



Dear Candidate,

As the San Francisco Latino Democratic Club embarks on our endorsements for the June 2016 election cycle, your participation in our club questionnaire allows our membership to better understand you and where you stand as a candidate.

Our questionnaire consists of a series of short-answer questions (200 words or less).

Please return the completed questionnaire by 11:59 PM Tuesday, April 5, 2016.

E-mail all questionnaires to our Political Action Committee at pac@sflatinodemocrats.com. If you are unable to complete the questionnaire by April 5, please let us know ASAP.

Upon submission of your completed questionnaire, you will receive an invitation to our April 9, 2016 PAC endorsement meeting.

Good Luck!

Sincerely,
The San Francisco Latino Democratic Club

BASIC INFORMATION

Name as It Will Appear On the Ballot:	Michael Grafton
Campaign Contact Info:	Michael Grafton michael.e.grafton@gmail.com (415) 744-4617
Website:	None

	Yes	No
Are you now or have you ever been a member of LDC?		X
Have you ever sought LDC's endorsement in the past?		X

QUESTIONS (Please limit responses to 200 words):

- Please describe your qualifications for the position you seek plus anything else that you'd like our members to know about you and your candidacy. Also list any endorsements you have secured from others you wish us to know about.**

I have secured no endorsements to date.

This is the first time that I am running for elected office. I never even considered running before, but the past two years of local Democratic Party decisions has impelled me to run, even though I have no real campaign experience.

I am running for the San Francisco Democratic Party County Central Committee as a representative of Assembly District 17, because, having attended the committee meetings for the past eighteen months, I see that the committee does not really support the needs of average San Franciscans, neither in the composition of the committee, nor in the endorsements.

Here are several examples:

- Committee Composition and Vacancies:** For example, rather than an election for open seats, the chair has made appointments with little consultation with the rest of the committee, or the communities affected by the vacancy. I realize that this is standard operating procedure for some

offices, but “small d” democracy should be allowed for a committee that purports to be representative of all San Franciscans.

- 2) **Endorsement Process**: For endorsements, despite the overwhelming support of Democrats in the District 3 supervisorial race for Aaron Peskin, the committee voted to endorse the mayoral appointee, probably for strategic reasons. The incumbent appointee was never a terrible candidate, but she clearly was not the right fit for District 3, and the SF DCCC should have known that.

- 3) **Resolution Process**: A couple of resolutions, one concerning 21st Century Policing and Black Lives Matter, and one concerning a Mission district moratorium, were derailed at the last minute by recent appointments to the committee. These last-minute “let’s play with the parliamentary procedures as much as we can” tactics has led to a disruption to committee meetings, and has severed any possibility of civil, collegial, across-the-aisle debate and compromise. Comprises are now coerced: it is rare to see any deference to the other side (however that is defined), and there has been a visible lack of respect that members have to one another. [Thankfully, this has improved over the past three meetings, but if contentious affordability or transportation or other issues come up, I fear that the committee will again devolve to underhanded parliamentary tactics and name calling.] You would think that there were two separate parties on the SF DCCC, and maybe that is really what is happening, a disjunction on Democratic Party values that is affecting the credibility and effectiveness of the committee.

2) What do you think are the top 3 priorities/issues of the San Francisco Latino Community? And why?

While recent shootings have highlighted the Black Lives Matter movement, there are similarities between problems faced by African Americans and those faced by Latino communities. Perhaps a Brown Lives Matter, going beyond the Dream Movement would crystallize problems facing the different Latino communities, especially undocumented immigrants. I believe that the SF DCCC should reaffirm the Sanctuary policy for undocumented immigrants, promote the expansion of mental health services to undocumented immigrant refugee children from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador; promote the enrollment of first generation undocumented immigrant children to the City College of San Francisco at no cost, expand local scholarships for those who are accepted to the California State University or University of California, expand enrollment in the Affordable Care Act (this is happening already, I believe, but we probably have room for improvement), and register new voters during pre-registration period in high school.

3) What are your plans to encourage and empower the Latino Community into the Democratic political process?

First of all, I would register, register, register. I have no idea what the success rate is for registering Latino voters, except that, in terms of economies of scale and expediency (and the sheer moving experience) that incumbent Zoe Dunning

tries to show up as often as possible at swearing-in ceremonies. I think that the Democratic Party needs to expand its outreach to other locales, like churches and supermarkets and even sports venues. It is moving toward pre-registration of voters of ages 16 to 18 in the high schools, and this is a good development.

I would take this one step further, though, and require two voting members between ages 16 and 18 on the SF DCCC; what better way to engage high school students in the electoral process, and what better way to possibly get Latino youth representation on the committee.

4) Are you active in your community/communities? If so, how?

I am not formally active in any single club, but support specific activities of quite a number of clubs. My strongest involvement is with San Francisco for Democracy, which is the local offshoot of Democracy for America, the Howard Dean organization that grew from his 2004 presidential campaign. I have coordinated three endorsement meetings in a row (this last of which was quite challenging, what with so many candidates running for county central committees). I have informally volunteered on the David Campos campaign for State Assembly, the Aaron Peskin campaign for District 3 Supervisor, the Thea Selby campaign for a four-year Community College Board spot.

6) Which candidates are you supporting or have you supported in the following elections:

2016 SF DCCC

Assembly District 17: Alysabeth Alexander
Tom Ammiano
David Campos
Malia Cohen
Petra deJesus
Zoe Dunning
Michael Grafton
Pratima Gupta
Shaun Haines
Jane Kim
Rafael Mandelman
Aaron Peskin
Gladys Soto

Assembly District 19: Kat Anderson
Keith Baraka
Brigitte Davila
Sandra Fewer
Hene Kelly
Eric Mar
Gabriel Medina
Myrna Melgar
Norman Yee

[I will not be able to vote for these folks, but will support them.]

2015 Mayor	Amy Farah Weiss
Sheriff	Ross Mirkirami
Board of Supervisors (District 3)	Aaron Peskin
Community College Board *	Wendy Aragon

- I actually liked all three Community College Board candidates, Alex Randolph, Tom Temprano, and Wendy Aragon. I think that Alex Randolph has proved his mettle on the board. This was a tough call.*

7) Do you believe that registered/paid lobbyists should be required to recuse themselves from votes that benefit the industry or organizations that they represent?

Wow, this is such a no-brainer, it is incredible that it has become an issue for the SF DCCC.

Anyone whose organization or industry stands to benefit from decisions made by any governing body, whether it is a school board or county central committee or district supervisor, needs to recuse themselves from votes. Recusing oneself removes any taint of conflict of interest, *even if the individual him- or herself is not taking steps to benefit personally from the outcome of the vote.* Just the perception of conflict of interest can undermine the public's confidence in an elected official, and by extension, the body on which that official sits.