

BART Board | League of Pissed Off Voters November 2020 Questionnaire

Hello candidates! Thank you for filling out the League's questionnaire. 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.

Email address *

[REDACTED]

Candidate Info

Name

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Office Sought

BART Board of Directors, District 9

Website

<https://www.patrickforbart.com/>

Where is one place in San Francisco you'll want to go celebrate when the pandemic is over?

Bike Repair Night with the SF Bike Coalition, and whichever bar/restaurant we decide on after we're finished for the evening!

Tell us about yourself.

Why are you running for this office?

I have a penchant for public transit, particularly BART, since I rely on it heavily for travel and leisure. I'm also obsessed with San Francisco politics and Bay Area news in general, and I wanted to take this opportunity to marry those two passions (transit and politics) together and give back to the city and my fellow transit riders. I want to make sure there is someone on the Board who is going to not only fight for equity and accessibility, but to actually put plans into motion and situating BART as an entirely free rail system someday.

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

Because I love your voter guides, I like your "no bullshit" attitude when it comes to sharing what your opinions on candidates and initiatives, and I think your voice carries far when folks consider their choices for the next election.

What are your values and how did you get them?

I believe in dependability, compassion, and empathy (good listening and being relatable). Being the third of four children, and the rebellious one at that, I was a trouble-maker and felt pushed out by my politically conservative family as I got older. While we all love each other despite our differences, I value my independence and self-reliance. That meant working two jobs and 72-hour weeks when moving to San Francisco to afford to pay off my undergraduate student loans. I worked doubles (9a-5:30p and 7p-3a) Wed-Fri, and another overnight shift on Saturday. Even when I finished paying off the loans and left the second job, I found myself filling my free time with volunteering opportunities through the SF Bike Coalition. That work ethic is what drives me and keeps me dependable to people who know me. If I promise something, or if someone calls on me to do something, I'm going to get it done.

My compassion and empathy comes from tragedies in my life. Losing a friend to suicide. Losing a friend to a drug overdose. And losing a friend to unexpected health conditions. Life is fleeting, and the relationships we have with people are unpredictable. I make sure to be there for people, and to hear from them about what's going on in their lives. Whether it's providing emotional support, backing them up on a logical conundrum, or being there to actively listen and be a person they can confide in, I strive to grow from other people's experiences, share my own, and be someone people can depend on.

What communities do you represent and how do they hold you accountable?

I represent the bicycle community and the environmental community. The former holds me accountable by humbling me and making sure we never get complacent in our fight for better bike infrastructure and safety in San Francisco. I volunteer to close down streets like Valencia during the pandemic to show people just how amazing it is to have car-free settings and safe bike/pedestrian thoroughfares. They can become a reality, but it takes repetitive effort and advocacy toward our local leaders.

As a vegetarian for over 6 years, a cyclist, and an Eagle Scout and avid outdoorsman, I try everyday to live up to the tenants of conservationism and environmental sustainability. That means not only leaving no trace, but leaving the planet better than the way we found it. To that end, I'm held accountable by taking time to pack out other people's trash whenever I find some on the trails of our parks or reserves in San Francisco. I also volunteer with the Adopt a Drain program through the SFPUC to ensure the storm drains on our street are free from debris and garbage.

What three endorsements are you most proud of?

N/A I haven't been endorsed (yet)!

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

I don't serve on any boards. But I am the director for a nonprofit which is apolitical, though we engage with legislators from both sides of the aisle.

What local and state commissions and policy bodies have you served on -- currently or in the past?

N/A

Local Issues

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

Yes

No

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

Yes

No

Did you support SB 50 (Senator Wiener's Zoning Bill) as written?

Yes

No

If not, are there amendments that would make you support it?

I would like to see greater tenant protections clearly baked into the bill. That being said, San Francisco is in desperate need of not only housing, but high-density housing close to transit hubs, and it's frustrating to see this bill not only fail year in and year out, but also receive condemnation from our city supervisors.

Do you support congestion pricing for the downtown core?

Yes

No

Do you support creating a Public Bank in San Francisco?

Yes

No

If Costa Hawkins was repealed at the state level, would you actively support legislation enacting 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?

Have you previously and/or will you in the future accepted donations from any law enforcement officers or associations?

Yes

No

If yes, please explain why.

What percentage of the SFPD budget do you think should be reallocated towards housing, homeless services, social workers, health, and education?

70

Would you support legislation to implement the Budget Analyst's recommendation to adopt a more efficient weekly staffing schedule for the SFPD? (Recommendation 2.2 here: https://sfbos.org/sites/default/files/BA_Report_PA_of_San_Francisco_Police_Department_061218.pdf)

Yes

No

Who are you supporting for US Representative, District 12?

Shahid Buttar (though the unfounded sexual harassment allegations are concerning)

Who are you supporting for State Senate, District 11?

Jackie Fielder

Who are you supporting for District 1 Supervisor?

Connie Chan

Who are you supporting for District 3 Supervisor?

Aaron Peskin

Who are you supporting for District 5 Supervisor?

Dean Preston

Who are you supporting for District 7 Supervisor?

Myrna Melgar

Who are you supporting for District 9 Supervisor?

Hillary Ronen

Who are you supporting for District 11 Supervisor?

John Avalos

Who are you supporting for Board of Education?

Mark Sanchez, Matt Alexander, Jenny Lam, Kevine Boggess

Who are you supporting for Community College Board?

Tom Temprano, Aliya Chisti, Shanell Williams, Alan Wong

Who are you supporting for BART Board, District 9?

Myself

Do you support the charter amendment to create a Workforce Education and Recovery Fund for City College (WERF)?

Yes

No

Do you support “Vote 16” the SF charter amendment that authorizes youths aged 16 and 17 to vote in municipal elections?

Yes

No

Do you support the charter amendment to allow non-citizens to serve on boards, commissions, and advisory bodies?

Yes

No

Do you support the charter amendment creating the Office of the Public Advocate?

Yes

No

Do you support the charter amendment creating a Public Works Commission, Sanitation and Streets Commission, and Sanitation and Streets Department?

Yes

No

Do you support the charter amendment establishing term limits for City boards, commissions and bodies?

Yes

No

Do you support the charter amendment creating the Sheriff's Department Oversight Board and Inspector General?

Yes

No

Do you support the charter amendment to remove the minimum police staffing requirement and require the Police Department to submit a report and recommendation regarding police staffing levels?

Yes

No

Do you support the ballot measure to increase the gross receipts tax on businesses with a greater than 100:1 ratio of the pay of their highest-paid employee to the median pay of their SF employees?

Yes

No

Do you support the gross receipts ballot measure proposed by the Board of Supervisors (Yee, Haney, Peskin, Fewer) [File No. 200648]?

Yes

No

Do you support the gross receipts ballot measure proposed by Mayor London Breed [File No. 200645]?

Yes

No

Do you support the ballot measure authorizing development of up to 10,000 affordable rental units in the City?

Yes

No

Do you support California Proposition 15, Tax on Commercial and Industrial Properties for Education and Local Government Funding Initiative?

Yes

No

Do you support California Proposition 21, Local Rent Control Initiative (Costa-Hawkins changes)?

Yes

No

Do you support California Proposition 22, App-Based Drivers as Contractors and Labor Policies Initiative (AB5 Referendum)?

Yes

No

Do you Support California Proposition 25, Replace Cash Bail with Risk Assessments Referendum (Cash Bail Referendum)?

Yes

No

March 2020 Election

Who did you support for Superior Court Judge?

Maria Evangelista, Michelle Tong, Carolyn Gold

Who did you support for DCCC?

N/A (NPP voter)

Did you support March 2020's Prop D, a tax on vacant storefronts?

Yes

No

Did you support March 2020's Prop E, limits on office development?

Yes

No

November 2019 Election

Who did you support for District Attorney?

Chesa Boudin

Who did you support for District 5 Supervisor?

Dean Preston

November 2018 Election

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

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

BART Board

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

First is long-term sustainability and equity by curbing BART's reliance on fare revenue. Shoring up new funding streams will take time, effort, and money in the near-term, but will ensure a financially healthier rail system for generations. And it ensures equity and accessibility by driving down the cost for riders, with the end goal of being a free rail system for all. In terms of timeliness, this is something BART should've been working on a decade ago, so time is of the essence as we're presented with a unique situation under a pandemic. We need to work swiftly with the state legislature and transit stakeholders to identify policy solutions such as a voter initiative or amendments to existing policy to divert new funding to BART.

Second is building trust and confidence in our ridership by ensuring BART's cleanliness and reliability during this pandemic. That means providing adequate PPE to BART employees and contracted workers, regularly cleaning cars, platforms, and surfaces at stations, and providing longer trains and more frequent service in heavily trafficked stations in the system to allow for adequate social distancing. All of which can be achieved quickly, though BART is still behind in PPE acquisition, and there have been complaints from some employees that work conditions aren't safe. There needs to be more accountability and follow-up that what's being said is what's actually being done.

Third is safety on BART. People want to feel safe and secure while riding BART, and for many, the sight of a law enforcement officer wielding a firearm can be unnerving and invoke fear. We want our public safety officers to be approachable, and this is the right first step in doing so. Under Bevan Dufty's leadership, BART added 19 new BART police officers in the FY20 budget, and I don't think that was the right approach. Unarmed ambassadors are a great first step, and BART PD Chief Alvarez has shown a willingness to reform the department based on feedback from the Board and riders. But I think an MOU between the department and the board will be critical and laying down the expectations of BART PD and other agencies when it comes to dealing with actual criminal matters, and matters that shouldn't be criminalized or handled by law enforcement, such as people in distress or unhoused individuals.

Do you support lowering BART fares, either overall or through means-based programs? Please explain.

Ideally BART should be a free rail system for all, and I don't think that's some sort of pie in the sky thought. I think it's essential if we want BART around for the long-term. To the point, I absolutely support lowering BART fares both overall, and through a means-based program. Across the board BART fares should be lower, though the Board has already approved fare increases every two years until 2026. I support a permanent extension of the discount pilot program for low-income riders is key, along with free ridership for people under the age of 18 years old.

By which percentage do you think the BART police budget should be cut?

40

Do you support increased enforcement of fare evasion?

Yes

No

How will you address the BART budget shortfall?

As mentioned previously, there needs to be steps taken immediately to identify new and sustainable funding streams for BART. That could be through the passage of Prop. 15 and an amendment to Prop. 13 (1978), which is partly where BART derives some of its funding from. But in the short-term, BART's only chance of weathering the financial hit taken during COVID is to push for aid from the federal government through a second round of stimulus relief money. Transit agencies across the country are suffering, and the federal government needs to come through with the power of the purse and tide over our valuable infrastructure.

Please explain your position on maintaining and improving BART's infrastructure, specifically whether you support expanding BART's service throughout the Bay Area versus focus on supporting BART's existing core system. How would you pay for expansions and core system support, given that Measure RR funds are allocated to set projects? (Please answer both questions.)

Simply put, we need to focus on our core network. At this very moment, BART is not poised to be putting out grandiose plans for expansion given the drop in ridership pre-pandemic and the severe drop in ridership and loss of revenue because of the pandemic. The core system is being tended to through Measure RR funds as we speak, and the infrastructure is being overhauled and replaced at a quicker pace given the reduction in service because of COVID. That being said, one of the most important things BART could invest in (which doesn't necessarily expand the core network as it does bolster it and fill a much needed gap) is a second transbay crossing. This could be in the form of a tunnel, though ideally a bridge would make sense, to allow for Amtrak rail as well, and finally connect the Capitol Corridor to San Francisco. But the feasibility of the project is still under review, and the Board is signaling that even if approved, this project won't be completed until likely 2050.

In terms of finances, core system support outside of Measure RR funding can be achieved through state legislative budget asks for capital improvement dollars when the economy rebounds from the pandemic. Other core system support like paying for staffing, pensions, and station integrity, safety and cleanliness would require diversifying BART's budget and identifying new revenue streams. It could also mean increasing the prices on parking at BART's garages, from a \$3 cap to \$4 over the next decade through incremental increases. DC Metro parking is nearly \$5 per day, and the garages are nearly full, so I don't think an increase would deter riders. Though this is an example and a last resort, as I don't like the thought of transferring the financial burden onto riders.

Do you support building housing on land owned by BART, if yes, what mix of housing would be ideal (affordable, mixed-income, market-rate, etc.)?

Absolutely. BART already has a goal to produce 20,000 homes (35 percent affordable) on its property by 2040 through its Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) program. I've made it clear that I think the percentage should be 40 or even 45 percent affordable, but if trying to adjust that goal slows down housing development, then I'd back off. We're in such a crunch for housing, and particularly high-density housing around transit hubs, that we need to take what we can get. But with the caveat that these homes are affordable and reflective of the prices that our typical riders can afford. So that means a percentage of below-market rate housing, 35 percent affordable (since that's been locked in by the Board), and a cap on above-market housing that doesn't deter development.

If you're elected, what racial justice policies will you push for?

To start, eliminating fare inspectors on trains, which almost definitely contributes to implicit bias. In that same vein, making sure BART PD officers are trained on implicit bias and de-escalation tactics not just once, but on an annual basis. Black Americans and Latinx Americans currently have ten cents and thirteen cents for every dollar white Americans have, respectively. I think driving down fare costs with the goal of eliminating fares entirely is the biggest step BART can make in promoting both racial and economic justice, but also taking a financial strain off of communities of color.

Last Question

Is there anything else you want to tell us? (3000 character limit)

Wasn't a San Francisco voter in the 2016 election, which is why I left those responses blank. Thank you for reaching out!

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