
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 *

Kelly Akemi Groth

Campaign Contact *

[REDACTED]

Email Address *

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Phone Number

██████████

Website

votekellygroth.com

Tell Us About You

Why are you running for this office?

I'm running for a new term on the SF DCCC so I can continue my work on the committee and build a pipeline of young, diverse progressive activists who want to change the party from outside in. Since being appointed in 2017 to serve the remainder of Eric Mar's term, I've helped rebrand the Party and develop a robust communications strategy, authored and passed resolutions including demanding an end to homeless sweeps and abolishing ICE, and worked to involve younger and leftist activists in the party process. I was born and raised in the Bay Area, and the future of the region and San Francisco matter deeply to me. I've seen communities forced out due to skyrocketing rents and gentrification. Homelessness continues to worsen and the city responds with an increase in tent sweeps, not an increase in services. State elected officials bought by real estate don't support repealing Costa Hawkins and think we can build our way out of this problem. I'm running to stand up to real estate and corporate interests that try to buy our Board of Supervisors and a place on the San Francisco Democratic Party.

What are the top three issues you will work on and how will you implement solutions in a timely manner?

My top three immediate issues are: 1. Urging local and state officials to make PG&E a publicly owned power. 2. Making public transit more affordable, reliable, and accessible. 3. Making the Democratic Party more relevant and accessible to communities.

As a member of the DCCC, implementation of solutions is less tangible than being a supervisor or city official. However, as an activist I have found coalition building to be the most important way to bring about change. I will continue advocating with activists in these areas and use the Democratic Party platform to ensure our efforts are recognized. As a Democratic Socialist, I believe that to not organize from inside of the Democratic Party, both at the local and state levels, is a huge missed opportunity. I've worked with other leftist delegates to pass resolutions at the party level calling for an end to illegal and excessive rent increases, calling for PG&E to become a publicly owned power, and urging the state to provide Medicare for All. Statewide elected officials notice where the Party is moving, and often introduce resolutions that reflect the Party. I'll continue working with activists within the Party to push the CDP further left and to forgo its corporate sponsors.

What three endorsements are you most proud of?

Jane Kim, Sandra Lee Fewer, Ivy Lee. As an Asian-American woman, I am forever grateful to have their mentorship and am inspired that they will always fight for policies that push the envelope and serve the underserved, including establishing an Office of Racial Equity, fighting for 40% affordable housing at Mission Rock, free City College, and universal childcare.

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

Currently I'm the co-president of the San Francisco Women's Political Committee. I term out of my co-presidency at the end of this December. In the 4 years I've served on the board I've worked to make our board of directors the youngest, most diverse group of women to serve.

What local and state commissions or policy bodies do you serve on?

UCSF Parnassus Community Advisory Committee

Previously, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Citizens Advisory Committee (2014-2017)

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. I've been lucky to attend public school my whole life and received an amazing education. While some charter schools may provide a better alternative to public schools in some areas, a majority of them are racist and fail students. If charter schools are going to operate in a community, we need to ensure that they have oversight and are accountable to the school districts they are housed in to make sure they're not taking resources away from public schools. I want to ensure that charter schools cannot buy their way into operating, when public school teachers don't get paid a living wage, cannot afford to live in the communities they serve, and have to buy their own school and teaching supplies.

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 am concerned about the prioritization of market-rate housing being built near public transportation in California. When BART was first constructed, the above-ground system was purposely built in the backyards of low-income communities. Now, we see those communities being priced out of their homes because living near transportation is desirable and profitable. Suburban communities that refused to build public transportation in their cities would not have to build housing or improve their transportation systems under SB 50 as written. California is in a housing crisis and many communities are being priced out of the Bay Area, and forced to drive cars due to our poor public transportation infrastructure. We need a housing AND a transportation bill that not only tackles this, but also focuses on affordable housing development and will have the support of community members and tenants, NOT real estate and developers.

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?

.....

Do you support contribution limits for DCCC races?

Yes

No

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

Electing activists such as myself who are responsible to the people, not my donors. We should also change state law to limit contributions to candidates to the DCCC. I've personally pledged to not accept over \$500 per individual and to refuse donations from developers and real estate. The DCCC should continue our vetting process of sponsors and donors for events and slate cards, to ensure developers and corporations aren't buying our support. When the Chair makes an appointment to the DCCC, there should be vetting of potential candidates and if they will pledge to contribution limits and refusing donations from developers and corporations as well.

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?

Bernie Sanders

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

Who did you support for District Attorney?

	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	Unranked Endorsement
Suzy Loftus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leif Dautch	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nancy Tung	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chesa Boudin	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Who did you Support for D5 Supervisor?

	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	Unranked Endorsement
Dean Preston	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vallie Brown	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ryan Lam	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nomvula O'Meara	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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>.

Who did you support for Board of Education? Please list all endorsements and ranking if any.

I supported Allison Collins, Gabriela Lopez, Li Lovett, and Faauga Moliga. When it came to my DCCC vote in 2018, I was asked to support UESF's endorsed candidates, which was Allison, Li, and Faauga. I agreed to, but still supported Gabriela and sent out a voter guide to all my friends and family with those 4 endorsed candidates on it.

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

No candidate - I abstained from voting at DCCC and made no personal endorsements.

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

Gordon Mar, sole endorsement

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

Matt Haney, sole endorsement

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

Rafael Mandelman, sole endorsement

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

Tony Kelly, sole endorsement. I abstained from voting for D10 at DCCC.

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>.

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

Jane Kim #1, Mark Leno #2. I voted for Mark Leno #1, Jane Kim #2 at DCCC.

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?

Previously, I've worked on national campaigns to motivate young voters to register and turnout to vote. By tapping into the energy on college campuses, we were able to activate thousands of students through avenues traditional campaigns had ignored, while building a pipeline of new activists. In one instance, I managed the beginnings of a voter registration and turnout program focused on high school students advocating for gun control. In San Francisco, I created and led a social media campaign urging BART riders to contact their BART Board Directors in opposition to an ordinance that would ban panhandling, and organized a protest against a BART officer arresting a passenger for eating on a platform. Both efforts received recognition in local news, the Board voted down the panhandling ban, and state elected officials have called for BART to change its policy around issuing citations to passengers who eat in the paid areas of the system.

What communities do you feel you represent in SF and how do those communities hold you accountable?

Like many other millennials living in SF, I graduated during the recession. I struggled to find work after graduating, working paycheck to paycheck trying to make enough money for rent and groceries. I worked up to three jobs at once and discovered creative ways to make meals on a stretched dollar. I represent the young San Franciscans who love our city but can barely afford to live here, the tenants who have faced landlord harassment and eviction, the car-less transit riders who want to get home safely on a reliable system. To the folks in these communities I've spoken to, they are excited I am running for the DCCC and can continue elevating their voices.

Please list specific ways you have shown up for immigrants at risk of deportation.

As a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, San Francisco, I participated in their Occupy ICE in front of the Department of Homeland Security. I've shared know your rights flyers and have a hotline saved as "FUCK ICE" in my phone and encouraged others to do the same and call if they witness a raid.

Please list specific ways you have fought against racism and white supremacy.

My grandfather was incarcerated by the American government in World War II because he was Japanese, and his fight against racism is one I carry close. As a Japanese-American growing up in white suburbia, I faced microaggressions from peers and adults on the daily. I was asked, "what are you? What kind of Asian are you? Can you understand what other Orientals say?" I was told I was going to hell by a fellow student because I was Buddhist and didn't believe in God. I constantly had to fight back against these sentiments aimed towards me and educate people that it wasn't okay to ask me those questions. Growing up, I also called out individuals who made prejudiced or racist statements against other ethnicities. I continue to call out individuals who make these comments, and proactively work to ensure there is adequate representation and diversity on any board or committee I am on. As a member of the DCCC, I supported our work to create a Black Agenda for the committee and advocated for the censure of Member Angela Alioto, who spoke the n-word six times during one of our meetings. While we were unable to censure or remove her due to state party laws, I pledge to reform these laws at the state level whenever possible.

In terms of white supremacy, when Patriot Prayer threatened to host a rally in Alamo Square, I marched in the streets along with several anti-fascist organizations. I also organize with the Democratic Socialists of America, who helped organize the counter protest to Patriot Prayer and other anti-fascist protests. I pledge to fight white supremacy alongside my comrades and work to deplatform Nazis and white supremacists.

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've been lucky enough to serve on the board of the San Francisco Women's Political Committee for 4 years, and have built a pipeline of young, diverse women to serve on the board with me. I've worked to ensure several communities, including LGBTQ, are represented on our board and committees. I've also helped organize slates for the Assembly District delegate elections, collaborating with community members and ensuring our final slate was diverse and representative of the districts.

Previously I managed a small team at my job before changing positions, and hired two brilliant young women and made sure I mentored them as well as managing them. I held check ins to ensure they felt comfortable in the role, were being heard in meetings, and felt represented at the organization. Previously the organization had been dominated by straight, cis white men and I often felt I was unnoticed.

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?

The violence from city officials against homeless people in itself is a human rights violation. The slashing and discarding of tents and personal property, especially during poor weather conditions, is horrifying. Homeless sweeps should be banned, and DPW should not be allowed to steal individuals' belongings and refuse to return them. Public land should be used to build emergency shelters, navigation centers, and other services to ensure our homeless population is safe and can work to transition into permanent housing.

To improve the effectiveness of the city's homeless and supporting housing services, the city should establish an oversight committee that ensures all departments are coordinating and communicating. Having the departments separate and siloed hampers the ability to address the needs of the homeless, and also makes it easy for each department to pass the buck when it comes to accountability.

How would you expand checks and balances in regard to Mayoral appointments?

I supported 2014's ballot measure that would have required the Mayor to temporarily appoint someone to a city vacancy, and require a special election for the Board of Supervisors if there were a vacant seat. Similarly, I support Supervisor Mar's proposal to not allow the Mayor to appoint someone to a vacancy 90 days before an election. As we've seen in several years past, appointed incumbents are not guaranteed to win, or are necessarily the popular choice of San Francisco voters. Another measure I would be willing to support would be to have the Board of Supervisors confirm the Mayor's appointments, similar to how the President of the United States requires a Senate majority to confirm appointments.

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?

Last questions...we promise.

What do you for fun in San Francisco?

Hike, yoga, bike through Golden Gate Park or over the bridge, see local theater.

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

Since before I was first involved in local politics, I found out about the League through one of their voter guides. I was excited such an organization existed, since I was tired of candidates all sounding the same (at the local and state level) and had no idea how to differentiate ballot measures, candidates, and what local offices were up for election. Since then I've helped lead League pub crawls with endorsed candidates, passed out guides before Election Day, and read their endorsements for very thorough explanations of each candidate and measure.

Is there anything else you want to tell us?

Candidates - I left some of the candidate endorsements blank because I cannot pledge to endorse folks without discussing with my slate members to ensure we've addressed concerns and are aligned on the candidate we're backing. I haven't met with all of the judicial candidates yet, and want to personally chat with all of them before making an endorsement decision as well.

850 Bryant - In the closing of the jails, I want to ensure that our solution is not to just send inmates to different counties. Alameda County is notorious for violent treatment of inmates, and closing of 850 Bryant doesn't ensure that they'll receive decent and fair treatment in another facility. Ultimately I believe in abolishing prisons, but also want to ensure in closing one prison, it doesn't push the problem to another county.

Congestion pricing - We need to make sure it's equitable, and not regressive. My one concern in congestion pricing is that our public transportation system is so unreliable and expensive, many low-income folks require a car to get to work. Owning a car in San Francisco is already so expensive for those working late-night shifts and cannot depend on public transportation running during the hours they need to be at work. If we roll out congestion pricing, it should tax those who can afford it, and immediately injecting the revenues generated into improving public transportation by extending lines, reducing headways, and stopping switchbacks on lines, and increasing service.

Banning elected officials - Ultimately we can't prevent people from running for this office, but I can understand where the concerns of having elected officials running comes into play. The purpose of the DCCC is to allow for grassroots activists to have a platform to work within the California Democratic Party, which is a confusing body that prioritizes elected officials and their delegates over elected activists. While the other side pours tens of thousands of dollars to elect individuals who use the DCCC to elevate their profile and eventually run for higher office, our progressive, local elected officials can use the DCCC as a platform to advocate for issues they normally can't.

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