



**Latino Democratic Club Questionnaire**  
**November 2019 Candidate Endorsements**

**1.) Why are you running for this position?**

*I am running for District Attorney of San Francisco because I believe that our City can and should be the most safe and just city in America. I am a San Francisco native, mother of three daughters, wife, daughter and public servant. I am a first-generation American and the proud daughter of a woman who immigrated to this country and raised her children on her own. I worked as an Assistant District Attorney under District Attorney Kamala Harris. I served as a Special Assistant Attorney General for Public Safety under AG Kamala Harris and worked with Dr. Nadine Burke Harris to build the Center for Youth Wellness in Bayview Hunters Point. I served on and led the San Francisco Police Commission and now serve the Sheriff's department as legal counsel. My life and career have given me incredible experience and a unique perspective on how we can effectively reform our criminal justice system to deliver both safety and justice.*

**2.) What are you going to do for the Latino Community as an elected official?**

*I will establish the first-ever Civil Rights Unit within the office of the San Francisco District Attorney. Staffed with experienced civil rights lawyers, prosecutors, and policy and research experts, the mission of the Civil Rights Unit will be to protect and advance the rights of all San Franciscans. We must defend our Sanctuary City status, keep our families intact, and preserve community trust to ensure everyone in our community is respected by our justice system which will lead to safer communities for all. As your District Attorney, I will train the staff of the office of the District Attorney to comprehensively protect our community members from unintended immigration consequences of prosecutorial decisions. I pledge to commit more resources to protecting immigrants. Through increased language access and culturally competent services, I*

want to make it easier for monolingual residents to access information and understand their rights. I will work to ensure that at every level of the office of the DA, civilian commission appointments and advisory boards, staff are trained to recruit broadly to deliver on our commitment to equitable representation.

### **Housing:**

#### **3.) Can you tell us your position on SB 50 and your reason for that position?**

*I support SB 50. I believe California needs to build more housing - especially affordable housing - to backfill the tremendous gaps that have grown due to accelerated economic growth. I also believe that the office of the DA should use every lever possible to protect tenants from unlawful evictions and to protect access to available housing stock to all San Franciscans.*

#### **4.) Do you support sustaining the shelter for students and their families at Buena Vista Horace Mann? What should we do to expand this program city wide?**

*Housing security is an important factor in crime prevention and we need bold, creative solutions that serve our communities. At this time, I understand that the School Board has already voted to expand this shelter to allow students city wide to be sheltered at Buena Vista. I support this in principle and want to look at how we are supporting those families so that they may exit out of homelessness.*

#### **5.) Should the Affordable Housing Bond be \$500 million or \$1 Billion in the next upcoming San Francisco election? Why do you support that amount over the other?**

*I support the efforts of our City Leaders to advance an Affordable Housing Bond measure, and will defer to the policy experts at City Hall to best determine the size of the bond.*

#### **6.) Do you oppose the Monster in the Mission? Do you support the Marvel in the Mission?**

*Procedural justice is important, and any significant housing development should be given every due diligence for review through a Community process. I trust the people living in the Mission to best weigh the land use issues implicated in these proposed developments. My focus will be to ensure the DA's office is a present community partner available to address safety and justice issues that come up with any changes in the community.*

### **Education:**

#### **7.) About 50 non-citizen parents voted for school board in 2018. What can you do to expand the access and security for Immigrant Parent Voting (Prop N 2016) for the 2020 School Board Election?**

*I am committed to working in partnership with elected leaders and advocates to protect and expand voting rights within the scope of my purview as District Attorney. I am also committed to working to create additional opportunities for non citizens to participate in our civil society in ways that do not have negative immigration consequences - all of our neighbors are impacted by policy decisions, especially in public schools, where 1 in 3 students come from immigrant families, and their engagement is important to reduce racial gaps in achievement. When students succeed in school, our communities are safer. I have taken an oath to defend and protect the Constitution and as District Attorney I take very seriously my responsibility to advance and protect the right to vote, to ensure that right is afforded equally to all, and to continue to make progress for traditional disenfranchised populations - everyone should feel safe and secure in exercising their right to vote.*

**8.) Spanish speakers comprise almost half of English Learners (ELs) in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), yet only 8% were re-classified in the 2015-16 school year. This is only halfway to the goal and outcomes for other English Learners. How can you support bridging this disparity?**

*I believe in language access as a tool for public safety and building community trust. We need to make it easier for all residents for whom English is not their primary language to seek services, interact with law enforcement and grow their involvement in our neighborhoods. I believe that language access and culturally competent services need to be provided across all city departments and I would leverage my position as DA to reimagine how this is operationalized throughout all city agencies.*

**9.) Latinos went without an elected school board member from 2004 to 2016 (12 years), yet comprise the second largest SFUSD population at 27%. Do you believe district elections for school board elections can bring more equitable representation to latino parents?**

*As a product of San Francisco public schools and a parent of children attending public schools in our city, I believe we need our School Board to reflect our communities, and it is important and vital for parents to see equitable representation. With our current Board representing many of our communities, we have the opportunity to build upon their success to sustain these achievements. I would focus my efforts and advocacy in ensuring that we are developing pipelines for individuals of diverse backgrounds to run for elected office. Additionally I will actively support efforts to ensure an accurate count of all members of our community during the 2020 census and will advocate for safe and secure ways for everyone to be part of the process without fear of immigration consequences.*

**Immigration:**

**10.) Asylum seekers at California border ballooned from 17,284 in fiscal 2017 to 38,269 in fiscal 2018. A backlog has grown to more than 820,000 CA immigration cases, each takes several months to process. San Francisco has done a great job supporting legal defense for asylum seekers. What should San Francisco's role be to provide social services to asylum seekers while awaiting justice?**

*As District Attorney, I pledge to lead the way for California and the US in establishing clear guidelines to protect everyone in our communities. We must keep our families intact and preserve community trust to ensure everyone in our community is respected by our justice system even as the federal landscape is becoming increasingly hostile and aggressive in its pursuit of mass deportations. As the Federal Government continues to advance policies that make seeking asylum cost prohibitive and resource intense, we must make a significant commitment to ensuring that asylum seekers received procedural justice and support while their cases are being assessed so that they may maintain a productive role in our community, so that they may live their lives in dignity, and so that they feel safe and protected by the City of San Francisco, regardless of their status.*

**11.) Would you have have you advocated for a Clean Dream Act that includes TPS recipients?**

*Yes, and I will continue to advocate for a Clean Dream Act that expedites pathways to citizenship for individuals forced to leave their countries due to armed conflict.*

**12.) Do you have any plans to advance the rights for undocumented immigrants to receive housing services?**

*I will do all I can in my role to advance the rights for undocumented immigrants to receive housing services. I supported AB291, Immigrant Protection Defense Act, from Assemblymember David Chiu and will vigorously protect an individual's right to housing and against unlawful intimidation from landlords acting in bad faith. I will continue working with advocacy groups and convening community members to further develop solutions that expand housing stability for noncitizens.*

**Criminal Justice:**

**13.) Are you for or against tasers for use in San Francisco?**

*No electronic control devices, yet.*

*Our officers need to have tools at their disposal to address the number of issues happening on our street. That includes, first and foremost, additional training on de-escalation and tactical approaches for uses of force when dealing with safety risks on our streets. In 2016 when I was*

*police commission president, we made preserving the sanctity of life central to how we were re-engineering use of force in our department to meet the current challenges confronted by law enforcement. To date, 52% of SFPD officers have received 50 hours of training (40 hours Crisis Intervention Team training and 20 hours Use of Force Tactical Training). I would like to see 100% of officers complete these 60 hours of training.*

*Additionally, in 2018, there have been 49 fatalities from police officer application of this particular use of force, 3 of which in neighboring San Mateo County. A recent non-partisan [2 year study](#) showed that 1 in 11 incidents involving ECDs resulted in fatal officer-involved shootings. These numbers are too high and do not justify their implementation. They suggest to me that the communities where these fatalities occurred have a lot of work to do to develop meaningful policies for implementing and training their officers so that lethal outcomes do not occur with the use of an ECD.*

*When I was President of the Police Commission in 2016 we understood that the use of force revisions were expansive in scope and ECDs were one of dozens of updates being considered. We drafted, but never implemented, a taser policy through a community driven process because we wanted to prioritize deescalation before we introduced another force tactic. I still stand by the recommendation that we defer implementation of this device until we complete additional reforms as outlined by the Department of Justice and Blue Ribbon Panel. We've already seen a 30% drop in uses of force and reduced officer-involved shootings without ECDs, let's see how much further we can reduce harm without introducing ECDs. We must invest in services before we invest in additional devices.*

#### **14.) What is your plan to add supportive services and reduce recidivism?**

*I was one of the two lawyers that Attorney General Kamala D. Harris took with her from the San Francisco District Attorney's Office to the Attorney General's office. From that vantage point, it was clear that in the past 30 years, California had built 21 prisons and 1 university. Incarceration is our most expensive outcome with one of the highest failure rates. California invested in incarceration as the predominant public safety strategy and it was a failure.*

*San Francisco is an early leader in identifying alternatives to incarceration and already has comparatively more diversion opportunities. I aim to support and expand on that infrastructure and hire alternative sentencing planners to work with prosecutors to design individualized sentences intended to break the cycle of recidivism. I will also rework our diversion guidelines to increase access to this pathway, particularly for people that are a lower risk to public safety or facing her/his first conviction.*

*We have a moral obligation to disrupt the status quo and build systems that deliver safety for our communities most impacted by violence and trauma. We have a fiduciary responsibility to*

*taxpayers to find more effective ways to keep our communities safe and to deliver justice. I will work with our justice partners, community members and staff to ensure that all justice pathways reduce the over-reliance on incarceration. As District Attorney, I will invest in different modes for sequential intervention of justice-involved individuals in a process that convenes community members and stakeholders to build consensus and meaningful accountability. I will make it a priority that our staff create partnerships across education, public health and other upstream systems to divert people away from the criminal justice system in the first place.*

**Equity:**

**15.) How would you support cannabis and alcohol parity for the Mission and Excelsior with other san francisco neighborhoods?**

*I believe we can work together with law enforcement, business leaders and elected officials to normalize cannabis consumption in a way that is equitable and safe for all communities. I believe that limits on the number of ABC licenses issued supports public safety and would like to see more collaboration among the state ABC, local neighborhood groups and SFPD to understand how businesses can be educated to understand and support best practices where alcohol is a primary revenue driver.*

**16.) How would you and how have you supported Latinx parity for Commissioners, Elected Officials, and Legislative Staff?**

*I am committed to hiring a staff in the District Attorney's office that is representative of our diverse city. Having representation at all levels of local government, including accountability bodies, is important to ensure that we cast a wide net in examining whether we are effectively running this City in a way that serves everyone. My endorsements are a record of individuals who I have worked alongside and speaks to my ability to collaborate towards problem-solving and reform. I have served on the Police Commission with other Latinx community members such as Petra DeJesus and Sonia Melara. My endorsers include former Supervisor John Avalos and community activist Michelle Ortiz.*

**17.) How do you measure the Latinx community receiving equity of San Francisco resources? How would you ally to help the Latinx receive equity?**

*I believe in fairness and equity and as your District Attorney, you can rely on me to be an advocate at the table during conversations about the priorities of the Latinx Community. Community based organizations are an important source of support and services that are vital to our commitment to move upstream so that we reduce recidivism and justice involvement. In addition to allocating resources equitably, I will continue to advocate for the end of cash bail, and to work in concert with the Treasurer of San Francisco in supporting existing programs of*

*their Office of Financial Empowerment and identifying new initiatives for collaborative reform through their Financial Justice Project.*