

The Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club Questionnaire for November 2020

Dear Candidates and Ballot Measure Representatives,

Congratulations on declaring your candidacy! The Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club invites you to get to know us a little better as we plan our endorsements for the November 2020 election.

There are a few steps in our endorsement process:

- 1. Complete and submit your questionnaire by July 23rd*
- 2. Sign up for an endorsement interview*
- 3. Interview with the club on either July 25th or 26th via Zoom*

From there, our PAC will vote on endorsement recommendations on Tuesday, August 11th, with the final endorsement vote taking place at our general membership meeting on August 18th.

Your participation in our Club's questionnaire and interviews will allow our Membership to better understand who you are, what you stand for, and what you plan to accomplish if you are elected to office.

There are three parts to our questionnaire, plus additional questions for individual offices: Part 1 is a series of short-answer questions, with a 150-word limit on answers. Part 2 is a series of Yes or No questions covering a broad set of issues. Part 3 covers whom you have endorsed for office currently and in the past.

Please return your completed questionnaire to pac@milkclub.org and to correspondent@milkclub.org no later than July 23rd.

In addition to this questionnaire, we invite you to participate in a recorded video interview on Zoom with Club leadership on either July 25th or July 26th from 10am to 5pm. This virtual interview replaces the typical in-person presentation to our Membership, and the recording will be shared with our Members ahead of our endorsement recommendation and final vote.

To schedule your interview:

- 1. Sign up for a time slot [here](#)*
- 2. Register on Zoom [here](#)*

Your questionnaire responses and interview answers will weigh heavily in our overall endorsement process, so please take both seriously.

Good luck!

-- The Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club

Required Information

Full Name: Jovanka Beckles

Office: AC Transit Ward 1

Campaign Address: 2540 Macdonald Ave. Richmond, CA 94804

Campaign Phone: (510) 621-7566

Campaign Email: info@jovankaforactransit.com

Campaign Website: www.jovankaforactransit.com

Political Party: Democratic

Are you a Member of the Harvey Milk LGBTQ Club?: No

If so, since when?:

Do you identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer (LGBTQ)?: Yes

PART 1:

Questions for All Candidates

1. Describe your qualifications for the office you are seeking. Feel free to add anything that you would like our Members to know about you and your candidacy.

I got into this race because I believe that AC Transit can be an engine of justice — for riders, the workers of ATU Local 192, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFSCME, the elderly and disabled who rely on bus service for transportation, and our children, who deserve a livable future that only a green revolution can deliver. Public transportation that works for the East Bay's working people is within our reach.

I know that I am running for office in the East Bay, and that the Harvey Milk Club normally focuses on San Francisco politics. But what is on the ballot this year in the East Bay is the future of public transportation across the entire Bay Area. During the global pandemic, public transportation has come under attack from austerity and with the current composition of the board, cuts seem inevitable. But I believe we can save public transit and actually fight to expand it.

There are three steps in the fight to save public transit: First, we must make transit safe for transit workers and riders. That fight is ongoing today, and I support the [Voices for Public Transportation coalition's](#) efforts to win uniform regional standards, with transparency and accountability by MTC. Second, when the emergency operating assistance in the CARES Act runs out, AC Transit, like its sister agencies across the state and nation, faces massive service cuts and layoffs. Our campaign will organize riders, workers and the larger community to fight at the regional and state level to shift other transportation revenues (transit capital funds, and highway funds) to transit operations. We must also do everything we can to press Congress to enact additional transit operating support, as proposed in the HEROES Act and the surface transportation reauthorization bill. As an organizer, and a leader in the fight for Black lives, I believe the fight to save public transit is central to the fight to make Black lives matter. Third, in fighting to save public transit from bankruptcy today, we must have our eye on winning a Green New Deal for public transportation, funded with new, progressive revenues, as proposed by the Voices coalition for a future regional funding measure.

2. Do you have any key endorsements that you would like to share? Why are these endorsements meaningful to you?

Here is a list of some of my endorsements.

Jesse Arrguin: *Berkeley Mayor*

Cheryl Davila: *Berkeley City Council*

Bevan Duffy: *BART board of directors*

Kate Harrison: *Berkeley City Council*

Eduardo Martinez : *Richmond City Council*
Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto: *El Cerrito City Council*
Lateefah Simon: *BART board of directors*
Mark Williams: *Board of Directors, AC Transit*
Melvin Willis: *Richmond City Council member*
Kafui Attoh: *Author of Rights in Transit: Public Transportation and the Right to the City in California's East Bay*
Keith Brown: *President Oakland Education Association*
Ruscal Cayangyang: *Former School Board Member, Vallejo*
Jackie Fielder: *CA State Assembly candidate D-11*
Demetrio Gonzalez: *Former United Teachers Richmond President*
Terry Harris: *Former Fire Marshall City of Richmond; Former President Black Firefighters Association*
Gus Newport: *Former Berkeley Mayor*

Groups:

Black Mobilization Organization Education Reunion
ATU local 192
Teamsters local 70
Teamsters local 856
Women in Politics
NUHW
Richmond Progressive Alliance
Our Revolution Contra Costa
East Bay Democratic Socialists of America

I am proud of these endorsements because they represent a diverse and broad coalition, the kind that is needed to pass through progressive laws. Within this list of endorsers are environmentalists, progressive organizations, labor groups, public officials, local leaders, community organizers and more.

3. What do you see as the most important short-term and long-term solutions to SF's homelessness crisis? What can you do in your office to help end homelessness?

In the short term we need to immediately house the homeless wherever we can: Hotels, motels, vacant apartments, etc... We are in the middle of a global pandemic that disproportionately harms the most vulnerable. This is an immediate health crisis and it needs to be treated as such.

In the long term we need more low income houses in the Bay Area. We need to prioritize building housing that working class people can afford, and stop building luxury condos that only push our low income POC folk out of their communities.

While I won't be able to directly impact housing policy as a member of AC Transit, I can advocate for things that could help alleviate the issues the unhoused face. A free transit

system would also allow the homeless to get around easier and they would no longer have to fear interacting with the police because they could not afford to pay a bus fare.

4. What work have you done to address economic inequality and housing unaffordability in San Francisco? What will you do to address them if elected?

As a member of Richmond city council I helped pass the first local rent control law in 30 years and worked to make it harder to evict and foreclose on residents. I also led the charge to win a \$15 minimum wage and helped pass a ban the box law that prevents discrimination against those who have already paid their dues to society. As a member of the AC Transit board of directors I will work to expand bus service, prioritizing expansion in working class Black and brown counties. A free, expansive, and reliable transit system would make commuting to work easier and more affordable for 1000's of working class people.

5. Describe your work addressing racial injustice, economic inequity, and police brutality in San Francisco.

As a member of the Richmond city council I voted for a law that prevents cooperation between local police autnotires and ICE. In order to further protect undocumented residents, I also voted to enshrine Richmond as a sanctuary city. I am very supportive of the Black Lives Matter movement and I am in favor of defunding the police and reinvesting in our communities, particularly the Black community.

6. How have you supported LGBTQ San Franciscans, and how will you continue to do so if elected?

When I first ran for office in Richmond, I was attacked for being an open member of the LGBTQ community. In response to those attacks a diverse group of community leaders and I came together to create the Richmond Rainbow Pride, Richmond's first LGBT organization. That organization is in charge of putting on the annual Pride celebration in Richmond. I am proud to still be an active member of the group. As a member of the AC Transit board of directors I will continue to support the LGBTQ+ community in whatever ways I can.

7. Describe your work addressing the climate crisis, and what specific steps you would take if elected to confront climate change and environmental injustice.

As a member of the Richmond city council I took on Chevron and passed new taxes and regulations to limit pollution at the refinery that operates within the city. This angered Chevron quite a bit. In my first reelection bid they spent around \$3 million to unseat me and my political allies. My enemies used all sorts of dirty tricks, and pushed several racist, sexist, and homophobic attacks against me. We won that election.

As a member of the board of directors, I will work to expand AC Transit's hydrogen and electric fleets. The expansion of the zero emission fleet will greatly reduce the carbon footprint of AC Transit. I also have a plan to enact a fare free bus system. A free bus system would encourage more people to ride the bus and leave their personal vehicles, which are responsible for over 1/4th of carbon emissions nationally, at home.

8. Describe a time when you worked against an established power structure or entrenched authority to achieve progressive change. How was this positive change accomplished?

My entire career I have been up against the political establishment. In Richmond, millions of Chevron oil dollars were spent against me to try and take me down, but I was able to win. Or rather, I should say "we" won. One of the most important things I learned in my time on the city council was that when you're facing off with the political establishment, the corporate class, with the Millionaires and Billionaires who have too much control over Bay Area politics, you really need a people-powered movement to beat them. It takes diligent work to build that movement. You need to intend to put in the work that is required to do it.

Only Congressional Candidates

1. Please explain why you are running for Congress.
2. Do you support Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's *Green New Deal*? Why or why not?
3. Do you support Medicare For All? If so, how would you implement it?
4. Do you support reducing military spending, and diverting these funds towards domestic programs? If so, how would you help implement this?
5. Do you support reducing America's military presence in other countries?
6. What would you do to improve America's current immigration policy?
7. What steps will you take to ensure reproductive freedom?
8. Do you support raising the Federal Minimum wage? If so, to what amount?
9. Is your campaign accepting any corporate or PAC money? If so, please list those sources.
10. What are your main strategies for meeting potential voters during this campaign?

Only Supervisorial Candidates

1. What are your top three legislative priorities if elected.
2. Should SFPD be reformed, transformed, reimagined, defunded, or abolished? And why?
3. How exactly will San Francisco balance its budget during this current economic crisis?
4. How best should the Board of Supervisors handle the current COVID-19 health crisis and the shelter-in-place orders for both individuals and for businesses?
5. Do you support expanding transit-only lanes in your district?
6. What strategies will you use to preserve and expand affordable housing in your district?
7. Do you support a navigation center in your district?
8. How would you characterize the relationship between the executive and legislative branches of government in San Francisco?
9. Who do you currently see as your closest allies on the Board of Supervisors?
10. If district add-back funds are available in the future, where and how would you allocate them in your district?
11. Which of San Francisco's governmental bureaucracies is in most need of an audit and why?

Only School Board Candidates

1. Do you support charter schools in San Francisco? Why or why not?
2. Do you support Common Core education standards?
3. What is your plan to address the bullying of LGBTQ students, as well as students of traditionally marginalized communities?
4. How will you address the needs of homeless students?
5. What are your plans to protect undocumented students and their families?
6. What are the most important actions that you can take in your office to stabilize and support African American students?
7. Do you support alternatives to a student's suspension in instances of disruption or *willful defiance*?
8. Do you support the removal of the *Life of Washington* mural at George Washington High School? Why or why not? If yes, what form of removal do you support?

Only City College Board Candidates

1. What specific experience do you have with the City College of San Francisco?
1. What is your plan to address the bullying of LGBTQ students, as well as students of traditionally marginalized communities?
2. How would you address the needs of homeless students?
3. What are your plans to protect undocumented students and their families?
4. Did you support or oppose the hiring of former Chancellor Mark Rocha? How would you describe his tenure as chancellor?
5. Do you support the Workforce Education and Recovery Fund to dedicate permanent funding for non-credit classes at City College?

Only BART Board Candidates

1. What are your plans to keep BART safe from viral spread during this COVID-19 crisis?
2. What are your plans to keep BART financially solvent during this COVID-19 crisis?
3. Will you vote or have you voted for fare increases? Should BART parking fees be increased across the East Bay and/or elsewhere?
4. Should BART police be defunded, disarmed, or banned entirely? Why or why not?
5. Do you support a regional sales tax to fund transit? Why or why not?

Only Ballot Measures

1. Please include any and all contact information for your ballot measure position.
2. Briefly explain your position on this ballot initiative and why it should pass or fail this election cycle.
3. What would be the fiscal impact of this ballot measure if it passes?
4. Who crafted this ballot measure, and how was it placed on the ballot?
5. Who are your ballot measure position's principal consultants, and what are your main funding sources?
6. Who are some of your ballot measure position's individual and organizational supporters?
7. Why do you think the Harvey Milk LGBTQ Club should support your ballot measure's position?

PART 2:

Yes or No Questions

(Please check Yes or No for each question.)

GENERAL

YES NO

Are you registered to vote as a Democrat?	x	
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Have you ever sought elected office before?	x	
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Do you have a campaign consultant or other main point of contact? If so, who? __Katie Scott-Smit and Nick Ratto_____	x	
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Have you ever sought a Milk Club endorsement in the past?	x	
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LGBTQ ISSUES & SEXUAL LIBERATION

YES NO

Do you support codifying various relationship structures as a protected class? (For example, a law that would prohibit discrimination against people in consensual nonmonogamous relationships in employment, housing, education, and healthcare.)	x	
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Do you support public funding for workforce programs, specifically for transgender job-seekers?	x	
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Do you support public funding to expand access to PrEP?	x	
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Do you support decriminalizing sex work?	x	
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TENANTS, HOUSING, AND HOMELESSNESS

YES NO

Do you support immediate rent cancellation and mortgage forbearance for all tenants and homeowners impacted by COVID-19?	x	
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Do you support the creation of an independent commission to oversee the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Services?	x	
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Do you support the split-role repeal of Proposition 13?	x	
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Do you support the repeal of the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act?	x	
Do you support the repeal of the Ellis Act?	x	
Have you ever evicted a tenant?		x
Do you support the sweeps of homeless encampments by the Department of Public Works or SFPD?		x
Do you support the public acquisition of hotel rooms for permanent shelter and/or supportive housing for the homeless?	x	
Did you support Measure D, the vacant property tax, this year?	x	
Would you support a licensing system for landlords in San Francisco?	x	
Do you support a public municipal bank in San Francisco?	x	
Do you support this year's proposed real estate transfer tax for properties valued at or over \$10 million?	x	

IMMIGRATION JUSTICE ISSUES

YES NO

Should U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement be abolished?	x	
Do you support San Francisco's Sanctuary City status?		
Do you support due process protections for immigrant youth accused of crimes?	x	
Do you support allowing undocumented San Franciscans to serve on City boards and commissions?	x	
Do you support increased funds for immigrant defense services?	x	

RACIAL & SOCIAL JUSTICE

YES NO

Do you support the death penalty?		x
Do you support the use of tasers by law enforcement?		x
Do you support requiring an independent investigation of all police officer-related shootings?	x	
Does your campaign accept contributions from law-enforcement associations, unions, or organizations?		x
Do you support disbanding the SFPD and requiring officers to reapply to a newly constructed, less violent police force?	x	
Should the San Francisco Police Officers Association be disbanded or at least have its political influence in the City severely curtailed?	x	
Do you support qualified immunity for police officers?		x
Do you support reparations for Black San Franciscans?	x	
Do you support the implementation of supervised injection/consumption sites?	x	
Do you support extending voting rights in local elections to currently and formerly incarcerated people?	x	
Have you ever crossed a union picket line or ignored a union boycott?		x
Do you support the right for public sector employees to go on strike?	x	
Do support repealing California's Proposition 209?	x	
Do you support the California App-Based Drivers Regulations Initiative?	x	
Do you support rebuilding the county jail at 850 Bryant?	x	shou ld be

PART 3:

Support of Other Candidates

(Please answer whom you support or supported in each race. If you made a ranked endorsement or voted for more than one candidate using IRV, please indicate the rankings.)

2020

Candidate

Democratic Presidential Primary	Bernie Sanders

CA State Senate, District 11	
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District 1 Supervisor	
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District 3 Supervisor	
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District 5 Supervisor	
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District 7 Supervisor	
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District 11 Supervisor	
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2019

Candidate

District 5 Supervisor	
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San Francisco District Attorney	
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2018

Candidate

Mayor	
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District 4 Supervisor	
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District 6 Supervisor	
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District 8 Supervisor	
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District 10 Supervisor	
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