
SF League of Pissed Off Voters 2020 CD12 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 *

Tom Gallagher

Campaign Contact *

[REDACTED]

Email Address *

[REDACTED]

Phone Number

██████████

Website

<https://tomgallaghercongress2020.com/>

Tell Us About You

Why are you running for this office?

1. Because Nancy Pelosi – who is “not a big fan of Medicare for all,” who refers to the Green New Deal as “the green dream, or whatever they call it,” and who supports increases in the military budget -- does not appropriately represent her district.
 2. Because I want to see a Democrat to her left become the first Democrat to make it to a run-off with her and run a high-profile race highlighting the differences between the “Bernie Sanders wing of the Democratic Party” and its corporate-oriented establishment.
 3. Because I believe that I can be the most effective in articulating the political differences in this match-up in the persuasive manner necessary to reach the broadest population possible beyond the twenty percent who are already with us. I am the only candidate to have won an election and served in a legislature. I have also written extensively on related topics in numerous articles and reviews, many of which may be found at TomGallagherwrites.com.
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What are the top three issues you will work on and how will you implement solutions in a timely manner?

Endless wars and excessive military spending. Current policies are increasing rather than decreasing the numbers of our enemies -- an argument crucial to effectively arguing that excessive military spending diverts resources from domestic priorities.

Medicare for all.

A Sanders presidency could break the current log jam, but we can't count on it. It's crucial to perform the often difficult balancing act of consistently advocating immediate total coverage while simultaneously supporting efforts that may only deliver partial, but real progress toward that end, but never suggesting that such partial successes are adequate.

A "Marshall Plan" for Central America. What would it take to make potential refugees from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras consider staying home a better option than risking their lives crossing deserts and rivers?

The original Marshall Plan occurred when forces generally opposed to massive foreign aid switched positions. Today, supporters of foreign aid are joined by business and government interests concerned about the growing influence of China's "Silk Road" initiative, which the government of El Salvador recently affiliated with. This is potentially a unique moment of opportunity.

What three endorsements are you most proud of?

Bernal Heights Democratic Club. I have a long time connection with this club, which has consistently been one of the two most left wing Democratic clubs in the city (along with Harvey Milk) and is, I believe, the only neighborhood club to deliver its slate card to every household in the area.

Michael Lighty. Michael is currently Healthcare Constituency Director for Bernie 2020 and was the person chosen to present the Sanders Medicare for All proposal at the 2016 Democratic National Platform Committee meeting. He has served as Policy Director for National Nurses United and National Director of Democratic Socialists of America. We worked together in SF DSA when we were few in number.

Stephen Zunes. As Chair of SF Progressive Democrats of America, I have had occasion to invite Stephen to speak to the organization on numerous occasions. A professor at USF, he is an expert on the Middle East and in nonviolent practice in politics. If there is another academic in the city as concerned with bringing the often far away-seeming questions of foreign policy back home to the voters of the district, I am unaware of that person.

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

SF Progressive Democrats of America. Stepped down as chair to make this race.
Was on the executive committee of the Bernal Heights Democratic Club for twenty years before leaving to make this race.

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

None.

House of Representatives

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

I do not see myself as representing specific communities, other than in the sense that I believe that the job in Congress should be about equalizing income, wealth and power which means generally favoring those of lesser income, wealth and power.

Name three local campaigns you have supported and describe the extent of your support.

I organized the 2008 Proposition U campaign that declared it city policy that our “elected representatives in the United States Senate and House of Representatives should vote against any further funding for the deployment of United States Armed Forces in Iraq, with the exception of funds specifically earmarked to provide for their safe and orderly withdrawal.” I wrote the language, solicited the Supervisors who placed it on the ballot, wrote the ballot arguments, and raised the funds for the campaign.

In 2003, as president of the Bernal Heights Democratic Club, I made the successful motion that we endorse the Green Party mayoral candidate Matt Gonzalez over Democrat Gavin Newsom. I subsequently wrote a December 5 San Francisco Chronicle op-ed endorsing him. We were one of only two clubs (Harvey Milk being the other) to do this and were the object of a subsequent unsuccessful effort to revoke our charter. (A result of this was a change in policy limiting the requirement that clubs endorse only Democrats to partisan elections, a policy that has not been tested in regard to the current “open” primaries.)

I managed Barry Hermanson’s 2001 campaign for Supervisor, which while not successful in electing him, utilized the campaign to produce and distribute literature promoting four ballot questions – to the extent that a rival candidate complained that our real purpose was to promote these issues rather than the candidacy.

Please share your fundraising total to date, the number of donors, and the number of volunteers on your campaign.

13000

Are you taking corporate or PAC money? Please explain.

No. Not only wouldn’t I take it, but the corporate people wouldn’t offer.

Describe one or two specific accomplishments in your political work- what did you get done, what was your role?

I have waged a local campaign against Nancy Pelosi's foreign policy views for over a decade, including the 2008 Proposition mentioned above. In 2018 I succeeded in amending the California Democratic Platform to insert similar language regarding the funding of the Afghanistan War. Before, during, and after these events, I have brought numerous foreign policy resolutions – on Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Venezuela – before the SF Democratic County Central Committee and local Democratic Clubs, prevailing over Pelosi's position in almost every instance.

I think of my congressional campaign as a continuation of this work of bringing far-off Washington matters back home.

I was the motive force behind Massachusetts adopting "plant closing" legislation, i.e. addressing the effects of mass layoffs, in 1985. The resulting legislation was much weaker than my proposal, yet an improvement on the status quo ante. This effort, in turn, played a role in advancing the adoption of national plant closing legislation.

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

I have attended rallies outside ICE headquarters. As mentioned above, I consider my prime contribution to be promoting the "Marshall Plan for Central America" concept.

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

I have worked in the San Francisco Public Schools for the past twenty years. No institution plays a greater equalizing function than the public school system, even in its currently inadequately funded circumstances.

Every piece of campaign literature distributed thus has advocated reparations for descendants of slaves and native Americans.

November 2019 Election

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 checked="" 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"/>

Last questions...we promise.

What do you for fun in San Francisco?

Play volleyball. Sing in the Conspiracy of Beards.

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

The organization's anti-establishment bona fides.

Is there anything else you want to tell us?

I have attempted to conduct this race in a somewhat radical, unorthodox manner, based upon avoiding a repeat of last year's fiasco, when a late entry made it a three way race to be the Democratic left challenger to Pelosi. The result was all three losing to a Republican who finished second with only 9 percent of the vote, while the three left Democrats spent a collective \$225,000+.

Two things seemed obvious to me:

A. Ideally, the SF left would find a way to unite behind a single candidate. I called the concept a "progressive primary." I was, in other words, advocating a course of action in which some candidates would agree to leave the race, understanding that one of those candidates could be me. This proposal was not embraced by the other candidates, and has been specifically rejected by one. Nonetheless, there is the prospect of the three meeting for public debate, which would be a first, so far as I know.

B. Last year's level of fruitless pre-primary spending should be avoided, not repeated – or increased. Believing that once there was actually a clear challenger to Pelosi from the left there would be money for that race, it seemed to me appropriate to curtail the amount spent prior to that point, i.e. while running against other candidates of the left. Could there be some obligation to solidarity on the left, even in the midst of a political campaign? Solidarity, if not to the other candidates, then to the collective donors on the left whose funds are not best expended in intra-left contests?

Therefore I have hired no fund raiser, set a \$200 (cumulative) limit on contributions, and attempted to run this portion on as little money as possible – the exact opposite of the normal raise-and-spend-every-dollar-you-can campaign philosophy . Again, this approach was not supported by the other challengers, one of whose campaigns outspent mine by a 30-1 margin in the first nine months of this year.

Can the sort of approach I've taken work in the real world? Only if people think it's the appropriate response to the situation – and that it matters.

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