SF League of Pissed Off Voters 2020 DCCC Questionnaire

Hello candidates! Thank you for filling out the League's questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire by 5pm on Sunday, December 1st if you wish to be considered for the League's endorsement. Please use this form rather than formatting it into a Word document or PDF. If you have any questions, you can contact us at TheLeagueSF@gmail.com.

Candidate Info

Need to see the other questions before you get started? Just fill this in. It's the only section with required answers.

Name *

Janice Li

Campaign Contact *

Email Address *


Why are you running for this office?

I am running because I believe that we have a serious pipeline issue in San Francisco politics. Progressives must be consistently lifting up people who identify as POC, women and LGBTQ into positions of political leadership and as candidates. Even as City Hall has experienced a progressive wave in recent years, many of our newer progressive faces are straight, white men. Our Board of Supervisors is one of the straight, whitest and male boards we’ve seen in a long time.

This is a personal issue for me because when I ran in November 2018 for BART Board, the only two winning candidates who won but were refused endorsements by SF DCCC were Gabriela Lopez and me -- two young women of color that the League DID endorse. And in my race, SF DCCC chose instead to endorse (you guessed it) a straight, white man over me.

I truly believe that Social Justice Democrats slate are the faces and the experiences that should be representing San Francisco's Democratic Party. We have years upon years of being organizers, activists and community leaders representing a broad range of communities. We need new progressive energy in San Francisco more than ever to build upon the successes of recent years, and I am proud to stand alongside them.
What are the top three issues you will work on and how will you implement solutions in a timely manner?

1) Making public transit free: This is something I have said at nearly every BART Board meeting, and making this is a policy issue of the SF Democratic Party is a step in continuing to socialize and build momentum for this idea.

2) Ending the homeless sweeps: I’m honestly disappointed that SFDCCC hasn’t stood with groups like Coalition on Homelessness to be more vocal about this. I think this slate has the new voices we need to collectively oppose Mayor Breed’s sweeps and be in solidarity with our city’s unhoused and marginally housed residents.

3) Demystifying the “powerful Chinese community”: I think the westside has mostly been forgotten and left behind by San Francisco’s progressive community. Look at any club, from this one to Milk Club to LDC -- those memberships and certainly the leadership is overwhelmingly concentrated in AD17. With Gordon Mar’s win in November 2018 and Jane Kim’s strong westside showing June 2018, it’s time to engage the westside in progressive causes by building understanding and ties to what’s often tossed aside as conservative Chinese voters on the westside because we get caught up in progressive litmus tests. I have been and am excited to be a part of SF DCCC to continue that work.

What three endorsements are you most proud of?

Social Justice Democrats slate, particularly Jane Kim, Bevan Dufty and the entirety of the AD19 slate.

What for-profit or non-profit boards do you serve on, including political organizations?

I am on the board of the Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club and was elected by the membership in January 2019.
What local and state commissions or policy bodies do you serve on?

I served as chair of the Port of San Francisco’s Waterfront Land Use Plan Update working group from 2015 to 2019.

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DCCC

Do you pledge to support San Francisco Employees’ Retirement System (SFERS) fully divesting from fossil fuels within three years and holding SFERS accountable at the ballot if they do not divest?

- Yes
- No

Do you pledge to support San Francisco purchasing PG&E assets to create public power in San Francisco?

- Yes
- No

Do you pledge to support the closure of 850 Bryant, jails #3 and #4?

- Yes
- No
Do you pledge to vote to endorse only those candidates that support Abolishing ICE?

- Yes

- No

Do you pledge to vote to endorse only those candidates that support decarceral criminal justice reform?

- Yes

- No

Do you support the expansion of charter schools? Yes/No (Please explain your answer.)

No - as a product of public school education, I believe that we need to focus on investments and energy into public education. I’ve seen how private investments and the charter school system wrecked the Buffalo Public School system while I was working with youth there (I started a community center in Buffalo) and have no interest in replicating those harms.

Did you support SB 50 (Senator Wiener’s zoning bill) as written?

- Yes

- No
If not, what amendments would make you support SB 50?

I regret supporting this the way I did.

The previous BART Board had supported SB 827 (which I did not) and staff wanted to force a vote at the first meeting in February (my second real board meeting). I was successfully able to push back the vote and did cursory engagement with housing groups but it was insufficient. If a version of this bill returns in 2020 in the same form, I would not support it until I had done more work, engaged with groups, and had a better understanding of amendments on the table particularly around affordable housing minimums, tenant protections, community self-determination and demolition controls.

Do you pledge to endorse only candidates committed to ending homeless sweeps?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Do you support the City funding community land trusts?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Do you support congestion pricing for the downtown core?

☐ Yes

☐ No
Do you support and would you vote to endorse a Public Bank in San Francisco?

- Yes
- No

Do you pledge to vote to endorse only those candidates that support Medicare for All?

- Yes
- No
- Other: ____________________________________________________________

Do you pledge to only endorse those candidates that support a full repeal of the Ellis Act and Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act?

- Yes
- No

Do you believe the number of real estate contributions to a candidate impacts their fitness as a progressive candidate?

- Yes
- No
If Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act is repealed, would you work to enact vacancy control in San Francisco?

- Yes
- No

Do you support a baseline percentage of 40% of affordable housing in developments when negotiating the number of housing units?

- Yes
- No

Do you support requiring 100% affordable housing on public land?

- Yes
- No

If not, under what circumstances would you support allowing a percentage or all market-rate housing on public land?

I still think that talking about this in broad strokes is difficult until we have an actual development in front of us and know the context of a neighborhood and have engaged with the actual community. But if you're asking if 100% affordable housing is the baseline starting point for me when it comes to public land, absolutely.
Do you support contribution limits for DCCC races?

- Yes
- No

What are your ideas to avoid a corporate takeover of the DCCC?

- Voluntary contribution limits and guidelines for DCCC
- Actively supporting those who have done significant work in or currently work in the nonprofit or public sector rather than the private sector
- Making sure a majority of the seats are held by renters rather than property owners

Do you support limiting DCCC ex-officio member voting rights for endorsements?

- Yes
- No

Do you support banning elected politicians from running for DCCC?

- Yes
- No

Do you pledge not to resign your seat before the November 2020 endorsement vote?

- Yes
- No
If not, please explain why:


November 2020 Election

Do you pledge to vote to SOLE endorse Supervisor Sandra Lee Fewer in District 1?

- Yes
- No

Do you pledge to vote to SOLE endorse Supervisor Aaron Peskin in District 3?

- Yes
- No

Do you pledge to vote to SOLE endorse Supervisor Dean Preston in District 5?

- Yes
- No
Do you pledge to vote to not endorse Karim Salgado or Joel Engardio for Supervisor in District 7?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Do you pledge to vote to SOLE endorse Supervisor Hillary Ronen in District 9?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Do you pledge to vote to SOLE endorse Former Supervisor John Avalos in District 11?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Do you support restrictions on Prop 13 in the November 2020 and future elections?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Do you support the proposed commercial vacancy tax?

☐ Yes

☐ No
Do you support the Fair Elections charter amendment to prohibit mayoral appointments of candidates 90 days before an election?

- Yes
- No

March 2020 Election

Which candidate will you support in the March 2020 Presidential Primary?

- I haven't decided

Do you support San Francisco Balanced Development Act which seeks to update 1986's Prop M?

- Yes
- No
Which candidate will you support for Congress in District 12?

- Agatha Bacelar
- Shahid Buttar
- Douglas Deitch
- Tom Gallagher
- Nancy Pelosi

Which candidate will you support for SF Superior Court Seat 1?

- Pang Va Ly
- Maria Evangelista

Which candidate will you support for SF Superior Court Seat 18?

- Dorothy Chou Proudfoot
- Michelle Tong

Which candidate will you support for SF Superior Court Seat 21?

- Kulvindar "Rani" Singh
- Carolyn Gold

November 2019 Election
### Who did you support for District Attorney?

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<th>1st Choice</th>
<th>2nd Choice</th>
<th>3rd Choice</th>
<th>Unranked Endorsement</th>
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<tr>
<td>Suzy Loftus</td>
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<td>Leif Dautch</td>
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<td>Nancy Tung</td>
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<td>Chesa Boudin</td>
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### Who did you Support for D5 Supervisor?

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<tr>
<td>Dean Preston</td>
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<td>Vallie Brown</td>
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<td>Ryan Lam</td>
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<td>Nomvula O’Meara</td>
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**November 2018 Election**

Need a refresher of what was on the ballot? Use this link: [https://sfelections.sfgov.org/november-6-2018-election-results-summary](https://sfelections.sfgov.org/november-6-2018-election-results-summary)
Who did you support for Board of Education? Please list all endorsements and ranking if any.

Gabriela Lopez

Who did you support for D2 Supervisor? Please list all endorsements and ranking if any.

Nick Josefowitz

Who did you support for D4 Supervisor? Please list all endorsements and ranking if any.

Gordon Mar

Who did you support for D6 Supervisor? Please list all endorsements and ranking if any.

Matt Haney

Who did you support for D8 Supervisor? Please list all endorsements and ranking if any.

Rafael Mandelman

Who did you support for D10 Supervisor? Please list all endorsements and ranking if any.

Shamann Walton
Did you support November 2018’s Prop C - "Our City Our Home" tax on gross receipts of businesses to fund homeless services?

☐ Yes

☐ No

June 2018 Election

Need a refresher of what was on the ballot? Use this link: [https://sfelections.sfgov.org/june-5-2018-election-results-summary](https://sfelections.sfgov.org/june-5-2018-election-results-summary)

Who did you support for Mayor in June 2018? Please list all endorsements and ranking if any.

Jane Kim

Did you support June 2018’s Prop C, Tax on Commercial Rent for Child Care & Early Education?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Did you support June 2018’s Prop F “Tenant’s Right to Counsel”?

☐ Yes

☐ No
Did you support June 2018’s Prop H “Arm Police With Tasers”?

- Yes
- No

Past Elections

Did you support 2016’s Prop D "Let's Elect Our Elected Officials" to have special elections to fill vacancies on the Board of Supervisors?

- Yes
- No

Did you support 2014's Prop G, the anti-speculation tax?

- Yes
- No

Short Answer Questions

Short Answers Please
Do you identify as an activist?

- Yes
- No

If so, please describe specific accomplishments in your activism. What did you get done, and what was your role?

Honestly I am so wordy below that I'll let the specifics below speak for myself.

The one thing I'll add is to talk briefly about my time before moving to San Francisco. In Buffalo, I worked for People United for Sustainable Housing, one of the most badass groups I've ever had the fortune of knowing and honor of working for. Just Google them -- they create new economies driven by the most marginalized in that community and are powered by direct action organizing.

One of the greatest things I think I will ever do in my life, I did with PUSH Buffalo, which was being the sole founder of a youth drop-in community center. That work was active disruption to say that we can create our own spaces and we can create better spaces for youth. That space stills exists today and continues to serve in particular refugee teens and POC.
What communities do you feel you represent in SF and how do those communities hold you accountable?

The idea of representation is complex. I can represent who I am, which is a complicated mess of intersected identities but I cannot pretend to broadly speak for identities. The way I engage in politics is deeply rooted in how I identify though, and who I am informs how I step up and engage (or conversely, how I step back and learn).

At the end of the day, whether it’s the Chinese community, the LGBTQ community, people who ride transit, people who live in a specific neighborhood, etc. – I have two thoughts about accountability. This is a great question though.

First, it’s about self-accountability. I could say, flippantly, that accountability is from voters but truthfully, being voted in/out of office isn’t good enough and for many elected offices, that only comes around once every four years. Self-accountability is about the discipline that you have and the seriousness you bring to your role; who are you talking to? Are you seeking out people who will hold you accountable or are you avoiding them? Are you doing the work and holding yourself to the highest standards?

Second, it’s about being present and engaging. Accountability cannot ever happen in a vacuum. It’s about attending events and meetings and rallies to both be visible but also to do so in the quiet moments for them and not for you. Are you putting yourself in a position where people can push back and question you? Are you accessible?

This is admittedly qualitative but in my last year of being in a more public role, I have embraced the public eye, even if it brought me international scrutiny (see: sandwich-eating at BART). I do live agenda reviews, even if it means I need to deal with sexual harassment from strangers via social media. I have struggled to balance my personal life with being in the public eye, but I have strived to attend events and be accessible. And if people have advice, I take it seriously and know that I can always, always do better.
Please list specific ways you have shown up for immigrants at risk of deportation.

As an immigrant myself (and as I type this from Hong Kong, where my heritage is steeped in the fight for democracy and self-determination), this issue is deeply personal. I am privileged to be a naturalized citizen now, but something I find important is to always talk about my experience of being an immigrant and how it continues to affect my everyday life.

In the post-Trump world, like many others, I immediately attended trainings and signed up to be part of the Rapid Response Network (SFILEN/SFILDC). The first time I ever spoke at a SF DCCC meeting was specifically to oppose Angela Alioto’s attempt to pass a resolution to overturn San Francisco’s sanctuary policy. I’ve publicly spoken out about the presence of ICE at BART. This isn’t enough, and I need to do more.
Please list specific ways you have fought against racism and white supremacy.

Being a person of color means that I never can escape white supremacy at every moment. There is no reprieve and as a POC; you can never escape the constant recognition of not being white. Some days, it feels like my existence and my insistence on being unrepentantly visible and vocal is an act against white supremacy. Sometimes just existing is a lot.

Currently: I’m supporting (and helped build) an entire POC slate to represent the west side on SF DCCC.

Currently: Also I publicly protested the enforcement of the no eating/drinking rule at BART, which has brought the wrath of BART POA. I’m actively being asked to resign, and in response, I publicly said 1) I will not resign and 2) I plan on using my position as BART Director to question staff and dig into racial bias in “quality of life” citations, which SF Examiner recently uncovered.

Currently: I have been the only vocal member of the BART Board pushing back against the increase of police at BART. I have joined with other members to push for harm reduction strategies and unarmed civilian ambassadors, even if it brings me ridicule because I know it’s the right thing to do for BART.

Future work to continue doing: The Asian American community in San Francisco must be more vocal in our solidarity with our black and brown community. I always think back on the fight to save the I-Hotel in the late ‘60s and how black and brown folks put their bodies on the line to save housing for predominantly Chinese and Filipino seniors. We need to look back to our elders and learn from our past and the solidarity movements that made us stronger. This is not new work.
Please give us some examples of situations you've encountered where gender and LGBTQ inequity was evident, and what you did or would do to address it?

I can count the number of queer Asians in elected office in the country on two hands. I didn’t meet the first fellow queer Asian woman until attending Young Elected Officials’ national conference this past August; that person was Sabrina Javellana, a 22-year-old on a city council of a small suburb in metro Miami. Running for office as an openly queer Asian woman and unabashedly being very gay is probably the most radically queer thing I’ve done. (Somehow, I’m also the first woman to serve in this seat on the BART Board. Yes, it’s 2019.) And I don’t want to be the last. There are more of us out there, and I have done everything in my power to lift up and encourage more young folks, more queer folks, more POC, and more women to run. Being publicly and politically queer seems like a given in a place like San Francisco but truly, it isn’t; our politically queer communities still trend painfully white and privileged.

Personally, I’m dedicated to politicizing the queer Asian community, and that starts first and foremost with visibility and engagement. It’s a both/and for me: Democratic clubs representing API communities need to be more actively discussing queerness and lifting up queer leaders and queer clubs (the Milks, the Alices, the GAPAs) need to be more political and develop political consciousness. It is scary to be vocal though, and I think the more of us who are publicly queer (yeah, that means making out with people at El Rio to doing interviews with B.A.R. to being on the Milk Club board to attending APIENC potlucks) inevitably builds a movement and a consciousness to say: yes, we exist.

In the midst of a homelessness crisis, how can the City and County of San Francisco improve the effectiveness of our city’s homelessness and supportive housing services?

END
THE
SWEEPS

SUPPORT ONLY HARM REDUCTION STRATEGIES
How would you expand checks and balances in regard to Mayoral appointments?

I don't know if I'm currently well-informed enough to have the right answers, but let's talk. I have complicated thoughts about governance but most of those conversations are me talking to myself in the mirror. I'd like to hear more about what ideas groups like LPOV have, what model of local government we seek and what reforms are needed to get there.

Do you work for the City and County of SF?

- Yes
- No

Are you a member of a union?

- Yes
- No

If so, how will you balance accountability to union leadership, workers, and constituents?

My answer above around accountability generally covers this. I would also encourage you to speak to SEIU, ATU, AFSCME and if you so choose, BART POA. They will give you the most honest answer of how I balance that already in my role on the BART Board.

Last questions...we promise.
What do you for fun in San Francisco?

I started playing rugby as a form of therapy (along with actually going to therapy, but that's less "for fun").

Why do you want the League of Pissed Off Voters’ endorsement?

I was honored to get LPOV's endorsement in November 2018, where you put your weight behind political newcomers like Gabriela Lopez and me. LPOV is one of the few groups that will take a chance on candidates like me, and I don't take that for granted.

Is there anything else you want to tell us?

I'm in Hong Kong at the moment and unfortunately am rushing through this a bit. I know I left a lot blank under endorsements. I have a LOT of thoughts about endorsements and I'd be disappointed if that's a dealbreaker for LPOV. As I look ahead, I want to be in conversation early and often but without knowing all the candidates running for November 2020, it's impossible for me to say who I'll be sole endorsing at this moment. (Jackie Fielder's late entry into the State Senate race is a great example of not needing to rush to endorse nearly a year in advance.)

LPOV in its membership/leadership isn't monolithic. That's good and that's important. But speaking broadly, I will not always agree with LPOV's membership/leadership. That's also good and that's important. What's most important is that I'm accessible and accountable, and you know how I land on where I land. And if you don't know, I'm here and ready and willing to engage. And I honestly will do that regardless of whether you endorse me or not but I would be honored to once again have your endorsement. I think my last eleven months of being on the BART Board have been strong, and I've consistently supported and championed some of the strongest social justice issues in that role.

And in short, we need people like me on the westside.
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