

Berniecrats November 2022 Endorsement Questionnaire

Due: Wednesday, August 3rd at 11:59pm

What do you think the problems are with housing? How will you address them? *

There are a ton of problems with housing, but here are a few:

1. A shortage of market rate housing that is especially pronounced in high-demand places like the Bay Area. I think this is a real problem, since we rely on the private market for most of our housing.
2. A profound shortage of subsidized affordable housing for everyone at risk of being shut out of the private market, which has been an increasing share of our population.
3. Displacement of long-term renters from neighborhoods across San Francisco. I am of course especially concerned about displacement of long-term renters from District 8, which has had the second highest level of no-fault evictions of any district in San Francisco.

With regard to market rate housing, I believe that it is too easy to build extremely large single family homes in San Francisco and too hard to build multi-unit small and medium sized apartment buildings. During my time in office, I have passed laws to constrain the development of “monster homes” in District 8 and to create a path to allow development of up to four units on any RH-zoned parcel in San Francisco and up to six units on corner lots. I am disappointed that the Mayor vetoed my fourplex legislation, but I plan to continue trying. We will need to make many and far bolder moves than “fourplex” if San Francisco is to meet the 82,000 new units needed to meet our Regional Housing Needs Allocation for the next Housing Element cycle.

With respect to subsidized affordable housing, I have supported and will continue to support additional dedicated revenue for the acquisition, preservation and development of regulated affordable housing. In fact I think I have campaigned for every affordable housing measure that has appeared on a San Francisco ballot in the last twenty years. I also used District add-back dollars to pay for a study of affordable housing needs in District 8, and will continue to try to identify sites and funding for affordable housing preservation and development in the District.

And with respect to protecting tenants at risk of displacement, California should repeal or at least substantially reform the Ellis Act, and at the local level we need to ensure continued funding for tenant right to counsel.

How will you address the issues around homelessness? *

No issue has occupied more of my time and attention over the last four years than our City’s homelessness crisis, and especially the mental health and addiction challenges experienced by

many of our unhoused residents. I have strongly supported and will continue to fight for additional resources to end homelessness for as many people as we can. I will also continue to push for immediate exits from the street for any unsheltered person willing and able to accept an exit and for a more assertive response (through case management where possible, conservatorship where necessary) and appropriate placements for people who need higher levels of care.

I worked to open a Hummingbird Navigation Center in my district (which to my regret was re-districted out during this year's redistricting process). I also worked to open a safe sleep site at Everett Middle School during the worst days of the pandemic. I have tried without success to get the City to purchase either of two hotels on Market Street for use as housing for homeless youth (the owner was not interested in selling).

What do you think the problems are with transportation? How will you address them? What are your views on free and accessible public transit, and how can the Board of Supervisors work to achieve that? *

We have so many problems with public transportation in San Francisco; here are a few that are most pressing for me:

1. Muni is structurally underfunded and in need of additional dedicated and ongoing operating revenue.
2. Muni suffers from significant staffing shortages that severely impact reliability.
3. Voter support for Muni is not as great as for other revenue priorities (see e.g., failure of 2016 transportation sales tax campaign, failure of June Muni bond).
4. Public transportation in the Bay Area generally suffers from some of the same safety and quality of life issues that impact other public spaces.
5. Inability to quickly and reliably get around the City using public transportation discourages people with other options from using public transit.
6. Prior to the pandemic, the rise of rideshare services was contributing significantly to traffic congestion, degrading public transit service, while also decimating the traditional taxicab industry.

In 2019, I worked with the Mayor and then-Chair of the TA Aaron Peskin to convene the Transit Reliability Working Group, which brought together local stakeholders and national transit experts to identify barriers to Muni service delivery and strategize ways to overcome these challenges. While the Covid-19 pandemic has delayed the implementation of the Group's findings, they do provide a blueprint for progress at Muni.

As Chair of the TA and someone who cares a lot about transit, I have worked and will continue to work to identify additional revenue to support the MTA and other transit providers. I campaigned and raised campaign contributions for the ill-fated Muni bond. My top electoral

priority for this year (aside from my re-election) is renewal of the Transportation Authority's half cent sales tax. This sales tax helps fund approximately a hundred million dollars of investment in local and regional transportation systems that pass through San Francisco and will help fund our local match to draw down billions of dollars in Federal funding for downtown extension of Caltrain and eventually High Speed Rail into the transit center in the basement of the Salesforce Tower. Going forward, however, I hope that we can identify electorally-viable revenue measures to support expanded Muni service, as well as fare reduction.

What do you think the problems are with public safety? How will you address them, especially regarding policing, alternatives to law enforcement, and non-911 response teams? *

San Francisco has many public safety challenges, including:

1. Homicide and other violent crime disproportionately impacting communities of color;
2. Anti-AAPI hate violence;
3. Outrageously high levels of property crime, which during the pandemic extended into serial (and sometimes repeated) home invasions in neighborhoods not accustomed to high levels of property crime;
4. Significant outdoor drug sales and use that disproportionately impacts low income neighborhoods and makes it hard for community members to feel comfortable in public spaces;
5. Ineffective interventions for serial offenders, ongoing failure to prevent recidivism;
6. Failure to meaningfully address the behavioral health and substance abuse needs of offenders.

I have been a strong supporter of Street Crisis Response Teams (a top recommendation of the 2019 Methamphetamine Task Force that I co-chaired) and other alternatives to overusing police where other people can get the job done better. I also believe, however, that even as we pursue these alternatives, we continue to need police officers, that their work becomes more complicated and time-intensive as we implement necessary policing reforms, and that recruitment and retention of a diverse police force capable of addressing our public safety challenges while building trust in all of San Francisco's neighborhoods is one of the most important things local government needs to do right now.

I have also been a strong supporter of the City pursuing alternatives to incarceration where we can. I voted for the legislation to close Juvenile Hall and to close 850 Bryant. However, I also

believe that we continue to need humane places to involuntarily detain people who have committed serious crimes and/or serial offenders. I have advocated for additional locked and unlocked treatment facilities for people with behavioral health needs, including those in the criminal justice system, and for more effective discharge planning and placements for those leaving jail. I have also been a leading advocate on the Board for the City living up to our Treatment on Demand policy, including for those within the criminal justice system.

What are your thoughts on the SFPD's proposal to expand police and government agency power to monitor private camera feeds in non-emergency situations to arrest and prosecute? *

I supported Supervisor Peskin's legislation to require Board of Supervisors approval of the use of surveillance technology by City departments. I believe that surveillance technology may be appropriately used by SFPD for active investigations provided that protections are built in to prevent surveillance of people and activities who are not the subject of an active investigation and otherwise prevent abuse. Supervisor Peskin has been working hard to strike the right balance, and I am grateful for his efforts.

Which people or corporations have employed you or have paid over \$10k to you or an organization you ran over the past 5 years? How much did you receive? You may link to filings. *

Prior to being elected Supervisor in 2018, I was a Deputy City Attorney with the City of Oakland and received a salary for that work of about \$150K. I also rent out a room in my home for about \$15K a year.

Do you support a SF municipal bank that's in line with the principles of racial, social, economic, and environmental justice, and how will you implement it? *

I support the creation of a SF municipal bank. I know that I have colleagues on the Board who have been working through the options, and I look forward to seeing what they propose.

What have you done to address systemic racism, sexism, economic inequality and discrimination in SF, and how will you address it as supervisor? *

I believe that a strong Labor movement is one of the most effective bulwarks against systemic racism, sexism, economic inequality and discrimination. Prior to joining the Board of Supervisors, I had participated in many Labor actions, including getting arrested on several occasions, and I have continued to try to show up for Labor as a member of the Board. One of the pieces of legislation of which I am proudest is an ordinance I authored, along with President Shamann Walton, to require employers at San Francisco International Airport to provide platinum tier healthcare benefits to airport workers and their spouses and dependents. Airline industry interests sued the City and County of San Francisco over these requirements and in April of 2022, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in our favor.

What are the problems facing SF's public school systems and how do you intend to support their programs? *

SF USD faces many many difficulties including: hiring and retaining teachers and other staff, significant racial disparities in academic outcomes, and declining enrollment. The District has also had significant governance and leadership challenges. The City and County has long contributed to SFUSD from our General Fund, and as a member of the Board I have supported augmenting those transfers using ERAF and other funds. I am a supporter of (and co-sponsored) Supervisor Ronen's proposed charter amendment to provide additional financial support to District schools on this November's ballot.

Should the San Francisco Charter be rewritten, and if so, what changes would you make? *

I think about this a lot, but for the moment I have observations rather than proposals. San Francisco municipal government seems broken to me, and I wonder if it has something to do with the separation of powers principles reflected in its charter. We all understand the benefits of checks and balances in our federal government; the Founders put our system in place to avoid tyranny. They were fearful of too much government and built the federal constitution to avoid that. Separation of powers is far less common, and probably less necessary, at the local level. Most California counties and cities are run by legislative bodies that select a chief administrator to oversee the day-to-day administration of government consistent with the policy directives of the legislative body. San Francisco has a "strong mayor" form of government, but that mayor's efficacy is limited by the built-in, inherent tension between the mayor and a board of supervisors that may not share the mayor's goals, priorities or approach. Most cities and counties also have far fewer members of their legislative bodies, five or seven instead of the eleven supervisors we have, and I do think a smaller board would likely be a more effective one. Lastly, even within the basic framework we have in San Francisco (i.e., strong, independently elected mayor), it strikes me that there could be a benefit in bringing more functions of City government under the purview of the City Administrator. One of the biggest problems I see with City government is the silo-ization of functions across departments; it would be good to find some structural fix (e.g., stronger city administrator, deputy mayors, etc.) to try to break down those walls and have our local city government function as more of a unified whole.

What work have you done to improve our community? *

I have been involved in San Francisco political and civic life for two decades: as a Democratic Club activist, DCCC member since 2006, member of the Building Inspection Commission and Board of Appeals, Board Co-Chair for the LGBT Community Center, Board President of Livable City, City College Board Trustee (where I helped lead the fight to save City College and re-establish local control), and for the last four years as a Supervisor representing District 8 on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

As a District Supervisor, it has been my great honor to work with neighborhood groups and community organizations to improve the areas that I represent and to work to address some of the larger citywide challenges confronting San Francisco, including homelessness (campaigning for Proposition C and authored Shelter for All legislation), mental health and substance abuse (co-chaired 2019 Methamphetamine Task Force, helped push for Street Crisis Response Teams, championed expansion of conservatorship and addition of board, care, and locked beds for people with serious long-term behavioral health needs), housing (sponsored legislation to limit monster homes, allow fourplexes, and sixplexes on corner lots, citywide and helped secure additional funding for affordable housing in District 8 and across the City), transportation (co-convened the Muni Performance Working Group, chairing the County Transportation Authority, working to pass extension of transportation sales tax on November ballot) and environment (sponsored San Francisco's declaration of climate emergency, banned natural gas in new construction, expanded City's water onsite water re-use requirements, and helped secure General Fund support for the Department of the Environment over multiple years).

I would be honored to have your endorsement for my re-election this year.