



2015 SF DCCC Endorsement Questionnaire

NAME:	Ross Mirkarimi
OFFICE RUNNING FOR:	Sheriff
CAMPAIGN ADDRESS:	77 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 101, Box 2008, SF 94102
CAMPAIGN CONTACT AND CELL PHONE:	Steve Kline REDACTED
EMAIL ADDRESS:	rossmysheriff@gmail.com

Instructions

Please complete this questionnaire and send electronic copies by 5pm on Thursday, August 6, in the accompanying email to:

- Alix Rosenthal at alix@alixro.com
- Matt Dorsey at mattdorsey@mac.com

The 2015 endorsement interviews for candidates for Community College Board, Sheriff, and the ballot measures will take place at the San Francisco LGBT Center (1800 Market Street) on Saturday, August 8, from 10am-2pm. The SFDCCC's endorsement votes for candidates and qualified local ballot measures will occur at its August 12 meeting.

Only candidates who return a completed questionnaire electronically by the due date will be allowed to present before the committee. At the time of the interview, you may also provide 15 copies of up to 4 pages of information for distribution to SFDCCC members. While it may seem that some of these questions do not apply to the office you are seeking, they represent Democratic Party principles and since you may run for higher office where these questions will be relevant, we would like them addressed.

We will distribute the questionnaires to the DCCC members and post them on the S.F. Democratic Party's website (at <http://www.sfdemocrats.org>) for the public to view.

General Questions

1. Are you a registered Democrat?

Yes: X No:

2. When did you first register as a Democrat?

1981

3. Who did you vote for in the last two Presidential elections?

Barack Obama

4. Have you ever voted for or endorsed a non-Democrat in an election?

Yes: No:

If "Yes," who? When?

Yes – Ralph Nader; Matt Gonzalez; Bernie Sanders (Congress, Senate)

5. Name the candidates you supported for the following offices:

OFFICE (YEAR)	CANDIDATE #1	CANDIDATE #2	CANDIDATE #3
Mayor (2011)	John Avalos	Dennis Herrera	
Supervisor, D1 (2012)	Eric Mar		
Supervisor, D2 (2014)	Juan Antonio		
Supervisor, D3 (2012)			
Supervisor, D4 (2014)			
Supervisor, D5 (2012)	Christina Olague		
Supervisor, D6 (2014)	Jane Kim		
Supervisor, D7 (2012)			
Supervisor, D8 (2014)			
Supervisor, D9 (2012)	David Campos		
Supervisor, D10 (2014)	Tony Kelly		
Supervisor, D11 (2012)	John Avalos		

6. Please provide a brief summary of your qualifications for this office. (No more than 200 words.)

Mike Hennessey was Sheriff for 32 years. He knows all the candidates but endorses one:

"I proudly endorse the reelection of Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi. He is an independent reformer and has delivered with impressive results, no matter the obstacle. He's effectively led the City through State Prisoner Realignment, tackling high recidivism rates and innovating ways to improve public safety. Ross is moving San Francisco forward while resisting special interests that insists on holding it back," former Sheriff Mike Hennessey.

Governor Brown's State Prison Chief, Jeffrey Beard, inspects San Francisco's jails and has said that "San Francisco County Jail is an example for state," SF Examiner, October 3, 2014.

As the District 5 Supervisor, I authored a series of laws preparing San Francisco for State Prisoner Realignment (AB 109); we've defied every negative forecast of jail overcrowding to a resurgence of violent crime, thus making our city one of the most under-crowded county jail system in the United States, with significant reductions in recidivism rates – this has earned us many awards over the last several years, most recently by Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

I am a sworn peace officer. Graduated from the SFPD Academy, class president, worked for the SF District Attorney for nine years, before successfully running for District 5 Supervisor in 2004. In my nearly two terms as Supervisor I legislated many laws designed to improve community policing and law enforcement accountability. I have carried these ideals with me into the Sheriff's office even to the chagrin of law enforcement unions, who didn't support Mike Hennessey nor me.

I understand paramilitary institutions on more than just the local level including an honorable discharge from the US Naval Reserves. I understand the importance of resisting any erosion to the constitutional independence of the SF Sheriff's Department.

We need to keep the tradition of an independent Sheriff.

8. Please describe your contributions to the Democratic Party at the local, state and or/national level in the last 4 years. (No more than 200 words.)

Four years ago I was on top of the world (provincially speaking), segueing from successful terms of being the elected District 5 Supervisor into a candidate for sheriff, tapped to succeed the famous retiring Sheriff Mike Hennessey. I won my election in 2011. Then I made mistakes -- there is not enough space to expound on my soul searching and transformation here -- but what emerged -- was my determination to not shy away or retreat from being a better man, father-husband and office-holder.

As Sheriff, I preside over the industry of second chances, determined to demonstrate at the local, state and federal levels what it means to advance change no matter the hurdle. I was first sheriff in the nation to take on the unregulated telecommunications industry that gouges poor people for calling someone in a prison and jail. We reformed our contracts in SF jails earning the invitation by The Federal Communications Commission to testify in support for landmark reforms not supported by law enforcement agencies and the corrections industry.

I was invited by President Obama's Director of Community Oriented Policing in Washington, D.C., to present why community policing must be practiced inside prisons and jails as well as on the streets to build trust where trust runs thin between law enforcement and communities of color.

Based on our reentry programs and the empirical results that garner the accolades of Harvard University or the State Legislature, I've been invited to present on the success of our administration's programs and outcomes. Two weeks ago San Quentin had me as their commencement speaker for a sizable junior college graduation. They all know I am a Democrat. Humbled. Impassioned.

9. If elected, what are the three top issues you will work to affect? (No more than 200 words.)

Expand the Eviction Assistance Unit (EAU): We are the only sheriff's department in California to have an EAU. We get no funding from the mayor or the supervisors. We cobble together a unit of two deputies/case workers with existing funds. There is an eviction crisis in San Francisco and few realize that by the time a court order comes to our department, we become the agency of last resort. With the creation and expansion of our EAU, we can help vulnerable populations like seniors, disabled, families with children, and the destitute, not become homeless and not exacerbate public safety tensions. We do this without violating a court order for eviction.

Stop Criminalizing the Mentally Ill: As Sheriff I reject the practice that San Francisco allows our jails to be used as a weigh station for the absence of psychiatric institutions. There are five new hospitals being built in San Francisco and not one is required to have a mental health bed - this is a disastrous trend! I have insisted to the Department of Public Health and the Mayor that there needs to be a complete overhaul at how San Francisco manages its mentally ill population that routinely carousels between county jail and SF General Hospital. But the truth is that since SFGH has reduced its psych beds by 70 percent over the last 5 years, our jails have become the largest mental health asylum in the city. We need an alternative model to attending to a growing complex psych population - why I advocate for a redirect of the Jail Replacement funds toward developing a pretrial (over 70% pretrial in jails) public health - public safety center for acute psychiatric services and co-occurring substance abuse disorders.

Overhaul Transparency, Training, Accountability: I am the first sheriff in modern history to bring in the FBI to investigate deputies for alleging staging fights. Typically the FBI doesn't involve themselves unless required by the US Attorney or by the courts under a decree. Instead they accepted my request. I've seen and heard at how both SFPD and SFSD have botched investigations over the years of their own staff -- I wasn't going to leave any oxygen in the room to compromise this investigation. This doesn't only set the right tone but it injects a level of uncommon scrutiny.

Further, I've requested that the Mayor fund my request for body cameras for all our deputies. This request has not been granted despite the fact that the overwhelming evidence that body cameras assist in making law enforcement more responsible. And when there are transgressions the video of those incidents becomes the basis for prosecution. The Univ of Cincinnati tragedy is but one example of their effectiveness. I shall continue to press for Crisis Intervention Training for all deputy and civilian staff working with our mentally ill population.

10. What have you done to mentor women and people of color in your field? (No more than 200 words.)

The high majority of my senior staff are women and women of color. I have very few at-will positions but I've been able to redesign my executive staff to reflect a very diverse women-driven and minority represented staff. This reflects overall the SF Sheriff's Department's leader in the nation of being one of the most diverse staffed law enforcement agencies in the United States. This was recently affirmed again locally by an article in the SF Examiner that assessed the difference of hiring diversity between the SF Sheriffs and SFPD.

My promotions at all ranks well represent a strong elevation of women, LGBT and women of color throughout the department of 1100 employees. Starting with Cadets and academy recruits.

Until last year the SF Sheriff's Department hadn't welcome a new academy class since 2009 – five years without a new class (compared to SFPD that had eight in three years). Still, in the first time for the department we advanced the highest number of cadets (non peace officers) to be mentored and groomed into an academy class consisting of young women and men of color. All but one graduated. This was unprecedented and reinforcing for a new template to groom entry level law enforcement staff into permanent career peace officer positions. This mentoring process also helps us shape our training regiment into a more community policing focus aimed at knowing San Francisco both inside and outside the jails.

Our civilian, in particular our reentry staff, is comprised mostly of women and people of color. Their mentoring of volunteers and interns helps us advance our progressive approach to administering rehabilitation programming for inmates and post-custody services.

11. Please list the organizations and elected officials who have endorsed you.

Former Sheriff Mike Hennessey
Former Mayor Art Agnos
Supervisor John Avalos
CCSF Trustee Brigette Davilia
SF Tenants Union
Latino Democratic Club
District 3 Democratic Club
Potrero Hill Democratic Club
SEIU 1021
SEIU Healthcare Workers
UNITE HERE, Local 2

Issues Questions

Please only mark whether you SUPPORT or OPPOSE each issue.

QUESTION	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
1. Do you support or oppose a woman's right to choose a safe and legal abortion?	X	
2. Do you support or oppose affirmative action?	X	
3. Do you support or oppose privatization of essential government services?		X
4. Do you support or oppose reducing jail/prison overcrowding by decreasing penalties for minor drug offenses?	X	
5. Do you support or oppose rent control?	X	
6. Do you support or oppose San Francisco's sanctuary city policy?	X	
7. Do you support or oppose instant runoff voting (ranked choice voting)?	X	
8. Do you support or oppose the Getting to Zero Consortium's strategy for HIV/AIDS in San Francisco?	X	

If you need to add further explanation or qualification to any of your support-or-oppose answers above, you may do so here:



Sustainable Communities Pledge

On February 25, 2015, the San Francisco Democratic County Central Committee enacted a resolution in support of the San Francisco Building and Construction Trades Council's Sustainable Communities Pledge. The pledge advocates for good-paying construction jobs for local residents; increasing housing and specifically affordable housing; and requiring environmentally responsible building in partnership with organized labor.

As part of that resolution, the San Francisco Democratic Party now includes the Sustainable Communities Pledge as part of its endorsement questionnaire. The complete text reads as follows:

Whereas, past patterns of urban and suburban growth and development are not sustainable and state law now requires the adoption of sustainable communities strategies that will incentivize urban infill and transit-oriented development; and

Whereas, this shift in land use and transportation policy is already resulting in an unprecedented level of private investment for residential, commercial, and retail urban infill development and construction, which is projected to increase over the next twenty years; and

Whereas, the Bay Area should welcome more intensive, compact development along transit corridors to meet our obligation to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases; and

Whereas, it is critical that private investment and construction in this development contribute to economically vibrant, healthy, and equitable communities, including providing housing for an economically diverse work force and walkable neighborhoods well served by employment, shopping, and recreational opportunities; and

Whereas, it is critical also that this private investment and construction provide tangible economic benefits including employment to residents, and not just profits to investors; and

Whereas, communities benefit more fully from construction and development when construction employers offer job training and apprenticeship opportunities, hire local workers, and pay area standard wages; and Whereas the value of every dollar in construction wages spent by local workers is multiplied as it circulates through the local economy and local small businesses; and

Whereas, local spending of construction wages generates much-needed sales tax revenue to local governments, I pledge to support and give priority to projects that abide by these principles of a sustainable, economically vibrant, and equitable community by:

- Furthering smart land use and growth policies by using energy efficient and environmentally sustainable building design and supporting alternatives to the automobile for transportation;
- Ensuring in cooperation with their representative organizations that local workers are hired on project construction and are paid area standard wages and benefits, including employer-funded healthcare for themselves and their families;
- Providing outreach to local youth and disadvantaged communities and opportunities for their training and employment through state-approved Labor/Management apprenticeship programs;
- Providing construction employment and training for our military veterans;
- Ensuring that affordable units are provided along with any market-rate residential units; and
- Providing such other community benefits and amenities as will offset a project's identifiable adverse impacts on the community.

I, _____, affirm that I agree with the contents of this Sustainable Communities Pledge, and if elected, I will work to further its mission.

Enter your initials: ____RM_____