

## Ida Martinac - East Bay DSA 2022 Electoral Endorsement Questionnaire

### A. You & Your Campaign

1. Briefly tell us your background or biography.

Originally from Croatia (Yugoslavia) I basically grew up a Socialist, and when Bernie showed up on the scene in 2015, I started to feel the Bern, and dropped everything else in my life. Moved to the US in 1990, and it wasn't until Bernie that I started to follow and participate in national politics. Studied International Relations at the City College of NY, came to SF Bay Area to study environmental law, but ended up a single mom before I could get my career up and running. There was also the Feeling the Bern part, whereby I saw getting the Bern elected as our children's ticket to a livable planet, and my individual career suddenly ceased to matter as much. In NYC I had, inter alia, worked at the UNHQ and demonstrated against the Iraq War post 9/11 each and every chance I got. Have devoted my life to civil service, and am currently working as a cog in the California DOJ machine, but am a steward with SEIU Local 1000, and have worked my way onto the bargaining team, which gives me a lot more sense of purpose and fulfillment than my day job.

2. Why are you seeking this office?

Bernie gave us the roadmap to the political revolution, and I am following it. Also, as a single mom and tenant, I have moved way too many times in not that many years, and I want to help other struggling, working families live a healthier, happier, and more fulfilling, sustainable, and climate resilient life in their rentals.

3. What movements are you connected to in your community, and what is your level of involvement with them? What organizations are you involved in or connected with?

I was very actively involved with Our Revolution and East Bay DSA during the 2018 and 2020 electoral cycles. In 2016 everything was more ad hoc and very, very grassroots and organic. Many of the DSA people I used to know have left town unfortunately. The pandemic has dampened socializing and community efforts, and I am working on crawling out of my cave. As for community, I have been struggling with that concept, as Capitalism is the very antithesis of community. I don't have a real sense of real community in the United States but have been seeking to create one of my own. Since I embarked on this campaigning path, since I have put myself out there, I have been witnessing a lot more coming together than before, other than during the Bernie campaigns. Not having been able to grow roots in any home here in the Bay Area due to being priced out of it so often, building a true community has been extremely difficult. I recently joined the Berkeley Tenants' Union, and am running for the Rent Board on a slate endorsed by the Berkeley Tenants' Convention.

4. How do you differ from your opponents in this race?

I am part of the Berkeley Tenants' Slate nominated at the Berkeley Tenants' Convention. There is one landlord candidate, and two other nominally pro-tenant candidates who didn't go through the convention, aren't necessarily Socialists and are more willing to bend in their commitment to tenant rights

5. Why should our Chapter prioritize this campaign and this race?

Because this is an important race for the working class of Berkeley. Without rent stabilization and the protection of tenants' rights there is no life for us in Berkeley. We are all going to get priced out of the city, and a corporate dystopian hellscape is all that will remain. It isn't electoral politics writ large. It's the messy democracy at the very nitty-gritty local level that most directly impacts those of us who live in Berkeley. I am disappointed that my comrades at EBDSA are even questioning this. Also, as far as I know, it's not called Oakland DSA but East Bay DSA, so some of the resources need to be expended on comrades who live in Berkeley and other places in the East Bay that aren't Oakland. I have been paying my dues monthly for years now, and hope that some of those dues will be spent in places other than Oakland.

6. From which other organizations and individuals are you seeking endorsements in this campaign? Who has already endorsed you?

I have received endorsements from the following diverse group of Berkeley public officials:

Ben Bartlett	Berkeley City Councilmember, District 3
Kate Harrison	Berkeley City Councilmember, District 4
Max Anderson	Former Berkeley City Councilmember
Leah Simon-Weisberg	Chair, Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board
Soli Alpert	Vice-Chair, Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board
John Selawsky	Rent Board Commissioner; BOLT Commissioner; Former President Berkeley School Board
James Chang	Rent Board Commissioner
Xavier Johnson	Rent Board Commissioner
Andy Kelley	Rent Board Commissioner
Paola Laverde	Rent Board Commissioner
Dominique Walker	Rent Board Commissioner
Richard Illgen	Former Rent Board Commissioner
Judy Ann Alberti	Former Rent Board Commissioner

J. George Lippman	Chair, Peace and Justice Commission; Commissioner, Human Welfare and Community Action Commission
Nathan Mizell	Vice Chair, Police Accountability Board
Alexandria Rodriguez	Commissioner, Housing Advisory Commission; Commissioner, Berkeley Housing Authority
Alfred Twu	Berkeley Planning Commissioner
Rafael Botello	Berkeley Commission on Labor Commissioner
Hector Malvido	Co-Chair, Latinos Unidos de Berkeley
Cecilia Lunaparra	President, Cal Berkeley Democrats

as well as Former Mayor Gus Newport, former Rent Board Commissioner Paul Hogarth, BART Board Director Lateefah Simon, AC Transit Board Director Jovanka Beckles, Former Berkeley Maternal Child Health Director and Founder of Healthy Black Families Dr. Vicki Alexander, MD., Civil Rights Attorney Osha Newman, the Berkeley Tenants Union, Berkeley Citizens Action, Friends of Adeline, the Berkeley Progressive Alliance, SEIU 1021, the Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club, and SEIU Local 1000 District Labor Council 744.

Our slate is seeking several other endorsements, such as the Sierra Club, Berkeley Neighborhood Council, Our Revolution East Bay, other labor unions, and the like.

7. Are you registered to vote with a party affiliation? Which party? Will that be the same when you run for office?

I am now registered Dem.

## **B. DSA and Democratic Socialism**

8. Are you a socialist? If not, why not? If so, what does being a socialist mean to you?

Yes, see above. I was born as Socialist and grew up steeped in the belief that sharing is caring and that Religion is opiate for the masses, inter alia. And a few others I won't put down in writing.

9. Are you willing to run for office publicly as a socialist?

Absolutely.

10. Are you a member of DSA? If not, would you join if you receive the DSA endorsement?

Yes, I joined the night Jovanka won the jungle primary along with Buffy.

11. Have you been active in DSA? In what capacity?

As mentioned above, I was actively involved with the electoral committee, and provided voter education strategy for the 2020 Presidential Primary.

12. Why are you seeking East Bay DSA's endorsement?

Because I am a Socialist, and a member of the EBDSA, and because I seek to further the goals of socialized housing we all believe in, to the extent possible in the very limited role I would have as a Rent Stabilization Board Commissioner.

13. Will you publicize EBDSA's endorsement?

Of course.

14. Will you be willing to run with other DSA-endorsed candidates as a slate?

I am already on a slate that was nominated to run for the Rent Board by the 2022 Berkeley Tenant Convention, of which EBDSA was a co-sponsoring partner.

15. Are you open to working with DSA when developing your platform?

As stated previously in the supplemental questionnaire preceding the Berkeley Tenant Convention, yes, I am. I will keep my communication channels wide open to my smart comrades at EBDSA.

16. Will you allow the EBDSA Electoral Committee to create campaign materials to distribute during its work on your campaign?

I would not only allow it; I would be thrilled. But we won't be able to coordinate, as you know.

17. EBDSA has a large and active volunteer base. Will you support EBDSA training our own volunteers, running our own canvasses, and campaigning openly as DSA members?

Please!

18. Will you allow EBDSA to collaborate with you on your field plan and program?

To the extent we wouldn't be running afoul of the California Elections Code, sure.

19. Will you allow EBDSA to keep copies of all data we collect through voter contact?

Naturally. It's EBDSA's data.

20. In past campaigns, EBDSA has had teams of member-organizers who work directly with campaign staff on areas such as field, communications, fundraising, data, and legal compliance. Will you agree to this arrangement and guarantee that your staff will build direct relationships with members of our campaign team?

Yes, to the extent permitted by law.

21. DSA ran an independent expenditure campaign in support of Bernie Sanders in the 2020 Democratic presidential primary. Who did you support in the 2016 and 2020 primaries? How did that support manifest?

Bernie, of course. I did a lot on social media, knocked on doors, held house parties, organized marches for visibility in 2016, worked on educating voters on how to vote successfully, even volunteered as a poll worker to ensure voters aren't being bamboozled by the machine. I also donated massively, and traveled to Nevada to knock on doors, and my car died while up there. I couldn't stop talking Bernie to the point of alienating all liberals from my life 😊

22. If EBDSA were to endorse another candidate in this race, would you run against the EBDSA-endorsed candidate?

I should hope for EBDSA endorsing our entire Berkeley Tenants' Convention endorsed slate!

23. If EBDSA does not endorse you, how will you relate to EBDSA?

I hope that eventuality won't transpire. I would continue to be a member and partner to EBDSA.

24. What do you see as the role of EBDSA in your campaign? And how will this campaign contribute to building DSA?

I hope that EBDSA will help our Tenant Slate get elected so that we can work together on crafting tenant policies rooted in Socialist values, to the extent the very limited role of the Berkeley Rent Board permits. Our getting elected as DSA candidates would further strengthen the stature of DSA and hopefully drive more members into the organization.

### **C. Goals of Your Campaign**

25. Who will be running your field program?

TBD

26. What staff and/or consultants have you hired?

The slate is working with the web designer from 2020's Tenant Slate, Timmy Perez, to update our website. We are exploring working with consultant Andre Charles to produce lit and mailers.

27. What voter contact program are you using for your campaign?

Likely PDI

28. What is your fundraising goal, and what is your plan to reach that goal? How much have you raised already?

I have raised enough to receive the \$8K cap in public financing matching funds, so all together about \$9K. I plan to continue raising more funds when I can catch a moment.

29. What is your win number? How many doors will you knock?

About 30,000 votes. Hopefully 15,000 doors, and other canvassing in student areas.

30. Which voters do you need to activate to win? What is your intended constituency?

Tenants, homeowners, and students. Hoping to activate the voters that usually don't vote, as AOC had done in Queens.

31. How much direct voter contact are you personally preparing to do?

As much as needed.

32. Will you pledge not to take any campaign contributions from the following sources?

- a. For-profit corporate entities (corporations, LLCs, etc.)
- a. Political committees formed by for-profit entities
- b. Real estate developers and realtors
- c. For-profit corporate lobbyists
- d. Professional landlords
- e. Law enforcement or prison unions

Not a penny from any of the above

33. Have you ever previously taken money from the sources listed in question #32? If so, please explain.

Never, and am not planning to.

34. Is public financing available in your campaign? If so, are you using it? Have you ever previously turned down public financing?

Yes, and am using it, as explained in my answer to Question No. 28.

35. What is your profession? Is a significant portion of your income or wealth derived from capital holdings (e.g., investments, rent, etc.)?

I have zero capital holdings. I am a Lumpen Proleter. Working as a Legal Secretary for the CA Dept. of Justice.

36. Will you abide by the Campaign Workers Guild's [Fair Campaign Pledge](#)?

Yes.

#### **D. Goals in Office**

37. How do you think political change happens?

By everyday people getting involved and making sacrifices for the greater good.

38. How does the campaign you are planning and the elected position you are considering relate to your theory of change?

Tenants and the working class are inextricably linked. We are one and the same, much of the time. I hope to help raise class consciousness in everything I do, not just in my elected position (should I be elected), but also as an union steward and activist.

39. If elected, what are your top 3 priorities?

- 1) Keeping & expanding rent control
- 2) Protecting tenants' rights
- 3) Helping Berkeley tenants become more climate resilient

40. If elected, you'll be one of a few representatives who refuse corporate donations and support a Democratic Socialist vision for our state. How can a single elected official contribute to bringing radical change to California?

One cannot, but as a movement candidate I have the movement with me, and WE are going to bring radical change to California, step by step, door by door, conversation by conversation, action by action, policy by policy. It doesn't happen overnight. #NotMeUs

41. In a capitalist democracy, politicians are by default accountable to a broad array of interests, constituencies, and donors. How will you instead remain accountable to the interests of the working class as a whole?

That is a very good question, and as I am running in this campaign, I am finding my own voice in the melee. I want to preserve my own voice, and my integrity is extremely important to me, just as it is to Bernie. Bernie, however, knows how to be strategic

without losing his integrity, and I shall strive with every iota of my being to emulate the Bern in that respect.

42. How will you be accountable to the members of DSA once you are in office?

By keeping channels of communication open, by listening, and taking into account the views and suggestions expressed.

43. What would the role of constituent services staff in your district be?

Not sure I understand this question.

44. How would you seek to increase democratic involvement and representation within your district?

The Rent Board holds public meetings.

45. Will you agree to appear periodically at monthly DSA meetings in your district?

Yes.

46. If elected, would you join a Democratic Socialist caucus?

Between my union bargaining and the future Rent Board obligations I will be extremely thin on time, but would definitely collaborate with Housing/Labor/GND caucuses to the extent that I am able to.

47. Do you commit to working in collaboration with other DSA elected officials?

Yes, of course.

48. What do you see as the role of DSA once you are in office? And how will you use your position to contribute to building DSA?

The more of us are elected, the more visibility and strength we gain, and the more members we can attract.

## **E. Issues**

### Environment and Green New Deal

49. What does a "Green New Deal" mean to you? How do you hope to help implement it in office?



Berkeley is very small and cannot implement the New Deal, but I will strive to do what is in my power to draft and work on implementing policies that will help renters become more climate resilient. For example, I would like to find an incentive mechanism for landlords to install solar on their roofs and for tenants to be able to benefit from it. The more distributed generation, the better. I would collaborate with a slew of environmental organizations and agencies to make this happen. This is my passion No. 1.

50. What does a "just transition" for fossil fuel workers and frontline communities mean to you?

It means what Bernie laid out in his GND. The Rent Board has zero jurisdiction in such matters, but to the extent that it does, I would strive to work toward implementing it.

51. Should utility monopolies like PG&E be publicly owned? If not, please explain.

HELL YES!

## Mass Transit

52. How does publicly owned mass transit fit into your vision of a fully realized socialist society? How can it help us transition to that society?

I am from Europe via NYC. Need I say more?

53. What role should transit workers and riders play in decision-making within public transit agencies? How can we move toward the governance model you envision?

I don't think the Rent Board has any jurisdiction in these matters, but to the extent the wires cross, for example the building of affordable housing near transit corridors, I would work with the various stakeholders to achieve the most sustainable, both environmentally and socio-economically, community.

54. Do you support having a robust transit system with extensive and low- or no-cost bus service — including service connecting working-class neighborhoods without running through business or financial centers? If not, please explain.

YES! I am frankly appalled by how deficient the public transit system here is in comparison to NYC.

## Labor

55. Are you a member or elected leader of a union? Have you ever been? Have you ever walked a picket line? Please provide specifics.

Yes, I am moreover an union steward with SEIU Local 1000 and am on the bargaining team.

56. What do you see as the role of the labor movement in political change?

Absolutely crucial. Of course. This question deserves a much longer answer, but for the purpose of ascertaining whether I deserve to be endorsed by my comrades, yes, organized and agitated labor is the last bulwark between fascist corporate dystopia and a livable life.

57. What support, specifically, do you plan to give as an elected official and public figure to workers in your district who are organizing a union or negotiating a contract?

Our slate will be responsive to requests by labor to use our titles as Rent Board Commissioners to show support for industrial actions if elected. We have and will support calls by Berkeley workers to the Council to come to the table with fair, reasonable proposals that don't nickel and dime the union. Soli Alpert and I are union stewards with SEIU Local 1021 and Local 1000 respectively, and all of us support labor actions in our communities and nationally.

### Healthcare

58. Do you support Medicare for All in California? Will you pledge to vote for AB 1400 (if relevant)? If not, why not?

I am not running for the state Assembly, but if I were, absolutely I would vote for, and not only vote for but organize for it.

### BDS and Palestine Solidarity

59. Do you support the Palestinian call for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) to pressure Israel until it complies with international law by ending the occupation, instituting equal rights for its Palestinian citizens and respecting Palestinian refugees' right to return? If not, please explain.

Yes.

### Prison & Police Abolition

60. Do you commit to reducing budgets for police, prisons, and other carceral institutions and reallocating that money to social services and alternative programs

for building community safety (like violence interrupters and mental health crisis responders)? If not, why not? If so, talk specifically about where this money should go.

This is not in the Rent Board's jurisdiction.

61. What concrete steps will you take in office to end mass incarceration and decrease the power of the police?

Not in the Rent Board's jurisdiction.

### Housing

62. YIMBYs ("Yes in My Back Yard") claim that overregulation is the primary cause of the housing crisis, and loosening regulation to allow more housing to be built is sufficient to make housing affordable. Do you agree or disagree? What do you think are the main contributing factors to the housing affordability crisis?

Good old greed. That's it. While we need more housing, that's just one of many solutions, the Vacancy Tax proposed by Councilwoman Harrison being another important element in the mix. We cannot keep building without taking into consideration the pressures of climate change, drought specifically, and we have to expand rent control to make this enlarged housing pool accessible to the working class.

63. Will you support all legislation that requires building owners to negotiate with tenant unions? What other measures will you support that would even the playing field between tenants and landlords? Is there any expansion of tenants' rights that you would not support?

Yes. At the moment TOPA and the Vacancy Tax are the measures our slate is supporting, and will campaign for, and we hope to expand tenants' rights and rent control. Not expansions I wouldn't support I can think of.

64. Do you pledge to oppose any upzoning proposal without sufficient affordability requirements, such that it is opposed by grassroots anti-gentrification organizations? Do you pledge to support proposals by such groups to fix new and existing laws which fail to include such requirements?

Yes, of course.

### Taxation

65. How do you propose to change our budget and tax structure (on the federal, state, or municipal level, as relevant) to better fund public services and redistribute wealth?

Not in the Rent Board's jurisdiction but if I could I would distribute a hefty portion of policing funds to a slew of organizations that provide social services; would build socialized housing for the unhoused (and the working class in general) along with services to help them heal and lead their life with human dignity; and would devote a hefty sum to strengthening our climate resilience. These are not all of my wish list items, but are on top of the list.