC ruling), causing the bill's author State Senator Scott Weiner to pull it. Thankfully after what was likely a HUGE backlash, Weiner reintroduced the restored bill with Santiago signed on as co-sponsor and Jerry Brown signed it into [law](#). The very next day, the Trump administration [sued](#) California.

Santiago wants to make community college tuition-free, and his campaign website boasts that he's "authored some of California's toughest new gun laws" and is fighting to add more bike lanes in his district and decrease the number of jaywalking tickets given to pedestrians. In the current legislative session he's voted for a host of progressive bills, including bills to recognize non-binary as an official legal gender, abolish the sentence of life without parole for juveniles, reform the money bail system, prohibit landlords from disclosing the immigration status of tenants, prohibit

advertisements for conversion therapy, and make California a sanctuary state. Santiago also [attracted right-wing ire](#) when he introduced [a bill](#) that would allow schools to combine Washington's and Lincoln's birthdays into a single Presidents' Day holiday and add a new paid holiday, International Workers' Day, on May 1.

Santiago has taken in more than \$1.2M this cycle. His largest contributions come from public and private sector unions (over \$350K), followed by construction and real estate interests, telecommunications and tech companies, and Indian tribes. He's also received numerous donations from pawn shops and over \$67K from law enforcement groups.

Kevin H. Jang, a Korean immigrant and attorney, ran for this seat in 2016 and won 14% of the vote in the primary. He's definitely built upon his platform on his [website](#) since the primary, but some of his messaging needs a little work.

He says that he supports getting money out of politics and protecting net neutrality. He supports [medicare-for-all](#) (he appears to mostly take a pro-business attitude towards it – arguing that it would ease the burden on small businesses), he supports [local business growth](#), finding solutions to [water shortage](#), and he's concerned about [increased crime](#) (but without any real solutions offered which is a concern). Jang has reported raising only \$19K this cycle mainly from individual donations.

RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendation. Santiago is likely to win, and Jang's a bit too weirdly pro-business, despite some nice platform positions.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 54TH DISTRICT

District 54 encompasses Los Angeles' westside, representing Culver City and parts of Baldwin Hills, Century City, Crenshaw, Leimert Park, Mar Vista, UCLA, Westwood and West Los Angeles. The demographic is pretty evenly split between White, Black and Latinx. This Assembly seat became open last year when Democrat Sebastian Ridley-Thomas stepped down citing "health concerns." It was *later* revealed that Ridley-Thomas was the subject of a [sexual harassment investigation](#) around the same time that other legislators such as Dababneh, Mendoza and Bocanegra were also accused and stepped down. (Ridley-Thomas is now the subject of another investigation related to suspicions that he got a new job at USC in return for his father Mark Ridley-Thomas giving a generous donation to the school). Ridley-Thomas' stepping down prompted a special election earlier this year in which Democrat **Sydney Kamlager** was victorious with almost 70% of the vote. (DSA-LA had endorsed Steve Dunwoody, but he did not make the top two).

[Kamlager](#) was recently on the LACCD Board of Trustees and is an advocate of making college education more accessible to lower income communities. She supports protecting Dreamers, protecting the environment (but doesn't make mention of fracking in Baldwin Hills or the oil wells populating her district), criminal justice reform (with a supposedly more congenial approach to police relations), and affordable housing (seemingly pro-density). She said she supported SB562 in this [ACLU questionnaire](#), but calls it "Universal Health Care" which shows her lack of understanding on the issue. There's no indication that she supports Prop 10, and recently she voted "no" on [AB2925](#) which would have prohibited arbitrary "no-cause" evictions. She's a supporter of Garcetti and [sang his praises](#) for his work in bringing the Olympics back to Los Angeles. Lastly, it appears Kamlager is a supporter of charter schools: she recently participated in a [groundbreaking ceremony](#) for Bright Star Schools to be located in her district. Between her special election and the general, Kamlager has raised almost \$1M, and additionally has over \$300K from IEs (\$17K in IEs opposing her). Her contributions include thousands from Big Pharma, Building Trades, Real Estate interests, and Telecommunication Companies.

Challenger Democrat **Tepriing Michelle Piquado** has formally withdrawn from campaigning, but her name remains on the ballot thanks to California's laws.

RECOMMENDATION:

No Recommendation. Kamlager is running functionally unopposed.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 55TH DISTRICT

Assembly District 55 is split three ways between LA County, Orange County and San Bernardino County. In LA County, it's comprised of Covina, Diamond Bar, Industry, Pomona, Rowland Heights and West Covina. The Republican Incumbent **Phillip Chen** is being challenged by Democrat **Gregg D. Fritchle**. This is Fritchle's FOURTH attempt at winning this seat. In the last general of 2016, Fritchle received 42.27% of the vote to Chen's 57.73%.

Phillip Chen prides himself on achieving a [100% score](#) from the California Police Chiefs Association and is a big supporter of using law enforcement to prevent crime in his district. He's endorsed by [CCSA](#) (California Charter Schools Association) and is likely a supporter of charter schools. He's [voted](#) down hundreds of bills on new taxes and regulations including voting against the gas tax. He co-authored the bill that allows property owners to transfer their property tax base to another county where they purchase a new home.

The Former Los Angeles County Reserve Sheriff's Deputy has raised over \$637K for this election, with over \$40K from Financial institutions, and thousands from Big Pharma, Charter Schools, Apartment associations, Health Insurance, Dialysis Companies, over \$46K from Oil & Gas, Pawnbrokers, Telecommunications, and Law Enforcement Organizations.

Fritchle does not have a campaign website, but instead directs everyone to his [Facebook Page](#). There doesn't appear to be any platform clearly listed on his page, but he's gotten the endorsements of [Bold Progressives](#) (running a grassroots campaign), [Evolve CA](#) (clean campaigns), [SEIU](#), [Moms Demanding Action](#) (gun reform), [San Bernardino Young Dems](#) (progressive group), [Democratic Party of Orange County](#), [LA Democratic Party](#), [California Democratic Party](#) and Assembly Speaker and bill-shelver [Anthony Rendon](#). Fritchle has no campaign donations listed on the California Secretary of State's website.

RECOMMENDATION:

Fritchle is unlikely to win, but even knowing almost nothing about him, he'd be better than a Republican cop. **We recommend you vote for Gregg Fritchle.**

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 57TH DISTRICT

Assembly District 57 is located on the eastern part of the Gateway Cities, includes a portion of the southwestern San Gabriel Valley and has a strong Latinx population. The cities of Whittier, Industry, Norwalk and South El Monte are within it. Democrat and Incumbent **Ian Calderon** is the current representative for district 57 and Assembly Majority Leader. He is on the Appropriations Committee, Elections and Redistricting Committee, and Insurance Committee. Calderon is the youngest member of a California political dynasty.

Both Calderon's father, [Charles Calderon](#), and uncle, [Ron Calderon](#) have served in the California State Assembly and State Senate and have both been embroiled in corruption scandals. Ian is the youngest California Assembly Leader in state history and the first millennial to ever be elected to the state legislator.

Calderon is unspecific about his platform and does not have much on his [website](#). He takes no position on Costa Hawkins or [Medicare for All](#). He's voted to make California a sanctuary state, supported \$15/hr minimum wage, and passed a [bill](#) making it illegal for restaurants to give straws unless by request. He's received a 92% rating from the Sierra Club's report card and a 100% rating from Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California ("Legislative Scorecard"). He has received the endorsement of the California Federation of Teachers, the California Federation of Conservation Voters, CTA, Equality California, SEIU and Stonewall Dem Club. He's raised over \$970K including thousands from many unions, Big Pharma, Real Estate PACs, Developers and Building Trades, Health Insurance Companies, Oil & Gas Companies, Cash-Checking Business and Lenders, Telecommunication Companies and Law Enforcement Associations

Calderon's opponent, Republican **Jessica Martinez**, has a campaign [website](#) where she describes herself as an "educator, wife, mother, concerned citizen." She's running on lowering taxes, education overhaul and "increasing incentives for small businesses." Martinez has raised no money and has had no media coverage, except for her recent [endorsement](#) by Carl DeMaio, Chairman of Reform California and the leader of the statewide Yes on Prop 6 - Gas Tax Repeal Campaign.

RECOMMENDATION:

Calderon got 46.62% of the vote in the primary, Martinez got 23.75%, it seems pretty likely that Calderon will win reelection here. **No recommendation.**

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 58TH DISTRICT

The district — which includes the cities of Artesia, Bell Gardens, Bellflower, Cerritos, Commerce, Downey, Montebello, Norwalk, Pico Rivera, and surrounding neighborhoods — is currently represented by Incumbent Democrat **Cristina Garcia**, who has held this seat since 2012 and is running for reelection. She is running against Republican **Michael Simpenderfer**.

When the #MeToo movement hit the Sacramento Capital, Cristina Garcia joined forces with activists in her district to help stop a State Democratic Party endorsement of Senator Tony Mendoza from SD32 (located in her district) after he was [accused of sexual misconduct](#). Soon after, she was accused of [sexual misconduct herself](#) (actually [reported](#) by her neighboring Assemblymember Ian Calderon in AD57). She took an unpaid leave from the Assembly earlier this year, later returning to work to a [chilly reception](#) and stripped of her committee assignments by Speaker Anthony Rendon. Former staffers allege that Garcia groped one of them after a softball game and urged several to play spin-the-bottle after a night of drinking. A legislative investigation [failed to substantiate the groping allegation](#) but did find that she routinely used vulgar language around staff and made her employees run personal errands.

In 2014, Garcia used homophobic slurs to refer to openly gay Assembly Speaker John Pérez and was reprimanded for making a racist comment about Asians. Garcia has also been [caught embellishing her resume](#) twice, claiming first to have a PhD from USC and later a master's from UCLA. She has nevertheless been endorsed by the state Democratic party.

Garcia was raised in Bell Gardens by a single mother who immigrated from Mexico. She taught math at a public high school and Los Angeles City College before running for Bell Gardens City Council, losing by 114 votes. In 2012, she ran for the Assembly, defeating former Assemblyman Tom Calderon. Garcia supports California becoming a sanctuary state, she's strong on [gun control laws](#), and in general, she emphasizes fighting corruption and enforcing environmental laws.

She touts her response to the Exide Battery Plant disaster; under a [law](#) she proposed, \$1 of a fee already imposed on car batteries will be reallocated to fund the cleanup of lead contamination. She's been the [target](#) of Building Trades since she opposed new oil drilling in her district. The total in independent expenditures raised against her so far exceed \$720K.

She's also apparently pissed off the charter school advocates as they also have [contributed](#) almost \$290K in independent expenditures to try and defeat her.

Due to all of the controversy, Garcia did not receive the number of endorsements she has in the past. The Sierra Club, CTA and National Union of Healthcare Workers have still continued to back her up. She's even managed to raise over \$668K in contributions from all the usual suspects: Big Pharma, Oil & Gas, Telecommunications, Realtors & Apartment Associations, and a significant amount from Unions.

Garcia won the primary with 28.89% of the vote with 6 Democratic contenders. The only Republican Michael Simpfenderfer, came in second with 26.38% of the vote to advance to the general. Simpfenderfer says California has become a "paradise for perverts and predators" and has the endorsement of the Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs. He [supports](#) reducing taxes and regulations and he's only raised about \$18K.

RECOMMENDATION:

Even with all of the drama that happened with Garcia this past term, it's pretty unlikely that Simpfenderfer will win here. It's kind of shameful that no better candidate emerged to knock off Garcia in the primary, and we'll have to hope one does next time.
No recommendation.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 59TH DISTRICT

This district encompasses most of South LA, roughly covering the zone between Western and Alameda, south of the 10 and north of Century. The demographic is overwhelmingly Latinx, but also has a large Black population. This district includes the USC campus.

Reggie Jones-Sawyer is running for his fourth term in the State Assembly, after running unopposed in 2014 and 2016. He was the first elected official to smoke weed—[from a vape pen](#)—in public, at an event earlier this year with Melissa Etheridge.

His platform on his [website](#) lists strong communities, quality education, healthcare, and creating jobs. He says he supports “universal health care” but his support of SB562 is unknown. Last year, he headed up the creation of the “[Progressive Caucus](#)” with other [Assembly members](#) in order to create a counter-effect to the “mod-squad” members. It appears that Jones-Sawyer has put charter schools on the defense when he introduced a [bill](#) that addressed that charter schools would be subject to conflict of interest laws (it didn’t [pass](#)). We don’t know if Jones-Sawyer supports Prop 10, but he did vote positively on [AB2925](#) this year. The bill would have enacted just-cause eviction protections statewide which shows he is a pro-tenant advocate. He’s got the backing of most of the labor movement and almost anyone else you can imagine with over \$580K in contributions which include: energy and oil companies, telecoms, Philip Morris, Pepsico, and, to a lesser degree, charter schools, landlords, and realtors.

Jones-Sawyer's opponent, **Leslie Hagan-Morgan** appears to be pretty progressive according to his [website](#). He lists education, supporting single payer healthcare, clean energy, living wage, public schools, early education programs, free college education, student loan forgiveness, rent control and stopping unjust evictions, investing in affordable housing, and criminal justice reform *including* investigations of police brutality and banning for-profit prisons. He has reported no contributions to the state.

RECOMMENDATION:

We wish Hagan-Morgan had his platform out there earlier since he appears to be with us on the issues - but we can't be sure. **No recommendation.**

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 62ND DISTRICT

This district covers the LA coast from Venice to El Segundo and the inland cities of Hawthorne, Lennox, and Inglewood. It's demographic is primarily Latinx with a significant Black and White population. Democrat and Incumbent **Autumn Burke** won the primary with 80.85% of the vote. Her opponent Republican **Al Hernandez** got 19.15% of the vote.

Burke is running for her third term in the State Assembly. She's also the daughter of former congresswoman and LA County Supervisor Yvonne Braithwaite Burke.

Burke has no platform listed on her [website](#). She did not fully come out in support of SB562 (Single Payer), but she did give a [shout out](#) to the CNA nurses at a rally for getting the conversation started. We do not know where she stands on Prop 10 or rent control, but she betrayed tenants by choosing not to vote on AB 2364 that would have required implementation of a 'just cause' eviction requirement statewide. Also, she is endorsed by the [California Charter School's Association](#).

She receives a lot of money (approximately 1.13M dollars) from oil companies (the Chevron refinery in El Segundo is in her district) and weapons manufacturers (Northrop Grumman and Boeing both have offices in her district), and a whole host of other corporate PACs. She also receives money from the charter school and landlord lobbies - but has the backing of the AFL-CIO and many of the unions under their umbrella.

Burke's only opposition is Republican Al Hernandez, who has reported raising no money. He also has no [website](#). As usual, these down-ballot races desperate need leftist challengers in the primary, and it really doesn't matter if or how you vote for this race in the general.

RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendation. Burke is likely to get re-elected easily.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 63RD DISTRICT

The district consists of a part of the Gateway Cities region southeast of Los Angeles, including Bell, Hawaiian Gardens and Long Beach. The demographic is majorly Latinx.

Anthony Rendon is the leader of the Assembly "Mod Squad" caucus of business Democrats. He's also the man who single-handedly shelved the single-payer bill, SB-562 in the state assembly last year calling it "[woefully incomplete](#)." Truth be told he took in over \$[700K](#) in money from insurance companies for his campaign. Also, sources who were closest to the bill's brokering indicated that Rendon did not act in good faith as he had requested multiple amendments to the bill which were delivered. He refused to acknowledge them and instead said he "never received them."

This debacle led to a year's worth of ire from [activists and nurses](#) for Speaker Rendon, inspiring protests and statewide canvasses for single payer. The bright side is that awareness for single payer has increased dramatically due to this.

Rendon's [website](#) is "woefully incomplete" as it lists no comprehensive platform, just mentions "clean water" and a link about "gun control." Rendon is likely continuing to depend on his district's low voter turnout. There's no indication where Rendon stands on rent control or Prop 10, but last year when a bill was proposed to repeal Costa Hawkins, Rendon [did nothing](#) to help the bill and it died in committee. Rendon also makes no mention of [Exide Technologies](#) battery plant, the environmental pollution travesty affecting thousands of low-income families in his district. Activists believe Rendon and neighbor Cristina Garcia sold them out with their subpar "collaborative" solutions that didn't cover the full cost of the clean up. People living in a 1.7 mile radius (10,000 properties) around the shuttered plant are left with contaminated [lead dust](#) that the state does not have enough money to clean up.

According to the state Rendon has raised a **WHOPPING \$2 MILLION DOLLARS** for his election, far surpassing any race in LA County. Unsurprisingly, Rendon's donors encompass pretty much *anyone*, Big Pharma, Insurance Companies, Oil & Gas, Predatory Lenders, Telecommunications, Real Estate Interests, Law Enforcement, and maximum amounts from Unions.

Maria Estrada entered the race, inspired by the activism against Rendon and his shelving of the healthcare bill. On her website she indicates she is the sixth of seven children, mother of two, and a grandmother of two more. She received her entire

education in Lynwood in the 63rd district and has been working since she was 15. In the primary Rendon received 46% (18K) and Estrada received 29% (11K).

Estrada's [platform](#) lists environmental justice, including fighting for the residents affected by this disaster and single payer healthcare. Estrada also plans to fight corruption in local government, and to support the low-income communities within AD 63, protecting their homes from gentrification. She just released her [campaign video](#). In her candidate questionnaire to DSA, Estrada also voices support of universal basic income, clean elections, investment in education and infrastructure, public banks, federal jobs guarantee, abolishing ICE, banning private prisons, protecting unions, stopping the expansion of charter schools, and support of Prop 10. Our clearest disagreement is over Proposition 6 - she views it as a regressive tax (and has taken endorsements from Republicans because of it.)

Estrada indicates she has \$18K raised for her campaign.

RECOMMENDATION:

Maria Estrada might not be your most typical politician, but we agree with her on the issues. And Anthony Rendon is very, very bad. **We recommend you vote for Maria Estrada.**

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 64TH DISTRICT

This district covers Compton, Carson, Watts, Willowbrook, and other cities and neighborhoods of South LA between the 110 and the 710 with a primarily Latinx and Black demographic. Incumbent Democrat **Mike Gipson** is running for his second term in the assembly.

Mike Gipson's [website](#) states that he is for education, public safety (having been a cop, he supports local law enforcement to have resources to fight crime), guaranteed healthcare coverage to everyone (coverage means insurance, not care), housing through investment in affordable housing, expanding resources for homeless, protecting the environment through cap and trade, and investment in public transportation. Gipson has not been a champion of [tenants rights](#). Although he did vote yes on AB 2925 (which would require landlords to establish cause in evictions), he did abstain from voting for AB423 which would have protected low income renters from shady eviction procedures. He also abstained from the vote on AB2364 which would protect tenants from Ellis Act loophole evictions. Gipson did recently get a [bill](#) passed that would allow the state to take over a water district from Sativa which has been delivering brown smelly water to residents for years.

Gipson has raised over \$928K for this election. Most of his campaign chest comes from unions, but he takes money from just about everyone—oil companies, landlords, casinos, insurance companies, realtors, liquor companies, the California Teachers Association, *and* the charter lobby.

Gibson's opposition is **Theresa Sanford**, a middle school teacher and a write-in candidate who got a total of NINE VOTES (.03%) in the primary. According to her [website](#), she wants to promote public safety, stimulate the economy and job growth, protect Prop 13 for residential and commercial property owners, cut taxes to stimulate economic growth in the private sector and preserve tax credits for the working poor, stop the bullet train, protect the 2nd amendment and provide "options" for health coverage instead of a one-size-fits-all approach (no idea what she means by that). As usual, these down-ballot races desperate need leftist challengers in the primary, and it really doesn't matter if or how you vote for this race in the general.

RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendation, Mike Gipson is functionally unopposed.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 66TH DISTRICT

This district covers the south bay, from Manhattan Beach and Gardena down to Rancho Palos Verdes. The demographic is an even mix of White, Latinx, and Asian.

A mod-squad member, **Al Muratsuchi** is running for his third (non-consecutive—he got beat by a Republican in 2014) term in the Assembly, and he's got every imaginable union and democratic politician backing him.

Muratsuchi, the former Santa Ana city attorney and LA County prosecutor, says he refuses to take money from the oil lobby, though he does still accept donations from landlords and other big business interests. The building trades unions (carpenters, steelworkers, pipefitters, etc.) are vehemently against Muratsuchi because of his support of refinery safety and the banning MHF (Modified Hydrofluoric Acid), an outdated and dangerous refinery process. In 2015, a [Torrance refinery exploded](#) and a piece of the explosion landed near an MHF tank, which is highly explosive and could have caused serious damage and death to over 150,000 residents in surrounding areas. Even Muratsuchi took heed and moved his entire family from Torrance to safety in Palos Verdes. Residents want to [ban MHF](#) which requires the [conversion of the refinery](#). The building trades are opposing this conversion because it will shut down the plant for up to [two years causing a loss of jobs](#).

Muratsuchi's opposition is Republican and Tea Party Member **Frank Scotto**, who got 43% of the vote in the primary. Unlike most seats in LA County, this one could actually be taken by a Republican (though the odds are low). Scotto is a former Torrance city councilperson and mayor, and was a founding member of the Torrance Police Foundation. He's big into [guns](#), wants South Bay cities to secede from LAUSD, and wants to cut taxes.

RECOMMENDATION:

Due to the urgency of the Torrance refinery situation, **we recommend a vote for Muratsuchi.**

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY - 70TH DISTRICT

This district covers Long Beach, San Pedro, Signal Hill, and Catalina Island, and notably includes the Port of Los Angeles. The demographic is primarily White and Latinx. Incumbent Democrat **Patrick O'Donnell** is running for his third term in the state assembly. His only opposition is Libertarian **Honor "Mimi" Robson**, who almost got 17 percent of the vote in the primary (no Republicans were running).

The former teacher and Long Beach city council person, **Patrick O'Donnell**, website has zero [platform](#) listed. The only good [bill](#) he authored was to keep ICE off of school campuses, not that it really helped as ICE stands on the sidewalk outside the schools. In 2016 he received an "F" from the [Courage Campaign](#) which says a lot considering it's not even as progressive as we are. He [graduated](#) in 2017 to a "D".

He has raised over \$850K in campaign contributions and is backed by the California Teachers Association, a whole bunch of unions, Eli Lilly, Exxon Mobil and other Oil & Gas, the landlord lobby, and a host of other industry PACs.

Libertarian **Honor "Mimi" Robson's** [platform](#) consists of:

1. "Reduce the size and scope of State Government by eliminating unnecessary regulatory agencies which will create a business friendly environment and bring back good paying jobs
2. "Improve the infrastructure in our state by eliminating frivolous projects like the high speed rail and instead focusing on our antiquated water system and roads.
3. "Eliminate government intrusion into the private lives of our citizens to create individual freedom and encourage self-reliance."

She supports healthcare for all people including undocumented immigrants via a "free market solution" allowing companies like Walmart to have medical clinics.

She's been endorsed by the Libertarian Party of California, Howard Jarvis Tax Payer's Association PAC, American Independent Party of California, Brian Ryman (listed as Libertarian Activist and friend). As usual, these down-ballot races desperately need leftist challengers in the primary. According to the state she's raised about \$8.9K.

RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendation, this race is functionally uncontested.

NON-PARTISAN OFFICES

The Superior Court of Los Angeles County is the main trial court for the 10 million people of the county. It hears both civil and criminal cases, including evictions, child custody cases, traffic tickets, homicide prosecutions, and many more. Its hundreds of judges have an enormous effect on the individuals who come before them and almost always win reelection unopposed. White men and former prosecutors predominate on the bench, sitting in judgment on the mostly poor and nonwhite plaintiffs and defendants who come to court to try to defend their families, their homes, or their freedom.

The large majority of Superior Court seats are uncontested this year, like most years, and therefore won't appear on the ballot. The candidates in contested races are almost all prosecutors, either with the county DA's office or in the city attorney's office of Los Angeles or another municipality. While judicial candidates aren't supposed to comment on political issues — even directly relevant ones, like the use of money bail to keep poor people imprisoned until they plead guilty — we've gleaned what little information can be found on them. As a general rule, prosecutors who have been on the front lines of mass incarceration shouldn't be rewarded with the power to set bail, sentence defendants, and evict tenants.

Please read these recommendations, as there are some opportunities to elect (slightly) better candidates than the typical cop-worshipping mass-incarcerators.

SUPERIOR COURT OFFICE NO. 4

A longtime prosecutor in the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office, **Alfred A Colletta** boasts endorsements from numerous Superior Court judges (including the retiring incumbent he'd replace) as well as hyperpunitive Republican former DA Steve Cooley and local police unions. Colletta has a lot of experience, but that experience mostly consists of sending working-class people to prison. However, he [does boast](#) of having prosecuted police officers, and he states that he "can distinguish between the person who appears to be the technical law breaker as contrasted to the person who will harm society." He has hired David Gould, a political consultant who frequently represents establishment-aligned candidates for the Superior Court, and [he's been endorsed by the L.A. Times](#).

A. Veronica Saucedo spent thirteen years as a public interest lawyer at Neighborhood Legal Services of LA County and the Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice, representing low-income people for free in family law and other cases. Since 2015, she's served as a commissioner for the Superior Court, a position that includes adjudicating cases. .

Saucedo grew up in Lakewood as one of ten children of Mexican immigrants, and she taught third grade before going to law school at UCLA. She's been endorsed by a number of sitting judges as well as Dolores Huerta, the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, and the Los Angeles County Democratic Party. Based on her background, Saucedo is likely to bring a less punitive approach to the bench. Saucedo was also rated "Well-Qualified" by the [Los Angeles County Bar Association](#), who rated Colletta and Schonbrun merely "Qualified." Saucedo is a better choice for judge than her two prosecutor opponents.

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote **A. Veronica Saucedo**, the public interest lawyer, over another prosecutor.

SUPERIOR COURT OFFICE NO. 16

Patricia (Patti) Hunter is a prosecutor in the City Attorney's office, where she's worked for over 28 years. She boasts endorsements from City Attorney Mike Feuer, Councilmember Paul Koretz, and former mayor/current Superior Court judge James Hahn, as well as a number of other current and retired Superior Court judges. Before moving into criminal prosecution, she spent her early years at the City Attorney's office defending against employment cases brought by workers at the Department of Water & Power.

Sydne Jame Michel is a city prosecutor for the cities of Redondo Beach and Hermosa Beach. Unlike the other two candidates, she has experience working in criminal defense from her years representing the wealthy at the high-profile law firm Kirkland & Ellis. At one point Michel was also in charge of the firm's pro bono program, which provided free legal services to those in need. She went on to the DA's office and, from there, to her current positions in Redondo and Hermosa. Michel's endorsements include hyperpunitive former Republican DA Steve Cooley as well as the usual host of judges and several South Bay police unions. She has also been endorsed by the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). Michel [has said](#) she intended to pour \$300,000 of her own money into the race, and she is represented by David Gould and endorsed by the [L.A. Times](#).

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote for Patti Hunter, who didn't spend years defending the wealthy and doesn't have cop endorsements.

SUPERIOR COURT OFFICE NO. 60

Tony J. Cho has been a prosecutor in the DA's office since 2005. His parents [immigrated from Korea](#) the year before he was born, and his father later earned a PhD and became a city councillor and later mayor in Cerritos. With endorsements from hyperpunitive Republican former DA Steve Cooley and local Democratic groups, representation by David Gould, and \$500,000 to spend on his campaign, Cho may be the frontrunner for this seat, although he [failed to get the L.A. Times endorsement](#).

Holly L. Hancock appears to be the only public defender running for the Los Angeles County Superior Court this year. She has spent her entire twelve-year legal career at the Los Angeles County Office of the Public Defender representing poor people charged with crimes. Hancock [told the Metropolitan News-Enterprise](#) that she decided to run for a judicial office after realizing the influence a judge can have in misdemeanor court, "where you can have an impact on the day-to-day people, working people, every day." During and prior to law school, Hancock worked as a flight attendant and served as a local officer in her union. As both a black woman and a public defender, Hancock would add much-needed diversity to the Los Angeles County bench, which is filled with white male prosecutors. She [has criticized](#) the money bail system, calling it "unaffordable by all but the wealthy," and says she would pursue "rehabilitation and reconciliation in sentencing as a priority."

RECOMMENDATION:

Definitely **vote for public defender Holly Hancock.**

SUPERIOR COURT OFFICE NO. 113

Javier Perez has been a prosecutor in the DA's office since 1990. He ran for a Superior Court seat in 2016 and made it to the second round, where he lost to a fellow deputy DA despite strong backing from the Mexican American Bar Association PAC. This time, Perez appears to have collected the lion's share of the endorsements, including hyperpunitive Republican former DA Steve Cooley, Senate candidate Kevin de León, and several unions and Democratic clubs.

Michael P. Ribons, a realtor/civil litigator in private practice, also ran for a Superior Court seat in 2016, finishing fourth out of four candidates. He earned praise, although not an endorsement, from the [L.A. Times](#). Although the Los Angeles County Bar Association previously [rated](#) him "Well-Qualified," he's been [downgraded](#) to just "Qualified" this year — a worse grade than both of his competitors. His website, unusually, boasts not a single endorsement, even though Ribons has been working as a judge pro tem on the Superior Court for eight years. He'll be listed on the ballot as an Arbitrator/Lawyer, despite [questions](#) about the extent of his arbitration practice.

RECOMMENDATION:

You probably can't make a good choice here. **No recommendation.**

JUDGES (YES/NO)

Did you think voting for the Superior Court judges was bad? Well now it gets even worse! We get a long list of judges for you to say Yes or No on. What a mess. LA Times, for some reason, **thinks you should vote Yes on all the judges** that are yes/no. Apparently, the LA Times is under the illusion that what matters in the courts of America is impartial jurisprudence. Competence is all that counts. If someone is "qualified"? Who cares if they want poor or gay people to suffer! Why, that's just the system at work.

In the age of "Justice" Kavanaugh, there is no reason to assume anyone who passed through law school and got the right set of attaboys from other prosecutors is "qualified" to have an impact on the lives of millions. We must have higher standards for justice than that. And if there's any bright side to Kavanaugh's disgraceful appointment, it's the death of the idea that the Courts are bastions of non-partisan virtue. The Courts are extensions of the legislature and the political parties. To ignore this is to cede power to conservatives, who have recognized this truth for decades, and have used this knowledge to systematically win a majority on the Supreme Court and wield that power to roll back protections for the vulnerable everywhere.

With that said, we went through the judges and made some recommendations, based *primarily* on whether they were appointed by a conservative governor, as well as some information about past rulings or interviews, if possible. As a primary source, we used this **progressive guide**.

CAROL A CORRIGAN - NO

She decided against marriage equality.

LEONDRA R. KRUGER - YES

Appointed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown.

VICTORIA G. CHANEY - NO

Appointed and nominated by two Republican Governors: Arnold Schwarzenegger and George Deukmejian (who hasn't been governor since 1991, so, woah)

HELEN BENDIX - YES

Appointed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown.

ELWOOD G. LUI - NO

Appointed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown... But identifies with the Republican party.

VICTORIA M. CHAVEZ - NO

Appointed by Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

LUIS A. LAVIN - YES

Appointed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown.

HALIM DHANIDINA - YES

Appointed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown.

ANNE H. EGERTON - YES

Appointed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown.

NORA M. MANELLA - NO

This is complicated. The voter guide linked above points out that Manella was appointed by two Republican Governors, Deukmejian and Schwarzenegger. But Jerry Brown, a Democrat, recently re-appointed her, and she considers herself a Democrat. Any Democrat who could be appealing to two different Republican Governors cannot really be our best option. She might be fine. But we deserve, and should demand, better than "fine".

THOMAS WILLHITE - NO

Appointed by Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

DOROTHY C. KIM - YES

Appointed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown.

CARL H. MOOR - YES

Appointed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown.

LAMAR W. BAKER - YES

Appointed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown.

ARTHUR GILBERT - YES

Appointed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown.

MARTIN TANGEMAN - YES

Appointed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown.

GAIL R. FEUER - YES

This one's complicated. She was appointed by both a Republican and a Democratic governor: Schwarzenegger and Jerry Brown. But a [2005 profile](#) about Feuer discussed how she worked as a environmentalist lawyer. Schwarzenegger was good on the environment, if nothing else, so that explains why he'd cross the aisle for her.

JOHN SEGAL - YES

Appointed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown.

TRICIA A. BIGELOW - NO

Appointed by Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF

This was a tough one. The idea of a good sheriff is a contradiction in terms, as **Jim McDonnell**, who won as a reformer in 2014, has proven over four years in the job.

After a career at the LAPD, Jim McDonnell became the Long Beach Chief of Police for four years before being elected LA County Sheriff in 2014 — the first in over a century to be elected from outside the department.

As Sheriff, per the LA Times, McDonnell has focused on retrenchment over reform, though as a candidate he emphasized criminal justice reform and preferred drug treatment over incarceration. He attempted to release the “300 list,” a list of deputies that have histories of abuse, lying and misconduct. The list was highly sought-after; it was McDonnell who tried to release it to the district attorney, but the deputies union successfully blocked it.

He has tightened the penalties for lying on the job, fired deputies who made false statements and is reviewing the assignments of those found to have lied in the past. Some could be required to work under special conditions, such as recording all their interactions with the public.

There continues to be misconduct under McDonnell: (LA Times links)

Consider, for example, the deputy alleged to have [raped inmates at the women's jail in Lynwood](#); [the video of the deputy ignoring a call of "shots fired" so he could talk on the phone to his girlfriend](#); [the racist emails sent by the sheriff's then-chief of staff](#); [the succession of shootings of unarmed men](#); [the continuing deaths at the county jails](#); [the charges against a sergeant for demanding sex in exchange for time off](#); [the questionable purchase by an assistant sheriff of a car seized from a drunk driving suspect](#)."

McDonnell's His challenger, **Alex Villanueva**, began his campaign under the banner of departmental reform while advocating for less oversight over rank-and-file deputies. He's been a sheriff's deputy for 30 years, and has said that they should just be left alone to do their job — which we know is to serve as the paramilitary force in defense of capital.

But then Villanueva convinced the Democratic Party and the big labor unions that he was to the left of current sheriff Jim McDonnell, and got the endorsement of

immigrants' rights group CHIRLA for his commitment to refuse to collaborate with ICE, and racked up the endorsements of countless progressive groups in Los Angeles.

Until recently, Villanueva was a LA sheriff's lieutenant with 30 years on the job behind him—and he claims he didn't climb higher up the ranks (like his opponent Bob) because he was the first in the department to blow the whistle on the Baca/Tanaka administration's abuses. This makes him the reformist candidate in the race, and the only one calling for stronger civilian oversight (which won him the endorsement of the LA County Democratic Party), but his idea for reform is to add 3,000 deputies to the department's roster.

It's confusing for us to question the endorsements of many of our [progressive allies](#), but perhaps that speaks to how awful McDonnell has been. There are arguments to be made that electing Villanueva would at least shock the sheriff system, or that he'd be marginally better, but it's definitely the case that the outpouring of [progressive support for Villanueva is disproportionate](#) — he's no [Larry Krasner](#). He's claimed that he would stop the sheriff practices of allowing ICE into their jails, but has been light on details — his primary concrete proposal being to take felons outside the jails before handing them to ICE, a reform so miniscule it can barely be called reform.

RECOMMENDATION:

Both candidates are unappealing. A sheriff's department run by resentful rank-and-file deputies backed by the prevailing powers of the Los Angeles political machine runs the risk of being even less accountable and more oppressive than the current department. The department exists to perpetuate its own growth and to protect capital at working people's expense. We need to defund the sheriff's department, not lend it a temporary air of progressive respectability. **No recommendation.**

LOS ANGELES COUNTY ASSESSOR

The county assessor's main role is to decide how much each taxable property in the county is worth for tax purposes. The importance of the office is shown by the fact that the previous assessor, John Noguera, and several of his staffers were indicted for accepting bribes to lower property taxes for some affluent Westsiders by millions of dollars.

Jeffrey Prang was a West Hollywood city counsellor until he was elected county assessor in 2014. He is the establishment candidate with many endorsements. Prang describes his top three priorities as: to upgrade and replace technology systems fairly, accurately assess property values, and to provide excellent public service enhance transparency and accountability through open access to assessment data

John Loew is known as John "Lower Taxes" Loew. He legally changed his name so it would appear as such on the ballot. He is a perennial runner for the position but to date has been unsuccessful.

Loew has stated he would lower property taxes. He has also stated he would support eliminating the requirement for small businesses to pay property taxes on business equipment.

RECOMMENDATION:

Unless or until a real left candidate runs for this race with a meaningful agenda, such as actually taxing the wealthy, it's a bit of a headscratcher as to why we elect this role at all. Still, you should not vote for the person who's pledging to lower property taxes, because property taxes in California are already far too low (thanks, Reagan). **Vote for Jeffrey Prang.**

MEASURES

PROPOSITION 1

Proposition 1 would authorize \$4 billion in general obligation bonds or housing-related programs, loans, grants, and projects and housing loans for veterans. The measure would distribute bond revenues for the CalVet Home Loan Program, the Multi-Family Housing Program (MHP), the Transit-Oriented Development Implementation Fund (which offers loans and grants to local governments and developers for housing projects near transit stations), and other housing funds. It passed a vote in the California State Assembly with 70% voting yes, including all Democrats. It passed the California State Senate with a 75% yes vote, including all Democrats.

RECOMMENDATION:

Do the same. Vote yes.

PROPOSITION 2

Back in 2004, California passed Proposition 63 to create a 1 percent tax on income above \$1 million for mental health services — alaudable initiative. There are a significant number of unhoused people in California with mental illness. The trauma of being unhoused and struggling to survive often leads to health issues and it is incredibly challenging to access health services while homeless. One of the most effective ways to serve people with mental illness is to house them, which is what Proposition 2 would do.

Typically, spending tax revenues on a particular service like this is something that doesn't require a ballot measure. In fact, the California legislature already passed this bill back in 2016, under the name AB1618 / No Place Like Home Initiative. In doing so, California adopted an increasingly popular "housing first" framework, under which mental health and homelessness are considered two aspects of the same public health crisis. As socialists, we agree, although we'd go a step further to identify the public health crisis explicitly as an aspect of the oppression and alienation of capitalism.

So why do we need the ballot measure at all? Unfortunately, legal advisors within the California legislature believed that the core argument — that housing-first policies are inherently in line with Proposition 63's mandate to provide mental health services — may not hold up in court. In California, changes to ballot initiatives require a vote of the public, and lawmakers thus decided to refer the bill that they already passed to voters.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is unambiguously good to use millionaire tax money to house the unhoused and **you should Vote Yes.**

PROPOSITION 3

Proposition 3 would issue \$8.877 billion in general obligation bonds for water-related infrastructure and environmental projects. The state fiscal analyst said the bond would generate about \$8.4 billion in interest over a 40-year period, meaning the bond would cost the state a total of \$17.3 billion.

This one's a bit tricky – the drafters of the bill are pretty devious and included a lot of language to make it sound like the money is primarily going to necessary environmental projects, but the Sierra Club's opposition is a red flag. In fact, California already passed a very similar bond measure this past June, which included provisions to ensure that money is allocated to projects with democratic oversight and a focus on projects that are truly public properties.

By contrast, this measure was directly written by a group of private interests with devious language to ensure that it sounds like the money enriching them is going to the public. To take some examples:

Many local utility agencies are in fact private entities run for profit. Under their current contracts, they're required to fund their own improvements in exchange for government-granted monopolies and the right to run for profit. Public funding from this measure would effectively subsidize their profits, allowing them to continue reaping profits while the public pays for upgrades to private systems.

Similarly, a provision in this bill purports to improve water systems in low income areas. That nice-sounding language hides how central valley big agribusiness would disproportionately benefit from water system improvements.

Not all of this bill is bad. There are plenty of explicit carve-outs for non-profits, true public agencies, and environment projects. However, coming so cleanly on the heels of a water measure that went through a far more democratic process is a giveaway: the bill is not in the public interest.

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote no.

PROPOSITION 4

Proposition 4 would authorize \$1.5 billion in general obligation bonds to provide for the Children's Hospital Bond Act Fund. The fund would be used to award grants to children's hospitals for construction, expansion, renovation, and equipment projects. Eight non-profit children's hospitals would receive \$1.08 billion, five University of California general acute hospitals would receive \$270 million, and \$150 million would be dispersed to other public and private hospitals that provide pediatric services.

There appears to be no organized opposition to this proposition, which makes it hard to really weigh any negative arguments. The [only argument](#) we could find was from a former League of Women Voters president who argued that this proposition was unnecessary: just like Proposition 3, it bypasses the legislative process to provide funding for the groups that sponsored the measure by couching the argument in something nobody can argue against: funding for kids health. Digging deeper, there are a few more reasons to be suspicious: why are the funds earmarked explicitly for construction of new buildings, rather than staffing, a concern that our allies in the California Nurses Association typically raise? It's perhaps notable that CNA did *not* endorse this measure, although they haven't come out explicitly against it.

Unfortunately, these hospitals have a spotty record on labor — many have had fierce anti-union campaigns within their walls, and the funding would not increase access to this care. That's why we need single-payer healthcare, and ideally a nationalized healthcare system. But many of these hospitals do serve kids on Medical, who (like all kids) deserve the best treatment possible.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend voting yes on Prop 4, but recognize there are some real concerns, and wouldn't blame you for voting against.

PROPOSITION 5

Proposition 5 would amend Proposition 13 (1978) to allow homebuyers who are age 55 or older or severely disabled to transfer the tax-assessed value from their prior home to their new home, thereby keeping their property taxes lower than they otherwise would have been.

As of 2018, homebuyers over 55 years of age were eligible to transfer their tax assessments from their prior home to their new home if the new home's market value is equal to or less than the prior home's value and once in their lifetimes. Furthermore, counties, not the state, decide whether tax assessments can be transferred across county lines.

The drafters of this bill got one thing right: Proposition 13 sorely needs to be rewritten. Unfortunately, they've moved it in the absolute wrong direction. California's budget crisis and much of its housing crisis trace back to this Reagan-era tax revolt-proposition, which froze tax-assessed values at the time of purchase. As true property values rose astronomically, that "wealth" stayed in the pockets of the land-owning class. Meanwhile, the working class was excluded.

As written, this proposition would strengthen proposition 13 by allowing homeowners to retain these unjust tax subsidies even when buying new homes! At a time when it's impossible for the average Californian to buy a new home, and hundreds of thousands live on the streets, it's ridiculous to hand out even *more* money to the landowning class.

Under this proposition, the very same wealthy property owners who stole a generation's worth of wealth from the public interest two generations ago would expand their ill-gotten gains.

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote no — and start organizing for the outright repeal of proposition 13.

PROPOSITION 6

This proposition would repeal fuel tax increases and vehicle fees that were enacted in 2017, including the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 (RRAA), and require voter approval (via ballot propositions) for the California State Legislature to impose, increase, or extend fuel taxes or vehicle fees in the future.

This requirement would cause future tax increases to require a $\frac{2}{3}$ legislative majority and the Governor's signature.

We hope we don't need to tell you that this Proposition is bad news. It's backed by the California GOP, it adds new voter requirements to increase taxes, and it repeals a tax that funds worthwhile key infrastructure in the public interest — though it's worth noting that, like any sales tax, the gas tax is regressive and disproportionately burdens working-class people who need to drive to work. We should really be taxing (or preferably, nationalizing) the gas companies themselves.

In the face of climate catastrophe, with limited time to dramatically curb emissions, it is preposterous to hamstring our ability to tax fossil fuels. The $\frac{2}{3}$ majority requirement is a ploy from right-wing politicians who are in the pockets of polluters. .

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote no.

PROPOSITION 7

Proposition 7 authorizes the legislature to provide for permanent daylight savings time if federal government allows. Wait, what? Authorizes the legislature to have the power to... but only if the federal government....?

To be honest, we started reading about all the extra hoops and procedural things that would need to happen for this to actually abolish daylight savings time, got bored, and gave up.

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote yes because daylight savings time is a devious invention by the capitalist class to keep the working class drowsy and confused. Or don't, whatever, we're going back to sleep.

PROPOSITION 8

This one is probably the most in-the-weeds, confusing, probably-should-be-the-job-of-our-lawmakers-if-they-weren't-in-the-pockets-of-big-healthcare proposition for voters this year.

Proposition 8 would empower the state to regulate dialysis clinics more closely and specifically would require dialysis clinics to refund costs above "115% of the costs for direct patient care and quality improvement costs, including training, patient education, and technology support."

Proponents cite statistics showing that dialysis clinics pull disproportionately high profits compared to other medical services in the state, while opponents argue that any state regulations would force them to close dialysis clinics because the counted costs don't cover "medical directors, clinic coordinators, professional services, regulatory compliance, or facility security."

The main opponents are, of course, the biggest dialysis companies – DaVita and Fresenius, which sponsored well over 80% of the opposition (the remaining 20% donated by slightly smaller, still very profitable dialysis companies), making it the most expensive proposition campaign this year. They report billions of dollars in revenue and report profit margins of nearly five times that of most hospitals. DaVita has recently been the focus of multiple scandals, including illegal kickbacks to doctors that refer patients to DaVita as well as fraudulently inflating the costs of treatments they provide and overbilling MediCal and Medicare. These, combined with the massive expenditure on the campaign are telling, because they show what we generally know: healthcare costs in the U.S. are massively inflated, not by the true cost of care, but by the industry's for-profit status. The biggest companies, which already extract huge profits, are hiding behind what's essentially the threat of a capital strike: they claim that they would be forced to close dialysis clinics in response to having *only* a 15% profit margin.

Now, as we get into more details, the background of this proposition gets even more interesting. Proposition 8 is primarily backed by Service Employees International Union – United Healthcare Workers West (SEIU-UHW) – the California healthcare local of SEIU. The union has been trying to unionize the dialysis industry for years, and this campaign is the latest in a history of that union using ballot measures, or the threat of them, as a negotiating tactic to get in the room with big healthcare providers to hammer out deals. Nearly all (well over 99%) of the funding for the campaign has come

from SEIU-UHW or its associated PAC. This has led several centrist-leaning-conservative newspapers, including the LA Times, to oppose Proposition 8, calling it an attempt to “strongarm” clinics.

Ultimately, we come down supporting union campaigns, supporting profitability caps, rejecting political campaigns that hinge on the threat of a capital strike, and especially opposing the vampiric healthcare-for-profit business. Still, it’s notable that several other unions – such as the California Nurses Association (CNA), National Union of Healthcare Workers (NUHW), California Teachers Association (CTA), and California Federation of Teachers (CFT) have all opted not to make any endorsement – indeed, now that the proposition is already on the ballot, it’s hard to see how any result might actually achieve SEIU-UHW’s ostensible goals of unionizing dialysis clinics. More widely, it’s worth recognizing the limitations of a targeted reformist measure like this – that such a capital strike is even possible is a severe indictment of the entire for-profit healthcare system that continues to destroy lives every day in the U.S.

RECOMMENDATION:**Vote Yes.**

PROPOSITION 10

This is the big one. DSA Los Angeles has [formally endorsed Yes on Proposition 10](#), and even made it [one of our chapter's priority resolutions](#). That's enough for you to vote for it, right?

Well, just in case it isn't, we'll explain. Put simply, Proposition 10 would legalize rent control in California. In case you hadn't noticed, California is in the middle of a severe housing crisis, and rent is one of the most significant fronts in the class war that the wealthy are waging against the working class. Since 2000, [the median rent in Los Angeles has risen 32% while median incomes have dropped 3%](#). The most conservative estimates indicate that Los Angeles has over 50,000 unhoused people living on the streets, and the rapid rise in rents has caused massive gentrification, displacement and destruction of primarily working-class communities all across the state, with each rise in average rent pushing more people to the streets.

If passed, Proposition 10 would allow California to take one step towards fighting the displacement and greed that's destroying our communities. The Costa-Hawkins Act, passed in 1995, prevents localities in California from passing new rent control measures that would cap (but not eliminate) the profit that landlords extract from their tenants. Costa-Hawkins encourages landlords to [invent cause to evict tenants in order to raise rent on new tenants](#). If rent control measures were passed following the passage of Proposition 10, existing landlords would be able to raise rents up to a legal standard rate — typically 3-5%. This would have the *direct* effect of keeping people who are in danger of being priced out of their communities in their homes, and keep money in the pockets of the working class, rather than flowing to their landlords, who, [increasingly in California, are wall street firms eager to profit off our pain](#).

In addition to DSA Los Angeles and DSA chapters around the state, the campaign for Proposition 10 is endorsed by the California Democratic Party, Our Revolution, the LA Tenants Unions, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment Action (ACCE), and a wide array of unions including California Nurses Association (CNA), California Teachers Association (CTA), California Federation of Teachers (CFT), Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

The same banks and real estate firms that profit from rising rents turn around and spend our rent to oppose Proposition 10. The California Association of Realtors PAC

and Blackstone Group, a \$7.2 billion dollar real estate company based in Manhattan, have each donated \$5 million to the opposition. The remaining No on 10 donors are all PACs and real estate companies invested in an unequal, oppressive, extractive future.

Much of their messaging has been misleading in a rather familiar way: real estate groups call the measure an “affordable housing freeze” and threaten to stop building affordable housing if it passes — once again, the threat of capital strike. We’ve even seen egregious and vile “innovations” from the No campaign, such as threatening their tenants with bigger rent increases and [promising to retract them if the proposition fails, in order to coerce them into voting no](#).

Although DSA-LA has put a significant amount of effort into passing Proposition 10, we’re under no illusions that the proposition, or future rent control measures, will alone solve the California housing crisis. California will need to follow rent control measures with stronger protections for all tenants facing evictions, stricter restrictions on short-term rental businesses, heavy taxes on units that remain vacant, and the construction of dense, truly affordable (especially public, communal, and decommodified) housing — particularly in high-income areas with a high density of homeownership.

As socialists we believe that housing, just like healthcare and other commodities that consumers are forced to purchase in order to survive, should be decommodified. It is an indictment of our economic system that thousands of our neighbors are dying on the street every year, while the executives of big real estate firms rake in million-dollar bonuses and billion-dollar profits. While rent control alone won’t bring us to a better world, it’s one step we can take to protect, unite, and build power for our working class tenant communities

RECOMMENDATION:**Vote yes.**

PROPOSITION 11

Proposition 11, according to its supporters, would close a loophole in California law in order to ensure that emergency medical services like ambulances and EMTs are always able to respond to emergencies and save lives. That's a lie. In fact, it's another way that the ambulance industry, an entity that is inexplicably run privately and for profit rather than for the public good, is attempting to extract maximum value from the labor of their workers.

If passed, these ambulance companies, who have supported 100% of the bill's \$22 million campaign, would be allowed to compel their workers to give up paid breaks during their shifts. This would take the ambulance companies off the hook for ensuring that they have extra workers on shift during their employees' breaks, and shield them from liability if calls come during worker breaks. Already, EMTs and ambulance workers are heavily exploited workers within our broken healthcare system, typically earning salaries considered "low income" in Los Angeles.

The very premise of a for-profit ambulance company is disgusting. Until we've finally commodified healthcare, however, let's make sure we're defending healthcare workers and checking the abusive growth of healthcare companies.

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote no.

PROPOSITION 12

Proposition 12 bans the sale of meat and eggs from animals who are confined in cages below a specific number of square feet. It follows a 2008 initiative that had the same intent, but rather than defining a specific size for containment, 2008 initiative's definitions depended on animal behavior (hens must be able to "fully spread... both wings without touching the side of an enclosure or other egg laying hens"). The primary supporter of this measure is the Humane Society of the United States and it's endorsed by a wide variety of animal rights groups and nonprofits.

It's primarily opposed, shockingly, by a bunch of farm trade associations, and also, actually shockingly, PETA — their stance appears to be that any measure that doesn't ban farming is reformist collaboration.

Generally, DSA Los Angeles doesn't have particularly strong opinions on this proposition. It seems like a slightly better-written version of an already-existing regulation, and the main opponents do suck: big agribusiness is no friend of ours. We lean towards voting yes on passing well-written government regulations on industries that are in dire need of reform, but this measure doesn't do much.

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote yes.

COUNTY MEASURE W

DSA-LA's Climate Justice Committee has formally endorsed County Measure W.

County Measure W would establish a special tax on impermeable land (concrete, asphalt, etc.), generating funds to improve water collection and eliminate waterborne toxins and pollutants. A guaranteed percentage of funds goes to the low-income communities that are most at risk.

Los Angeles is not prepared to deal with its lack of reliable water. The looming climate disaster will exacerbate already-historic droughts. Los Angeles imports $\frac{2}{3}$ of our water. The process of transporting that water is unreliable, vulnerable to earthquakes, expensive and energy-intensive; moving that much water requires so much energy that it is itself a contributor to climate change. This measure would make it easier to capture stormwater runoff, rather than losing rainwater to the ocean.

County Measure W also allocates funds to public green spaces that Los Angeles desperately needs. Creating a fund for water projects allows the city to tackle a number of different issues at once, from stormwater capture to decontamination to creating green spaces and carbon sinks. Because it is a tax on impermeable land, it also encourages property owners to invest in more environmentally and water-friendly infrastructure.

The measure also has exemptions for low-income and senior individuals (although they would have to apply to be exempted, which is not ideal). There are provisions for union jobs and a percentage of jobs to those facing barriers to employment, like the formerly homeless. While the measure is a bit wonky and creates a new board underneath the county board of supervisors that would award grant money, there is enough in the plan to recommend it particularly encouraging is the attention paid to equity and community involvement. If you need more persuasion to vote YES, check out the statements in opposition from your handy Official Sample Ballot, which is full of phony, puffed-up indignation and self-righteous anger over the possibility of having to pay for the impermeable parking lots and spaces that heat up the city and allow us to lose hundreds of millions of gallons of water to the ocean every year.

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote Yes.

CHARTER AMENDMENT B

DSA-LA has endorsed Charter Amendment B, which would amend the city charter to allow the city to explore the creation of a public bank for Los Angeles. Currently, Los Angeles keeps its tax dollars in private Wall Street banks, giving them about \$8-12 billion to hold (and invest) at any given time. *Each year*, we pay them \$115 million in fees and around \$1 billion in interest for loans. They then loan our money and collect interest as their profit. . Their investments include private prisons (such as for-profit migrant detention centers), fossil fuels (such as pipelines on indigenous people's land) and weapons manufacturers.

This is the first step towards taking our money back from Wall Street and breaking the private monopoly on finance. We could divest our tax dollars from oil companies and private prisons and instead reinvest in our communities: we could pay for public housing, green energy, public transit and more. Ideally, the bank we create would be governed by a charter that explicitly directs the bank to invest in projects that strengthen communities in a socially, environmentally, and economically just way. The public banking model has worked in Germany, where it helped finance 70% of the nation's investments in renewable energy infrastructure.

This amendment does not create a public bank itself — which is both good and bad. Voting yes on this measure does not require a commitment of money from the city, but it also does not guarantee a fully-formed public bank dedicated to socialist principles. That fight will need to continue after the vote.

However, it is a critical step to securing the bank for Los Angeles, as well as an initial salvo in a nationwide battle for publicly-controlled finance. Los Angeles has a chance to send a message that we want to take our money back from Wall Street and create a financial system that works for us.

RECOMMENDATION:

Vote Yes.