

San Francisco District 11 Democratic Club
Questionnaire for Candidates – November 2016 Candidates

PLEASE USE THIS TEMPLATE TO RESPOND ELECTRONICALLY TO

info@sfd11dems.com by **Monday**, August 22, 2016 by 11pm.

Our PAC meetings are scheduled for Saturday, Aug.27 & Sunday, Aug. 28, 2016 from 10am-5pm each day. If you have a preferred time to schedule, please contact info@sfd11dems.com. Otherwise, you will receive time an email to sign up for timeslots using google docs.

- 1. Name: Ahsha Safai**
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- 5. What is your political affiliation? How long?**
I have been a registered Democrat since 1991.

- 6. Please list your campaign manager and contact info?**
My campaign manager is Kelenia Olsen, (909) 234-1055 | kelenia.olsen@gmail.com

- 7. What is the major source of your campaign funding? Also, please list your top 3 funders.**
The major sources of my campaign funding are contributions are from San Francisco residents, working people, and organized labor.

My top 3 funders are:
 - 1) Teamsters Local 665
 - 2) SEIU Local 87
 - 3) Firefighters Local 798

- 8. What office are you running for? Please explain why you are running and what your qualifications are for this specific office?**

I am running for Supervisor because our neighborhoods in District 11 have been treated like the forgotten part of San Francisco for too long. Our working families need a strong voice to represent them at City Hall. As a parent of two young children, a labor organizer and a long-time neighborhood resident with a track record of success, I believe I can be that voice.

My qualifications include over 16 years of experience here at the local level of government and professional training as a City Planner. I served as Deputy Director for Mayor Gavin Newsom in his office of Community Development. I helped to oversee the grants application process for over 200 non-profits citywide with a special emphasis on job training and neighborhood economic development.

In 2006, I was appointed by Mayor Newsom to DPW's Street Parks/Community Corridor Partnership team, a special initiative designed to make San Francisco cleaner and greener through public-private partnerships.

For the past 8 years, I've been the political director for SEIU Local 87. During that time I have worked on two collective bargaining agreements for our 4,000 members, helped to write and pass legislation that deals with prevailing wage and the Retail Workers Bill of Rights, expanded our membership with a project labor agreement the Golden State Warriors, and worked aggressively on immigration reform and raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

As a neighborhood leader, I have advocated, led, and fought for change in my District. I successfully fought the closure of St. Luke's Hospital by serving on the Citizens Advisory Committee, organized a neighborhood led revolt against the Park Bond of 2008 which ultimately led to achieving over 4 million dollars in non-bond money improvements at Balboa Park, and saved the Mission Childcare Consortium from being displaced – a family serving daycare with 224 subsidized childcare slots. I have consistently been on the front lines of positive change for the residents of District 11.

Based on my work experience, my professional training, and my track record of success I believe I am the strongest candidate.

9. Identify the three most important issues for the position you seek? What are the solutions you see for these specific issue areas or how will you work to tackle them?

The three most important issues for the position I seek are:

1. Affordable Workforce Housing - Our city is facing continuing pressure to create more affordable ways for working families and low-income individuals to remain a part of the city's make-up. The only way we can achieve and maintain our diversity – both economic and ethnic/racial – is to require developers to create mixed-income projects. I believe the city has fallen short over the past decade, but has recently pushed for greater and higher concentrations of affordability and expanded its emphasis on creating affordable housing. The biggest mistake I believe is to constantly allow developers to place their affordable housing off-site. All efforts and policies should be driven to keep all affordable housing on-site to truly achieve mixed-income development and to allow all residents to realize a beautiful living environment. The lack of middle-class/workforce housing development over the past 15 years has been one of the largest short-comings of our housing policies and one that will be biggest priorities when in office. Development should continue to be financed from both public and private sources but greater emphasis should be given to policies that will create incentives for private sector investors to finance mixed-income and/or affordable development

projects. I believe that development should be encouraged in a smart manner. In the city's downtown core, larger, taller and denser development – mixed-use, mixed-income and transit oriented – should be encouraged. In the neighborhoods, scale and character should be respected, however, along main commercial corridors and transit lines, denser, taller, and transit-oriented development should be allowed.

2. Establishing a fully funded universal Pre-K program. I believe all San Francisco children should have the opportunity to succeed and providing all children with the tools to be ready for school day one should be one of our top priorities as a City. I believe the achievement gap for African-American and Latino students begin before kindergarten. We must strive to ensure that all segments of our population are benefitting from our City's strong economic growth and with many of the new tax measures proposed and potential sources of new revenue, we must make this a top priority.

3. Aggressively Addressing Homelessness. We must find the way to use all available resources, land and funding streams to secure safe, clean and affordable transitional housing for homeless. We should set a goal to see no person living on the streets, but that starts with providing adequate supportive housing and transitional services. We must investigate creating tiny homes, using public land, and securing money from the private sector to create this housing. We must also prioritize creating new med-psych beds in hospitals and clinics around the City to help transition people away from self-medicating to proper psychiatric care.

10. District 11 has more children, more ethnic diversity and more homeowners than any other district in San Francisco. These are just a few of the unique features of this district. If elected, describe the priorities of your office for District 11.

My absolute highest priority is to put the needs of my District first because D11 has been treated like the forgotten part of our City for far too long. Our most critical needs are:

1. Creating more workforce housing for working families. We have a severe shortage of affordable family housing that can house working families and must do better in both the private and government market to produce more of this type of housing. We must find parcels in our district to create workforce housing for our working families.

2. Create a Cleaner and Greener District – We have a tremendous shortage of trees, a perpetual state of illegal dumping and graffiti, and a general sense of our neighborhoods being dirty. I will work to refocus DPW's energy and efforts in our neighborhood to make this a top priority. We also have many of our neighborhood parks in despair. I will work to attract money and revitalization

plans from Rec and Park to prioritize our parks after years of constant neglect.

3) Revitalization – I will focus on revitalizing the commercial corridors in District 11, as they are among the slowest-growing in the City. I have fought against the spread of pot clubs in my District because though we currently have too many vacancies, more pot clubs is not the answer. We need to devise a plan to attract more restaurants and family serving businesses to the area to combat our shrinking sales tax revenue and ensure the economic health of our neighborhoods.

11. We would like to know your position on the following ALL of the Measures, please circle or clearly mark your preference. In addition, please add short comments to your top 5 issues on why you believe this measure or proposition is of critical importance this election:

LOCAL Measures:

Initiative Ordinance: Affordable Housing Requirements for Market-Rate Development Projects (Resubmitted)
Support or **(X) Oppose**

Initiative Ordinance: Competitive Bidding for Affordable Housing Projects on City-Owned Projects (Resubmitted)
Support or **(X) Oppose**

Initiative Ordinance: Office Development in Candlestick Point and Hunters Point
(X) Support or Oppose

Initiative Ordinance: Allocation of Hotel Tax Funds
Support or Oppose – **No position**
I like the idea behind this initiative but am not convinced yet that this should be a hard set aside in our budget. There are other initiatives on the ballot that hope to expand services to homeless individuals.

Charter Amendment- Sixteen and Seventeen-Year-Old Voting for Municipal Elections
Support or **(X) Oppose**
This is a good idea but should start with the School Board elections first.

San Francisco Community College District November 8, 2016 Parcel Tax Election
(X) Support or Oppose
City College needs additional consistent funding and will help to expand educational opportunities for all San Franciscans.

Prohibiting Candidate-Controlled General Purpose Committees
(X)Support or Oppose

Initiative Ordinance - Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax Ordinance
(X)Support or Oppose

Its time to aggressively address the cause of diabetes that is plaguing our society, particularly in communities of color. It has been shown that a small tax will change people's behavior. Communities across the world are now seeing that they must tax sugary beverages to accomplish this goal and the revenue can be used to help expand educational opportunities.

Initiative Ordinance - The Safe Neighborhoods Initiative
(X)Support or Oppose

Initiative Ordinance - Promotion of Safe and Open Sidewalks
Support or Oppose – **No position**

I have not decided yet which way I am voting yet. We currently have laws on the books that state you can not camp on the street and we need to expand our shelter and supportive housing services.

Resolution Ordering School Bond Election in an Amount Not to Exceed \$744,250,000 and Authorizing Necessary Actions in Connection Therewith
(X)Support or Oppose

It is essential to consistently build and expand our schools in San Francisco. We need to expand educational opportunities for all San Franciscans and creating a flagship Arts School is a wonderful bonus.

Charter Amendment - Dignity Fund
(X)Support or Oppose

Its time to consistently provide for our most vulnerable seniors.

Charter Amendment - Municipal Transportation Agency- Appointments to Board of Directors and Budget Process
Support or **(X)Oppose**

The appointment and oversight in transportation have been voted on for over the last 30 years. Consistently voters have said they want to politics out of the oversight. This charter amendment is unnecessary.

Charter Amendment - Homeless Housing Services Fund; Transportation Improvement Fund - Budget Set-Asides

(X)Support or Oppose

We need new sources of funding for homeless and transportation services that don't take from existing revenue streams. This will add over 1 billion dollars over the next decade.

Charter Amendment - Filling Vacancies in Local Elective Office

(X)Support or Oppose

Initiative Ordinance - Increase Real Property Transfer Tax on Properties of At Least \$5,000,000

(X)Support or Oppose

We need additional funding sources to expand educational opportunities.

Initiative Ordinance - Restrict Lobbyist Gifts, Campaign Contributions and Bundled Contributions

(X)Support or Oppose

Charter Amendment - Housing and Development Commission

Support or **(X) Oppose**

Having been the former Deputy Director of this Office, I don't believe it is necessary to create additional bureaucracy as well as to eliminate up to 100 city jobs to accomplish this office merger and commission creation. There is currently a Citizens Advisory Committee that works aggressively to ensure the public's voice is heard and these two office work independently for a reason – to ensure their focus remains specific – one on economic development the other on housing and community development.

Charter Amendment - Department of Police Accountability

(X)Support or Oppose

Its time to elevate this office to a department and shed more light on police accountability.

Charter Amendment - Non-Citizens Voting in School Board Elections

(X)Support or Oppose

Its time to let all our parents voices to be heard.

Charter Amendment - Public Advocate

Support or **(X)Oppose**

This is office is unnecessary and duplicative. Supervisors are elected to hold the Mayor accountable and to lead on behalf of the public and residents of their district. We created district elections so the residents of each district would have an advocate at City Hall – 11 Supervisors with 3 staff members each. This amendment would cost the City up to \$4 million dollars and create 22 new staff positions. It is unnecessary.

General Obligation Bond Election -Amending Earthquake Loan Bond Program to Finance Acquisition and Rehabilitation of Affordable Housing
(X)Support or Oppose

Charter Amendment - City Responsibility for Maintaining Street Trees
(X)Support or Oppose
We suffer for lack of trees because many of our families are on fixed income

State Measures:

Proposition 51: School Bonds. Funding for K-12 School and Community College Facilities. Initiative Statutory Amendment.
(X)Support or Oppose

Proposition 52: State Fees on Hospitals. Federal Medi-Cal Matching Funds. Initiative Statutory and Constitutional Amendment.
(X)Support or Oppose

Proposition 53: Revenue Bonds. Statewide Voter Approval. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.
Support or **(X)Oppose**

Proposition 54: Legislature. Legislation and Proceedings. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute.
Support or **(X)Oppose**

Proposition 55: Tax Extension to Fund Education and Healthcare. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.
(X)Support or Oppose

Proposition 56: Cigarette Tax to Fund Healthcare, Tobacco Use Prevention, Research, and Law Enforcement. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute.

(X)Support or Oppose

Proposition 57: Criminal Sentences. Juvenile Criminal Proceedings and Sentencing. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute.

(X)Support or Oppose

Proposition 58: SB 1174 (Chapter 753, Statutes of 2014), Lara.

[English language education. \(PDF\)](#)

(X)Support or Oppose

Proposition 59: SB 254 (Chapter 20, Statutes of 2016), Allen.

[Campaign finance: voter instruction. \(PDF\)](#)

(X)Support or Oppose

This should be a top priority around the country to over-turn Citizens United.

Proposition 60: Adult Films. Condoms. Health Requirements. Initiative Statute.

Support or Oppose – **no position**

Need more information to understand this initiative.

Proposition 61: State Prescription Drug Purchases. Pricing Standards. Initiative Statute.

(X)Support or Oppose

Proposition 62: Death Penalty. Initiative Statute.

(X)Support or Oppose

Proposition 63: Firearms. Ammunition Sales. Initiative Statute.

(X)Support or Oppose

Proposition 65: Carry-Out Bags. Charges. Initiative Statute.
Support or **(X)Oppose**

Proposition 66: Death Penalty. Procedures. Initiative Statute.
Support or **(X)Oppose**

Proposition 67: Referendum to Overturn Ban on Single-Use Plastic Bags.
(X) Support or Oppose