



DUE MAY 11 at Midnight!
Latino Democratic Club Questionnaire
November 2019 Candidate Endorsements

1.) Why are you running for this position?

This city has become increasingly unaffordable, less diverse, and is losing much of what makes it special. I'm fed up with seeing the people I know and love forced out of this city so that real estate speculators and billionaires can make more money. Enough is enough. I'm running for office to do my best to change the course of this city before it's too late.

As a tenant right attorney and affordable housing advocate, I've focused my life on improving conditions for the working class. I've represented hundreds of tenants fighting abusive evictions in court. I founded California's only statewide tenant rights organization which played a key role in saving rent control and reigniting the tenant movement. In June, I wrote and passed Prop F to give free legal representation to tenants facing eviction. I was an early supporter, financial backer and worked tirelessly last fall to pass Prop C. And I've been a longtime District 5 neighborhood leader, taking on evictions, corporate chain stores, developer giveaways and more. I want to continue this work and believe the way I can have the biggest impact in this moment is as a legislator. District 5 deserves a Supervisor that will always side with the people over mega landlords and corporations.

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

I'm going to continue asking Latinx leaders how I can be of service, and show up as a strong ally on the issues that matter most to the Latinx community. This is what I've tried to do as head of our statewide tenant coalition over the last decade working closely with our Latinx led member organizations across California.

There are thousands of Latinx residents of District 5 (10% of the district) whose interests I will directly represent if elected on the board. In addition, I believe all supervisors have a duty to make sure San Francisco continues to have a strong, vibrant Latinx community citywide, and especially in the Mission. Whether in my district or beyond, I will do everything in my power to stop displacement or other abuse, and I will support Latinx residents citywide.

It's a problem that our board of supervisors lacks Latinx representation. We need Latinx representation on the board of supervisors and in as many leadership positions as possible.

Whether elected or not, I will continue standing up to all forms of official misconduct -- from police abuse to ICE raids to white nationalism -- so much of which is targeted at Latinx communities.

My work has been in tenants rights and housing justice for the past 20 years. This is an issue that has disproportionately impacted communities of color, including and especially the Latinx community, and is only getting worse. My commitment to housing being a human right, alongside education, healthcare and other basic needs serves vulnerable communities most. If elected, I will continue to fight every day on the frontlines with you, never on the sidelines.

Housing:

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

AGAINST. SB50 gives away massive development rights, with nothing in return to the community. *We need to require more affordable housing, community input, and investment in public transportation. SB50 is a developer giveaway written by developers, for developers. We're joining the Tenants Union, Housing Rights Committee, Affordable Housing Alliance, The Anti-Displacement Coalition and we are saying SB50 does not help communities. It's a gentrification bill to enrich developers on the backs of our communities, not a serious policy effort to address the affordable housing crisis.*

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?

I support it, yes, and I support Dolores Street Community Services in wanting to expand the services citywide. Children and families experiencing homelessness should be able to stay in a place that is safe, comfortable, and has food provided for them. UESF found that the counseling families get at BVHM also get them into more secure housing too, so it's temporary. I applaud the effort at BVHM which appropriately addresses a crisis by using everything at our disposal to help.

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?

\$1 Billion, or more. We are in an affordability crisis. We must prioritize housing that is affordable to San Franciscans. Two other points on the bond: (1) we need to ban bond pass-throughs to tenants and (2) we need oversight of the Mayor's Office of Housing when it comes to how they spend these funds.

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

I oppose the Monster in the Mission and have stood with community allies in opposition since the start. The last thing the Mission needs is a massive luxury housing project, especially when we could have a visionary project that provides affordable housing for the community. I support the Marvel!

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 supported Prop. N and I'm dismayed at the limited participation, though I understand it, especially in today's climate of hostility from the federal government to immigrants.

Anyone who is living here and participating in our communities in San Francisco should be able to participate in elections. As a parent myself, I can't imagine not having the right to weigh in on my children's education. Also our city needs to build (and earn) greater trust with immigrant communities -- a challenge, but even more important, in this era of Trump. I'm wide open to LDC's suggestions on how we move forward to increase non-citizen participation in school board voting.

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?

This is a troubling statistic, and shows we need to do more to address structural inequities in the school system, and to increase support for Spanish speaking students. It's extremely important that we honor diverse communities in San Francisco and that we have equal access to education for all of our young people. I look forward to learning more from UESF and LDC about how the board of supervisors can best assist in tackling this problem.

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?

Yes. I was a supporter of District elections for the BOS, and I believe they would also be beneficial for the school board. And yes, I believe this could help bring more equitable representation to Latinx parents.

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?

The treatment of asylum seekers in this country breaks my heart. My father and grandparents came to this country as refugees, fleeing Nazi Germany. Perhaps that informs my general view when it comes to asylum seekers: most have fled unspeakable abuse and deserve protection and all possible social services while awaiting a decision on their cases.

San Francisco has been rising to the challenge of providing legal representation to asylum seekers, thanks in no small part to the pioneering work of the late Jeff Adachi and Deputy Public Defender, Francisco Ugarte, and many community activists. I believe that anyone seeking asylum or facing deportation should have a right to counsel, much as we just won for tenants facing eviction.

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

Absolutely. I'm incredibly frustrated by the limits in the Clean Dream Act and other national policies, though I fully understand the attempt to make progress in the context of our current national politics. Immigrants in this country have suffered too much, not just economically, but from rising xenophobia, racism, and direct abuse. We cannot allow continued harm to our immigrant communities from widespread immigration detention, enforcement and deportation. I am all for anything that helps as many immigrants as possible find a safe and swift pathway to legal immigration status and citizenship.

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

Starting with Prop F, which we made sure was available to undocumented people, making sure that housing is a human right for all of us has been a priority for me. Our goal should be for city programs to provide housing services regardless of one's immigration status. Housing and eviction are already deeply tied to race, class, gender and orientation, so marginalized voices need to be centered for it to become equitable. To the greatest extent possible, we should establish rights for (or at minimum not exclude) undocumented people in any housing resolutions, initiatives or legislation in the future.

Criminal Justice:

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

AGAINST tasers or the police getting any new weapons. I was part of the No on H campaign, which was the sister campaign to Prop F.

14.) What is your plan to add supportive services and reduce revisitation?

I support closing 850 Bryant and opening a mental health hospital there instead. I support full and swift implementation of Prop C, and I believe that our broken criminal justice system needs to be reformed to include restorative justice. We need to focus on why people end up in jail over and over in SF. We know that recidivism rates are extremely high, and that 75% of people who commit crimes

are either mentally ill or addicted to a substance. Until we address that, we are not going to see a reduction in crime.

Equity:

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

To me, this is an issue in which neighborhoods really vary, and why it is so important that we allow neighborhoods to have a voice, and not force one size fits all citywide solutions to neighborhood issues. A neighborhood in one part of the city might favor a restaurant, bar, or music venue in a vacant storefront, while another neighborhood may feel saturated with night-time, alcohol serving businesses and be working to fill vacancies with daytime retail uses. I understand from many community leaders in the Mission that there are growing concerns about concentration of dispensaries and alcohol serving businesses, and particularly the connection with gentrification of the neighborhood. I start from the hope that any local businesses (as distinct from national corporate chains) including dispensaries will be welcomed by their neighbors, but at the same time we need to value and respect the wisdom of neighbors in deciding what kinds of businesses are desirable for specific neighborhoods. An oversaturation of any type of business, or a lack of another, can put a lot of undue strain on a community.

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

My track record is strong when it comes to supporting Latinx leadership. I have supported many strong, progressive Latinx electeds and city leaders, and I will continue to do so. Tenants Together, the organization I founded and ran as ED, is now over 50% Latinx staff, and I'm proud to have played a role in transitioning my ED leadership role to a Latina housing justice warrior, Lupe Arreola, who will now lead this crucial part of the statewide tenant movement. I will continue supporting and promoting Latinx leaders with progressive values in any capacity I can in City Hall and beyond. I'm deeply honored by the support I have already received from so many Latinx local leaders, including Petra DeJesus, Christina Olague, David Campos, Matt Gonzalez, Gabriel Medina, Kevin Ortiz and many more.

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

First of all, we need to make sure the next census adequately counts Latinx people. This is a huge issue and Trump trying to add a citizenship question to undercount Latinx residents. I'll fight to make sure all of our community voices are heard. And with any resource, be it healthcare, childcare, or economic aid, we track by neighborhood how many resources go where, based on the need of that neighborhood. I'm happy to work with Latinx neighborhoods outside of my district to make sure resources are reaching the community. Finally, we need to look at equity not just through the lens of whether everyone is getting the same amount of money or service, but also whether the results are equitable, and if they are not, we must take action to achieve true equity.