



2024 PRIMARY ELECTION VOTER GUIDE!



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About the DSA-LA 2024 Primary Voter Guide

Here it is! Your 2024 DSA-LA Primary Voter Guide. Now you may have noticed we've written... a lot for many of these races. As socialists in Los Angeles, we believe it's important to contextualize these races: Who are these candidates and how did they build power? What are the dynamics of the races they're running in? Will their priorities build socialism, or at least help Los Angeles' working class? We hope this guide will function as an educational tool to understand what it takes to bring working class power to the County, as well as help you fill out your ballot.



First of all: DSA-LA has proudly endorsed four candidates this primary election! Ysabel Jurado for Los Angeles City Council District 14, **Nithya Raman** for Los Angeles City Council District 4, **Kahllid Al-Alim** for LAUSD Board District 1, and **Karla Griego** for LAUSD Board District 5.

We require a membership vote to endorse a candidate, and an endorsement includes a commitment for the chapter to devote time and money to that campaign. **Otherwise, candidates named in the guide are recommendations: the candidate might not call themselves or be a socialist, but there are planks of their platform we believe will materially benefit the working class of Los Angeles** (especially in comparison to other candidates in their race). All of this research is done and designed by DSA-LA volunteer member labor, and we strive to produce detailed, educational analysis about the LA electoral landscape.

We're also excited to announce, for the first time ever, we've collabed with our statewide org [California DSA](#) to provide you even more insight!

Volunteer members from up and down the state put in the time to research every statewide, state legislature, and federal recommendation. The recommendations we include in this guide for these races come from the CA-DSA team. [If you know folks across the state who need help, California DSA has a full voter guide!](#)



You might also notice that a surprising number of these races are either literally or practically uncontested and that many of the candidates seem bland, hazily defined, and mildly corrupt. This is a consequence of our big-money political system that rewards machine candidates and incumbents, drastically hampering the democratic process. We've mostly chosen not to make recommendations in races where an incumbent is running against right-wing challengers and is expected to coast. **Many of these represent “lesser evil” calculations, and in some cases, there simply isn’t anyone to vote for.**

We've got to keep building power to take on these forces of capitalism, and we must keep on organizing to make sure these candidates have viable challengers in the future. That being said, there are some races with candidates extremely worth voting for, and in many down ballot votes, your vote and the votes of your friends and family can make a big difference in our collective lives.

Need help voting?

You can look up your district here: <http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/>

And find a list of voting centers here: <https://locator.lavote.gov/locations/>

If you'd like to find out more about any of these candidates or races, email us at electoralpolitics@dsa-la.org, and we can either answer your questions, point you towards more information, or help you learn how to do this research yourself.

Join DSA today!

Elections are one of the primary avenues through which working people experience politics, but not the only one. Our economy must be built democratically, by and for working people, not by billionaires for profit. And we know our economic system is rooted in white supremacy and the capitalist class depends on racism to divide and oppress the working class. All across the country, DSA is fighting for a stronger labor movement, a Green New Deal, housing and healthcare as human rights, and more.

A better world is possible, but not guaranteed. **[Join or recommit to DSA today to build working class power — together!](#)**

PLEASE NOTE: This is not the final version of this document, as we are still working with California DSA for some recommendations. Please hold tight, sign up at dsa.la/gotv and we will update you when this guide is updated!

Los Angeles City

Measure HLA (City Mobility Plan Street Improvement)

2023 was the most dangerous year on record for car violence and pedestrian fatalities in Los Angeles, with car deaths outnumbering murders. 2023 was also the hottest year on record—the climate crisis is here. But none of this should be a surprise to us or to the people running the city. In fact, there have been plans in place since 2015 to address the lack of transit and pedestrian improvements (remember when Garcetti pledged to have zero pedestrian deaths by 2025?), but city officials have completely failed to follow their own planning documents and invest in green and safe transit and mobility. In LA City's Transportation and Street departments, projects to advance public transit and green mobility have been marginalized, underfunded, and ignored. The mandate in Measure HLA, if passed, will actually force the LA Department of Transportation to incorporate these components into its day-to-day flow of planning, upkeep, and construction.

As socialists, we see that Los Angeles's experiment in car dependency has failed. The Arroyo Seco Parkway was the first freeway in the country 85 years ago, but now Los Angeles has the worst air quality in the country, and transportation is the largest sector of emissions driving the climate crisis. Studies consistently show that widening streets and highways actually increases traffic congestion, but California transportation officials continue to invest in car dependency instead of clean transportation and safe walking and biking. Socialist politicians like Anne Hidalgo in Paris have shown in the past decade that municipal governments can rapidly transform cities away from traffic hell toward mobility and transit, and that building walkable, livable cities is a popular reform. In Los Angeles, our politicians might need to be forced to invest in people over cars.

However, Measure HLA's enforcement mechanism is a private right of action—a fundamentally conservative device that structurally privileges the needs of wealthier people with easy access to legal representation. Any resident will essentially be able to sue the city if it falls behind in its compliance with the ordinance. This is a bad precedent for how to ensure universal access to public goods. It's not hard to imagine this measure heightening entrenched inequality in street safety for marginalized and disinvested neighborhoods as departments will not only be responding to which councilmembers can raise the biggest stink, but to which neighborhoods are most likely to get litigious if the city cuts corners in improving streets. Both of these will favor the wealthier parts of LA and the impacts of this will significantly disrupt the pipeline of LA City street projects for years, including good ones, while departments learn a new way of operating. It will be doubly disruptive because of how critically understaffed LA's transportation

departments are, especially clean transportation job roles, in the fallout of the billion dollar LAPD raise and austerity for every other department. In the short-medium term, streets may get worse before they get better.

Measure HLA does not inherently democratize questions of public investment and it does not address LA's appalling lack of long-term infrastructure planning. Planning decisions will remain ad-hoc and restricted to a small club of City decisionmakers until more systematic interventions are made. However, we desperately need transparency into the implementation of the city's Mobility Plan and enforcement to make it happen. Because at the current rate, we won't have safe streets for 160 years. By that point, we may not even have a city to be furious at for disregarding its people. Measure HLA may not be perfect, but it's the only thing we've got. **We recommend voting yes on Measure HLA.**

City Council - District 2

Out of all the LA City Council races, Council District 2 is the only one without an incumbent running for re-election, as current Councilmember Paul Krekorian is termed out. The field to replace him is crowded and runs the gamut of experience and qualifications, but more on that in a bit. District 2 is a unique place in the valley that has tended to lean pretty progressive in the larger races - Bernie heavily won the area in the 2020 Presidential Primary and it was one of the only strong non-Caruso holdouts in the San Fernando Valley where Gina Viola also competed formidably in the Mayoral Primary. But when it comes to its local council representatives, the status-quo-machine-backed moderates sleepwalk through their races and go on to serve their full terms.

Those running to replace Krekorian include Adrin Nazarian, former Chief of Staff to Krekorian when he was in the Assembly and current AD46 Assemblymember; Manuel (Manny) Gonez, husband to Kelly Gonez, charter school-backed LAUSD Board Member; Sam Kbushyan, political lobbyist; followed by DSA-LA member, Jillian Burgos, and mental health specialist, Jon-Paul Bird.

Nazarian, the likely handpicked successor, lives in the shadow of Paul Krekorian and feels like a real life stand-in of Tom Wambsgans from *Succession*. Sure, he ends up as CEO, but only because he's a spineless yes-man willing to do anything to attain power (spoiler). He represents 4 more years of pro-cop and pro-landlord policy. Meanwhile Gonez and Kbushyan are running on the language of progressive candidates, but probably only because their consultants told them it will resonate with the district.

On the surface, Kbushtyan is an interesting concept (also a former challenger to Mitch O'Farrell back in 2013). His platform hits the right notes about homelessness and generally prioritizing people over criminalization, and his background as a former organizer with SEIU 2015 suggests that he could be aligned with our positions. The problem we're facing is that it's hard to know how much of his platform he actually believes and how much is just for show. Especially when he puts out mailers calling for more policing and enforcement of 41.18 zones. It feels like there's more to Kbushtyan that isn't immediately apparent. There are bits of evidence that suggest closer ties to establishment politics such as his role in Karen Bass' Mayoral transition team, running his own lobbying firm SKG (Sam Kbushtyan Group), and also being connected to former Bernie Sanders consultant, Chuck Rocha. A far cry from positioning himself as an outsider looking to fight corrupt status quo politics. With Gonez, it's much clearer who you'll get, maybe slightly more to the left of Krekorian on some issues like the environment and transportation, but still very much on the center-right of council given the criminalization dog whistles that ring throughout his platform.

Jillian Burgos is a DSA-LA member running on an actual leftist platform that centers the working class in her priorities and is what District 2 deserves. The Valley needs a representative in council that will uplift a long neglected part of Los Angeles and actually look to protect its residents, housed and unhoused, by expanding all forms of transit and pro-tenant protections while diverting failed criminalization policies towards holistic, service-based approaches. Though the Chapter ultimately did not endorse her campaign, it wasn't for a lack of Jillian's values. She is running in a crowded race that has collectively fundraised the most out of all the other district elections at the time of writing, and is struggling to keep up with the money.

It's hard to predict who will emerge from the Primary, but perhaps with all of the other candidates fighting for the same pool of voters, Jillian can find an opening to crack the top two and move onto the General election in November. **We whole-heartedly recommend Jillian Burgos for City Council District 2.**

City Council - District 4

Nithya Raman changed LA politics when she was elected over incumbent David Ryu in 2020. An urban planner by trade, she proved that Angelenos want progressive visionaries, not centrists bought by cops and developers. Hugo Soto-Martínez has said that he would not have run if Nithya hadn't proven that it was possible for our movement

to win. In just one term, she's already infuriated the right-wing establishment by securing landmark tenant and immigrant rights protections, transferring resources away from LAPD toward unarmed response, and bringing homeless services (not sweeps) to her district.

With one potential exception, this looks to be a two horse race. Chances are good that this election could be settled in March. *[In Los Angeles, if a candidate receives more than 50% of the vote in a primary, they win. It doesn't go on to November.]* The exception to this two-horse race is Levon "Lev" Baronian. He's a Republican, former NASA engineer whose platform ranges from good (electric, trackless trolleys) to bad (increasing police funding to make more arrests), with gradations in between. But looking closer at his social media, we start to get crypto-fascist vibes. The language of a "cleaner and safer Los Angeles" with the focus on "petty crime spreading like wildfire" and unhoused folks being "dependent on handouts" is particularly telling. But his lack of significant funding and other grassroots or institutional support means he is unlikely to have much reach.

The right wing of Los Angeles has solidified support and incredible funding behind challenger Ethan Weaver, a former prosecutor who wants to drag the district back toward its previous status quo of over-policing, sweeps, and developer handouts. CD4 was "put in a blender and chopped up left and right" during 2022's rigged redistricting process in order to separate Nithya from much of the renter base that voted for her in 2020. Now, powerful forces are now spending big to get her out.

Nearly a million dollars has been raised between Weaver and the PACs backing his play and opposing Nithya. No other councilmember has this much money in a race to oppose them. This includes \$400,000 alone from slumlord company Douglas Emmett and over \$160,000 from the local cop union. Other significant backers include the firefighters union (*Don't ask... but basically their reactionary leadership is still mad at Nithya over vaccine mandates, among other things*), as well as new-player-in-town "Thrive" a Rick Caruso-backed venture that's giving "Make Los Angeles Great Again".

Despite her visionary work to champion much of DSA-LA's Democratic Socialist Program, Nithya has frustrated DSA members. A recent chapter vote led to her being censured over her application for and acceptance of an endorsement from "Democrats for Israel LA", a Zionist organization that promotes an anti-Arab, anti-ceasefire message on social media. At the same time, she has been vocal in her support for a ceasefire, and members still voted to maintain our own endorsement.

Outside of our socialist circles, this race is being treated as a referendum on democratic socialist politics and policies. If Nithya is held to a single term, it will be touted as proof

that voters have rejected DSA's vision for our city. But if we win, we prove that our victory in CD4 wasn't just an early-COVID-era flash in the pan. We have the chance to prove that DSA politics are here to stay. **DSA-LA proudly endorses Nithya Raman for Los Angeles City Council District 4**

City Council - District 6

The candidates running in LA City Council District 6 are a David Lynchian nightmare. Ely De La Cruz Ayao is a Republican who wants to create a "Homeless Response LAPD Unit" and pay them overtime out of Council funds. He is also most definitely (and probably unintentionally) violating campaign finance laws by taking donations through Venmo, Zelle, and PayPal. Then there's Carmenlina Minasova whose platform includes criminalizing "any persons or organizations using direct evidence like videos or other ways" [this is the exact text, we do not understand this either]. Both of their campaign websites look like they belong on the early dial-up days of the internet.

Finally there's Imelda Padilla, incumbent from the Special Election in early 2023 when Nury Martinez resigned in disgrace after the leaked Fed tapes. During her short time on Council, Padilla has already aligned with the right wing of council against stronger renter protections and in favor of more criminalization policies. She is backed by corporate landlords and corporate commerce. Everything these entities stand for is in direct conflict with working people, and by aligning with them, Padilla is ready to sell out the working class. **We cannot offer a recommendation for this race.**

City Council - District 8

Incumbent Marqueece Harris-Dawson is essentially running unopposed in this race. There's Jahan Epps, capitalist real estate developer who has no discernable platform. Then there's Cliff Smith, a radical Roofers Union worker who has the platform we dream of (\$25 minimum wage and an union, elected civilian police control board, ban LAPD collaboration with ICE), but no shot at winning.

Harris-Dawson has been fairly good on council since the election of Nithya Raman back in 2020 and has been a reliable member of the pro-tenant bloc. He is a key ally on tenants

rights legislation, including helping to pass the expansion of Just Cause evictions to cover non-RSO units and recently in the ongoing effort to reform RSO legislation to lower allowable rent increases. However, Harris-Dawson can be quick to put renters aside to preserve the “small mom-and-pop” landlords, a rhetorical trap that the corporate landlord lobby loves.

To his credit, Harris-Dawson is part of the bloc that votes against any 41.18 designations (motions used to prohibit and criminalize unhoused populations in certain areas). Likewise, he comes from Community Coalition (CoCo), so he understands community organizing, and is someone that can be won over, especially if he has the cover of other council members that allow him to get away with being more progressive. However, he’s not a socialist and certainly not immune to establishment politics. For example, he typically votes in favor of most police-related items such as reallocation of funds, and voted in favor of the massive raises to LAPD last summer. There’s also plenty of real estate and corporate commerce in his campaign donations, which are, you know, bad. **We recommend you vote for Cliff Smith for Council District 8 because he has a socialist platform that LA deserves.**

City Council - District 10

Finally, Council District 10 will get to vote for a council representative! Ever since Mark Ridley-Thomas announced he was stepping down in late 2021 due to bribery charges (which he is now serving prison time for), the district has gone without an actual elected council person and instead has been represented by two separate council-appointees: Herb Wesson in March 2022, followed by Heather Hutt in July 2022, both of whom were selected by then-council president, Nury Martinez. So while Hutt is technically the incumbent in the race, she is ostensibly running as a first-timer. Among her challengers include 57th District Assemblymember Reginald “Reggie” Jones-Sawyer, attorney Grace Yoo, and progressives Aura Vasquez and Pastor Eddie Anderson.

During Hutt’s time on council, she has towed a moderate to slightly-left-of-center line and has sometimes played a role on legislation from DSA-LA’s bloc, such as a resolution to explore and support social housing legislation and a motion to overhaul the Rent Escrow Account Program (REAP), a program that has real power to punish bad landlords. However, she has also consistently voted in favor of 41.18 designations (motions used to prohibit and criminalize unhoused populations in certain areas). She also plays into the rhetoric of “small mom-and-pop” landlords as an excuse to go against more progressive

housing legislation, even a fairly benign motion made by councilmembers Eunisses Hernandez and Hugo Soto-Martínez to exclude utilities in this year's rent increases. It's also worth noting her vote in favor of LAPD's historic raises that are about to bankrupt our city, despite her recognizing that fact while also acknowledging the violent racism that permeates the department in her remarks in council before voting to approve the contract.

Perhaps Hutt's biggest challenger, Assemblymember Reggie Jones Sawyer, who is termed out of the State Legislature and is on the next pre-determined step of his political career to City Council. While he's not the most progressive Assemblymember, he has the endorsements of fellow Assemblymembers Alex Lee, Ash Kalra, and Pilar Schiavo, as well as a long list of unions. His campaign's platform certainly echoes with progressive buzzwords though he manages to avoid mentioning police in his public safety section. On the topic of public safety, Sawyer was the previous chair of the Assembly Public Safety Committee and often towed a line between trying to address the systemic roots of crime with rehabilitation and education while closing private prisons with more moderate police reform. It's easy to imagine Sawyer being an ally to the progressive bloc on council on many issues, but he isn't the candidate we're hoping for.

This election also sees a recurring candidate in CD10 elections, Grace Yoo, returning for another shot having lost twice before in 2015 and 2020. Previously in 2019, Yoo was part of a group that successfully killed a homeless shelter proposal in Koreatown and before that was behind the failed Yes on Measure S campaign in 2017. She's a NIMBY who is more concerned that KTown real estate developers are building apartments that are too tall and could house too many people if they were actually affordable. To Yoo's credit, she has outraised all of the establishment candidates at the time of writing and has earned the endorsements of the East Area Progressive Democrats and Jackie Goldberg. Yet she seems to be squandering the money on way too many consultants, terrible mailers, as well as giving \$1000 away to the person that sends them the best cover of Hall & Oates' "You Make My Dream Come True". No, we aren't joking. This is 100% real.

Rounding out the race are challengers Pastor Eddie Anderson and Aura Vasquez. Vasquez has a background in conservation and a clear emphasis in the environmental justice field. She would be a fierce advocate for policies that build up much needed green infrastructure in under-resourced communities as well as prioritizing demands for a Green New Deal. Likewise, her support of a public bank is particularly heartening to see in her platform. Many of her policies do seem broadly in service of a more progressive district, though many lack specificity, and the vision on policing she has put forward on her website and in the press is concerning, however. She advocates for increased police patrols of neighborhoods and describes increasing police on foot in specific areas as

“preventative.” Furthermore, though Vasquez’s generally progressive platform may feel reassuring, we have some questions about her judgment and certain organizational associations.

The good news is, there’s a tried and true progressive in the race: Pastor Eddie Anderson. Anderson has been endorsed by Eunisses Hernandez and the California chapter of the Working Families Party, and is outspoken in his calls to reimagine public safety as a move away from discriminatory and carceral policies towards an equitable distribution of services and resources. Anderson’s experience as a community organizer at LA Voice, a multi-faith organization that uplifts a progressive agenda, could transition nicely into an elected office that seeks to organize a community alongside the representative. However, his fundraising efforts have been lacking and shows him struggling to keep pace with the rest of the field. **We recommend Eddie Anderson for Council District 10.**

City Council - District 12

Since 2011, Council District 12 has been represented by corrupt right wingers. We’ve got former Councilmember Mitch Englander serving time in federal prison after accepting tens of thousands of dollars in bribes in favor of kickbacks for real estate developers, and the now-councilmember, Englander’s former staffer, City Staffer B... uh we mean John Lee... is currently facing ethics violation charges by the city related to the exact same thing. Also, he’s beloved by the police union and the apartment associations, who are funneling money into his re-election to make sure they keep one of their biggest heroes on council.

The district, which covers West San Fernando Valley, is easily the most conservative bastion in the city of Los Angeles. And yet, it has come so close to having a respectable council representative in 2019 and 2020, where environmental scientist, Loraine Lundquist, narrowly lost the special and regular elections. This is especially impressive given the district was a stronghold for Biden over Bernie in the Valley, and was won easily by Caruso in the last mayoral election.

So maybe there’s a chance it could actually flip this time around in 2024, with Serena Oberstein in the running. She’s definitely not a socialist, but in the face of an unethical incumbent, she has experience on the city Ethics Commission. Her website boasts endorsements from SEIU 121RN and SEIU-UHW, National Union of Healthcare Workers,

and a smattering of Democratic Clubs and local politicians. When it comes to housing and homelessness, Oberstein supports “a comprehensive approach and not an arrest-our-way-out-of-the-problem attitude,” and hiring a homelessness deputy, if elected. However, her public safety platform cites, “putting resources back into the Department that can actually help sustain its long term vision of safer communities.”

Despite her inability to reimagine a care-first public safety, Serena Oberstein would be a significant upgrade from another term of the scandal-plagued, cop- and landlord-loving John Lee. **We recommend you vote for Serena Oberstein for Los Angeles City Council District 12.**

City Council - District 14

Council District 14 is a packed race, filled with a mix of viable candidates and complete write-offs who will be lucky to crack 5% of the vote. DSA-LA membership voted to endorse Ysabel Jurado for CD14. Born and raised to a working class family in Highland Park, Ysabel’s experience as a tenants’ rights attorney protecting her community from eviction is what separates her from the rest of the candidates. As a housing policy advocate, she supports innovative solutions to the Los Angeles housing crisis in a way that puts power back in the hands of working class families. Namely, she is a proponent of decommodifying housing with programs like social housing, community land trusts, and resident-owned housing cooperatives. She supports the introduction of a tenants bill of rights, a vacancy tax, and ensuring the City swiftly implements, and fully funds, a right to counsel program for all residents at risk of becoming unhoused. Such policies can help weaken the stranglehold landlords have on our housing system. CD14 leads the LA in the amount of three day notices being filed against tenants, and in the number of unhoused individuals on the street. The district needs Ysabel’s expertise to move tenant centered policies forward and prevent more individuals and families from falling into homelessness.

Council District 14 has been historically underserved and prone to corrupt representatives given that it includes land coveted by developers. The former city Councilmember, José Huizar, was arrested and indicted on Federal corruption charges in 2020 while in office. He’s now serving 13 years in prison. Taking his place, Kevin de León, was exposed through the leaked LA Fed audio scandal where he made racist comments and helped scheme cutting up districts to maintain political power for him and his friends on council. He’s the last man standing from the tapes, as Gil Cedillo lost to DSA-LA

endorsed Eunisses Hernandez, and Nury Martinez resigned in disgrace. De León is determined to weather the storm of bad press and angry constituents, believing his base of support is rock solid. And he has no qualms with using taxpayer money to pad out his flailing campaign by inserting himself into community events to give the impression that he actually cares.

Sensing de León's weakness, challengers from the CA Democratic establishment, namely Assembly Members Miguel Santiago and Wendy Carrillo, have descended onto the race in hopes of getting access to one of the most powerful municipal seats in the country.

Carrillo's campaign has been wobbling as of late and has struggled to find stable footing in this competitive race, especially after the news surfaced that she was pulled over for drunk driving. She walks an uneasy line, sometimes stumbling, between trying to slur progressive talking points together without having many receipts from her time in the Assembly to prove it. It's hard to tell if there's a path for victory for Carrillo or if she's just coasting under the influence of a poor campaign strategist.

On the other side of the establishment candidates, Santiago poses a difficult hurdle to get over. Labor has almost entirely lined up behind Santiago and his record as a progressive in the Assembly is nearly spotless. Not only has he been a principal co-author and advocate for single-payer healthcare legislation (AB1400 and SB770), he has helped move legislation forward around a public bank, and was a sponsor of AB1482, which expanded statewide rent control. In previous elections, DSA has been able to break off labor support from the unpopular centrist incumbent to propel our wins. That will be less the case with Santiago. However, the dynamics in the Legislature vs. LA City Council are very different and it wouldn't be the first time a progressive Assemblymember came to council and drifted to the center. Additionally, while Santiago has labor behind him, he also carries the support of class enemies in the LA Chamber of Commerce and BizFed. Both of these institutions are notorious for their anti-labor, anti-tenant, anti-environmental positions, oftentimes spending tens of thousands of dollars to defeat progressive causes and candidates.

While Carrillo and Santiago are not quite as villainous as KDL, they are no friends to the working class, they do not share our socialist vision and have no interest in bucking the status quo that has failed so many Angelenos. They have accepted donations from fossil fuel companies, developers, and police unions – a strong indication of how they plan to govern.

Also in this crowded race is Eduardo 'Lalo' Vargas, an outspoken member of the Los Angeles chapter of the Party for Socialism and Liberation. If he ends up making it through

the Primary to November and wins the election, he would be a fantastic addition to City Council. It just doesn't seem likely that will happen. We believe there is a much more viable and experienced socialist candidate in Ysabel Jurado.

With the housing crisis only getting worse in CD14 and the number of unhoused folks increasing drastically can we really afford to settle for "better than KDL"? The good news is we don't have to. **[Vote for Ysabel Jurado, who DSA-LA has proudly endorsed.](#)**

Board of Education - District 1

DSA-LA membership proudly endorses Kahllid Al-Alim for LAUSD Board of Education - District 1. School board races are often overlooked, but it's an important arena where the fight between organized labor and the privatization of public goods is in constant flux. At the moment, UTLA (the United Teachers Los Angeles union) has the backing of the majority of the seven school board members. But with four seats up for grabs this year, the school board is again at risk of being run by charter school advocates who are ok with taxpayer public funds going to privately held schools.

LAUSD Board District 1 encompasses Mid City and several South LA communities including Watts, Baldwin Hills, and Leimert Park. The incumbent for District 1 is George McKenna who has served on the board for 10 years and is retiring. Seven candidates are vying to fill McKenna's seat, including the DSA-endorsed Kahllid Al-Alim, making it the most crowded race of the 2024 LAUSD election.

Kahllid Al-Alim's opponents include Didi Watts, a former classroom teacher and school psychologist who is currently chief of staff at LAUSD Board District 7. Watts's endorsements include former mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Tanya Ortiz Franklin, the current LAUSD board member for District 7 who is not backed by UTLA, and whose campaign funding is currently bankrolled by the charter school industry. It's not clear from Watts's website what her views on charter schools are, but if her campaign donations are any indication, let's just say she's probably not in favor of protecting our public schools from privatizing interests!

Sherlett Newbill was a basketball coach for more than 20 years at Dorsey High School. Although Newbill is endorsed by the UTLA-backed LAUSD Board Member for District 5, Jackie Goldberg, she has accepted the maximum donation from the Los Angeles School Police Foundation and doesn't spell out her views on charter schools on her website.

Kahlid Al-Alim is a member of SEIU 721, which represents more than 95,000 public sector employees—such as those working in hospitals, foster care, and mental health—in Southern California, and is the only candidate for District 1 whose website clearly spells out that he is against the privatization of public schools. Al-Alim has been endorsed by the Association of Raza Educators and by UTLA, who writes that he “contributed significantly to the organizing of parent and community support for our 2019 and 2023 contract campaigns and strikes.” His platform also includes ending the school-to-prison pipeline and securing resources for every student, including unhoused youth. He has served on the LAUSD African American Education Task Force, the LAUSD Parent Advisory Committee, was President of his Neighborhood Council, and is a parent of students currently in LAUSD schools. **Vote for proudly DSA-LA endorsed candidate Kahlid Al-Alim.**

Board of Education - District 3

BOE 3 covers the San Fernando Valley west of the 405 freeway, but also Sherman Oaks and Studio City into North Hollywood, as a treat. Incumbent Scott Schmerelson had a 40-year career as a public school teacher and principal before retiring and joining the LAUSD school board in 2015. He is campaigning on an adequate and equitable funding formula for LA public school students, ensuring that our public school infrastructure is up-to-date and prioritizing public schools over charter school expansion. Schmerelson is endorsed by UTLA and broke school board precedent when he joined teachers on the picket lines in 2019. In 2023, he supported the union in their bargaining for healthcare, ensuring their benefits were retained for both current teachers as well as retirees. He’s been a reliable, albeit not necessarily enthusiastic, advocate for UTLA’s priorities during his terms in office.

The stakes of this race are high, as it dictates the future of the pro-public school bloc on the school board. With the election of DSA-LA endorsed Rocío Rivas in 2022, the current makeup of the LAUSD school board became a 4-3 majority in favor of protecting public schools and stopping further privatization from the charter industry. Three out of four of those majority seats are up for election this year, and if money is any indication in this race, the charter lobby is zeroing in on this race to tip the school board back into their favor, through their candidate, Dan Chang. While he boasts that he is a teacher, he has a background with Green Dot charter schools and the billionaire-driven philanthropy that backs charter schools. With \$500k+ in independent expenditures supporting him, the billionaires and privatizers have their eyes set on this seat to swing the school board back into charter-favorable control. Individual donations also include large out-of-district sums from charter advocates, real estate developers, and as well the New

Majority PAC (which usually donates to California Republicans, but apparently also gives maximum to the charter darlings running in LAUSD this year?? cool.) **Protect our public resources - we recommend you vote for Scott Schmerelson.**

Board of Education - District 5

DSA-LA proudly endorses Karla Griego for LAUSD Board District 5. Board District 5 is one of those oddly shaped districts. It wraps around District 2 to include parts of Northeast LA and parts of Southeast LA. District 5 is currently represented by Jackie Goldberg. Goldberg is a DSA member who has worked in public service for more than four decades and is currently school board president. She is retiring in December 2024.

Griego's opponents are Graciela Ortiz, Victorio Gutierrez, and Fidencio Gallardo. Graciela Ortiz is a former school counselor and is currently an administrator with the LAUSD's Pupil Services department, as well as a Huntington Park council member. Well, technically, she's currently on leave as an administrator and barred from LAUSD school campuses, as she is currently part of a lawsuit that accuses her of negligence in supervising a youth voting organization where an allegation of sexual assault has come up. Her endorsements include the LA School Police Officers Association, and Kelly Gonez, LAUSD District 6 board member whose 2022 reelection campaign received significant donations from pro-charter advocates. Victorio Gutierrez has worked in education for 37 years as a teacher, school dean, and principal. He's an intriguing candidate as he is not seeking any endorsements, but his campaign priorities seem to be low on specifics, not to mention a lack of discussion around the charter school issue. Fidencio Gallardo is the mayor of the City of Bell and is Jackie Goldberg's Education Innovation Deputy. He had run for the District 5 seat in 2018, later dropping out to support Jackie Goldberg's campaign. Goldberg is unsurprisingly endorsing Gallardo in this election. Gallardo's website mentions oversight and accountability for charter schools, but unfortunately stops short of a statement against privatization.

Also winning the endorsement of UTLA (the United Teachers Los Angeles union), Griego is the only candidate for District 5 whose website spells out that she is against the privatization of public schools. She has been a special education teacher for 19 years, is a parent of a current LAUSD student, and has plenty of socialist bonafides to back DSA-LA's endorsement: Griego has been a UTLA North Area leader, chapter chair, and strike leader; supports a green new deal for public schools and a community-run "safe passage" program to help children get to school safely; and backs the community schools model, which includes wraparound social services like food assistance, legal aid, and mental health care. **DSA-LA is proud to endorse Karla Griego.**

Board of Education - District 7

Board District 7 stretches from South LA, through Gardena, Carson, and Lomita, ending in San Pedro and Wilmington. Tanya Ortiz-Franklin won her election in 2020 heavily backed by the charter industry, which has very much defined her term. When the board successfully passed a policy to begin to limit how and where charters can co-locate on LAUSD campuses, Ortiz-Franklin voted “no,” even trying to introduce an amendment to further slow roll this necessary policy. Ortiz-Franklin faces no viable challenger in this race with Lydia Gutierrez, who has reported no fundraising. Despite this, independent expenditures have been pouring in to back Ortiz-Franklin, which okay, wow, look at the 1% throwing their money away. **We cannot offer a recommendation in this race.**

Los Angeles County

District Attorney

The race for Los Angeles County District Attorney might be the most high profile race on the ballot. The DA oversees cases from law enforcement agencies, and decides whether or not to push for criminal charges. We'd say "think of Sam Waterston on Law & Order" but that show is so inaccurate it'd confuse you even more. So let's instead start with this point: there can be no socialist district attorney, because they are collaborating with a policing system that is inherently at odds with a socialist future. We guess there could be a DA that only believed in jury nullification, that'd be fun and kind of wacky, but they'd be recalled before they even took office.

The current DA is George Gascón, who beat the incumbent Jackie Lacey back in 2020. That was only possible because of the historic efforts by Black Lives Matter and other activists across LA that brought urgent attention to Lacey's negligence to respond to the 600 people murdered by police under her watch. They said Jackie Lacey must go, and she did.

Gascón has been an improvement over Lacey - the Los Angeles Times has found that under his tenure, "prosecutions of police officers for excessive force have become more of a focus, and seven people have been exonerated for crimes judges later ruled they did not commit. Gascón's resentencing unit has also had a dramatic impact by shortening the prison terms of people who were sent away for decades as juveniles because they were tried as adults, though some say the program is moving too slowly." He hasn't been perfect, though, with advocacy groups like Stop LAPD Spying being unfairly prosecuted under his watch and failing to prosecute deputies who murdered unarmed teenagers.

The contradiction of this race is that a socialist looks at George Gascón and could go "a progressive DA might be an oxymoron, but hell, he's doing a hell of a lot better than most DAs across the country." To the reactionary mind, however, Gascón is a devil from a black and white Fleischer Studios cartoon, dancing as he opens the prison doors in Hell, releasing every murder and tyrant throughout human history onto the streets of Los Angeles, and handing them a massive lollipop on their way out.

Fox News has convinced the rest of the country that Los Angeles is a constantly burning hellscape. They've also convinced the voters who live here, who could presumably look out their windows and see that there are no riots happening outside their homes every

hour on the hour. But those reactionary voters have money, and boy have they convinced and funded some candidates to run against Gascon to make Los Angeles Great Again. However, they've done a terrible job of coalescing around one candidate, leading to something like a political Three Stooges Syndrome where they all get stuck in the same door frame. Six different candidates, running to the right of Gascón, have all raised more than Gascon's campaign's \$109,000 war chest: Debra Archuletta (\$224,000), John McKinney (\$230,000), Maria Elena Ramirez (\$255,000), Eric Sepatto Siddal (\$394,000), Jonathan Hatami (\$552,000), and Nathan Hochman (\$1,539,000).

We don't need to go into the difference between all those candidates: they all want to return to the Jackie Lacey days: harsher punishments, more people in jail for longer sentences, less police oversight, reintroduce unfair bail policies, and undo Gascón's attempts to positively reform the office. Hopefully they all split the right-wing vote and Gascón can continue his efforts to at least somewhat mitigate harm done by our police.

DSA-LA could never really endorse a district attorney, but we can, and do, recommend you vote for George Gascon and stop our city from backsliding.

Board of Supervisors - District 2

Welcome to the beautiful Los Angeles County Second District, the home of two million Angelenos across Culver City, Marina del Rey, Koreatown, South Bay, Inglewood, Compton, Carson, El Segundo, and much of South Los Angeles. If you're wondering "wait that is so big, how is one politician responsible for all of it," well, welcome to the absurdly structured Los Angeles County Supervisor seats.

Holly Mitchell is running for re-election, after winning the seat in 2020 by beating Herb Wesson Jr. Herb Wesson is extremely corrupt, so that was a good result. Good job, 2020 voters. The Board of Supervisors doesn't have a ton of contentious votes. A former State Senator, she's spoken on the Board about the need to address racial and economic equity in our city, but that's been more rhetoric than legislation up to this point. Notably, after the Board of Supervisors voted on a statement supporting the state of Israel, Mitchell acknowledged the comments in support of Palestine and said that although she would be voting in support of this motion she would introduce another motion in support of de-escalation and providing humanitarian aid for Gaza. As far we can tell, she never did.

Her re-election campaign is notably endorsed by Working Families Party and Isaac Bryan, who are strong progressive voices locally, even if they're not explicitly socialist. She's

talked about her interest in introducing direct payments to Angelenos (a good first step towards universal basic incomes), and her housing policy is oriented towards housing-first options. She has raised the most in this race by far, with about \$180,000 in her war chest. Which isn't exactly a lot compared to other races, but when you go through her opponents, you'll understand that she's not exactly up against heavy hitters.

Daphne D. Bradford's campaign seems entirely oriented towards fighting "the failed policies of DA George Gascon are destroying our communities." Which is notable, as she is not running against George Gascon. She's raised a whopping \$6,448 so far.

Another opponent, Clint D. Carlton, is former director of Homeless and Housing for Councilwoman Traci Park, who, considering her fascist policies towards dealing with our unhoused neighbors, is a massive red flag. Also, we have identified that almost his entire campaign website is AI/Chat GPT generated. We should keep a running count of how many politicians we find who've started using it for their websites.

Mitchell's final opponent is Katrina Williams, is the CEO of a non-profit called Changing the Faces of Homelessness. However, the website for the organization no longer exists, and we couldn't find much about it. There's a chance that she understands the housing crisis better than Mitchell. But she hasn't communicated any of it. And her entire campaign fund is a \$10,000 loan she gave herself.

If the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors is currently a spectrum between "secret Republicans and vaguely progressive," then Holly Mitchell is certainly on the "vaguely progressive side." She's also to the left of all of her primary challengers. **We don't need to recommend Holly Mitchell, she's going to win.** But we certainly don't think any of her opponents are any better.

Board of Supervisors - District 4

We're going to start our analysis of the race by quoting our 2020 voter guide. "LA County's 4th District is massive, probably too massive, stretching from Marina Del Rey down through Diamond Bar. The incumbent Janice Hahn is a relatively generic California liberal, and backed by the entire Democratic coalition of California. Hahn is the scion of a long-ruling dynasty of Los Angeles politics – her father, Kenneth, was on the Board for 40(!) years, and her brother, James, served as city attorney through the 1990s before becoming a one term mayor from 2001-2005 and a judge from 2008-present.."

All of that is still true - her father especially has not changed. Or, at least as far we know.

As we mentioned in our Holly Mitchell evaluation, it is hard to distinguish between the actual politics of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, because it is not a very deliberative body, and really only introduces legislation after they've reached consensus. As far as we can tell, Hahn sits in the center of the board, both politically and literally (she's got the middle seat on the dais). She has spoken out about increasing the size of the Board of Supervisors, and yes, please, for the love of everything, please.

Janice Hahn is now running for her third term. She's also basically endorsed by every Los Angeles County Democrat you can think of. (Don't think about them too much, though, you'll get depressed.) Her re-election campaign has raised over a whopping \$620,000 at the time of writing this entry. Yowza. Compared to Holly Mitchell, however, Hahn faces some more substantial challengers.

Her highest profile opponent is Alex Villanueva. Did you forget that he announced he was running for Board of Supervisor after getting kicked out as County Sheriff? Because we think he did too. While he has raised around \$80,000 this cycle, that pales in comparison to the \$3.2 million he raised for re-election in 2022. He's barely posted on social media posts. He's not making any surreal church commercials. It seems like he's not really putting his heart into it.

He is, however, still evil, and once again, we'll quote a past voter guide. In office, Villanueva "'stopped collaboration' with ICE by making them wait outside the jails while sheriffs bring them inmates, reinstated his buddy and accused abusive stalker to the department, oversaw his sheriff's shooting of over 100 civilians, harassed journalists, halted internal investigations into the rampant and murderous deputy gangs, taken out paid ads targeting individual activists, attacked and then attempted to blackmail the LA Metro department, covered up deputy abuse of inmates immediately following the George Floyd murder, the list goes on and on." To put it delicately, the man can go fuck himself.

Hahn's next best-funded opponent is John Cruikshank, the Trump supporting Republican mayor of Rancho Palos Verdes, who's got about \$75,000 in his campaign warchest. His endorsement page starts with the question of "hey, how'd that steak end up on the menu?" We assume, in this analogy, the steak is a metaphor for John. Because, sadly, John is not a giant anthropomorphic piece of meat running for office. Even sadder, he's not really a progressive or leftist challenger. He's running to the right of Hahn, looking to double down on more police funding, more arrests, dangerous harmful environmental priorities, and... oh god, building a hyperloop?

The final candidate on the ballot is Danté Tremayne Frye, who, despite being on the ballot, has zero presence in the race or on the internet. Seriously, nothing. If you know anything about Mr. Frye, please let us know. If you are Mr. Frye, please reach out. Are you real?

Ultimately, as bad as Villanueva and Cruikshank are, we're going to quote the 2020 voter guide again and say "Hahn is cruising into re-election here. **In a world where she can do better, we're not recommending anyone for this race.**"

Board of Supervisors - District 5

While the Board of Supervisor districts are way too large population-wise, District 5 is also too big geographically. It's 2,785.21 square miles and touches the Ventura, Kern and San Bernardino County lines. It includes 20 cities and 83 unincorporated communities, including San Gabriel, San Fernando, Crescenta, Santa Clarita and the Antelope Valleys. Not getting how big that is? You can drive 90 minutes and 62 miles northwest from Los Feliz to the unincorporated community of Gorman and still be in the fifth district. Now, why are you driving to Gorman? We don't know, we just picked it because it was a funny name. (If you're one of the dozen registered voters in Gorman, we're sorry. But also, hello!)

Anyway, to paraphrase Lrrr from Futurama, why does the fifth district, the largest district, not simply eat the other districts? You can ask Kathryn Barger, who's been in charge of the district since 2016. She's a rare-breed in LA these days: she's openly a Republican. Even people like City Councilmember John Lee have learned to lie and say they're "independent." Even worse, she's one of those Republicans that liberals absolutely love. Establishment Democrats love a sensible Republican who can "reach across the aisle to get things done." She also has had a stranglehold on the district: since 2016, she has won her two head-to-head elections with almost 60% of the vote.. Her attempt at a third and final term won't be as easy, and she's fundraised almost \$1.2 million to fight off some legitimate challengers.

The next highest fundraiser in the district is Democratic Assemblymember Chris Holden, who's raised over a million dollars so far. That's more than the fundraising total of all the other candidates in the Supervisorial District 2 and Board District 4 races combined. Holden has a long resume, having served as the Mayor of Pasadena before getting elected to the California State Assembly in 2012, where he was Majority Leader from 2014 to 2016. He defines himself as a progressive – or at least "pursuing progressive

solutions", whatever that means. He takes credit for Pasadena enacting its first living wage ordinance, which you know what, that's a good thing to take credit for. He also is endorsed by basically every Los Angeles area assembly member you can think of, including local progressives like Laura Friedman and Isaac Bryan and DSA member Alex Lee. He is also, we cannot stress this enough, extremely tall.

But you do not have to compromise your values and simply vote for "the progressive solutions" pursuer. You can, and should, vote for an incredible socialist running for Supervisor, Konstantine Anthony, a long time committed DSA-LA member and former-Mayor of Burbank. He is a constant presence at DSA-LA meetings and events, rallies, and protests. He has called for a ceasefire in Gaza (albeit after a misguided endorsement, and then un-endorsement of Adam Schiff), and is an outspoken advocate against the displacement of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh. As a SAG-AFTRA member, he did everything he could to fight for Hollywood workers on strike in 2023, rightfully earning the title of Mayor of Honk City. He is committed to tenant organizing, a Green New Deal, fare-free transit, childcare for all, increasing the minimum wage to \$18 an hour, really, everything a socialist should support. Our chapter is lucky to have him as a local member, and we hope you're lucky enough to have him on your ballot. **We recommend voting for Konstantine!**

Superior Court Justices

Look: voting for judges has mostly been a complete mess. Voters have no meaningful way to evaluate which candidates are good or bad, seats frequently go uncontested, and the people who get elected are typically well-off prosecutors who've spent their careers putting poorer working-class plaintiffs in jail for minor offenses. In general, we do what research we can to find judicial candidates who aren't ghoulish prosecutors.

In a rare development, however, a group of three public defenders are running together in a slate, calling themselves "Defenders of Justice," another progressive slate for judges after the mixed success of the 2022 election slate. Endorsed by DSA-LA elected Eunisses Hernandez, their platform prioritizes care over punishment and opposes mass incarceration. Electing progressive judges won't fix our ultimately broken judicial system, but it sure would help a lot of people to have these candidates overseeing their case instead of the ghouls who built their careers throwing people in jail.

We recommend voting for George Turner for Office 39, Erika Wiley for Office 48, and La Shae Henderson for Office 97

Also of note are two additional public defenders running: **Kim Repecka is running for Office 124** and **Rhonda Haymon for Office 12**. The incumbent in Repecka's race has been publicly admonished by the Commission on Judicial Performance.

Glendale City Council

Glendale has a city council-manager style of municipal government, where five council members are elected for basically part-time jobs, while the city manager's office oversees much of the direction of the city's programs. The city council, however, does appoint the city manager. Glendale also doesn't have council districts, so you will be choosing up to three people for at-large seats on your ballot here, even though Glendale has a similar population size as Salt Lake City. After running in 2022, Karen Kwak is running for council again. Karen is an active organizer with the Glendale tenant's union, and is one of two renters running in this election. As a city with 67% renters, the majority of whom are rent burdened, Karen will be a vital voice on city council to advocate for the working class, on a council where issues from renters often go unheard. **We recommend voting for Karen Kwak.**

Glendale School Board

Glendale has become a flashpoint for the nationwide fascist campaign to harass teachers, kids, and parents in the name of stopping racially just and gender-inclusive instruction and policy. Teachers unions have been at the forefront of the fightback, supporting recalls and using their contracts to make their districts safer for trans students - efforts that we can support through DSA's 2023 National Convention resolutions to focus on school boards and setting up a Trans Rights and Bodily Autonomy Campaign.

The Glendale Teachers Association has endorsed Beverly Hills Teacher Association leader Telly Tse in Area A and longtime PTA leader Neda Farid in Area E. While neither are socialists, both are committed to strong and safe schools for all children and rejecting right-wing transphobic attacks with a united front of parents, teachers, and neighbors. Here, we have a unique opportunity to uplift trans rights, defend union workers, and

support a broad coalition against right-wing hate all at the same time. **That's we're recommending you vote for Telly Tse and Neda Farid.**

California State

Proposition 1 (Behavioral Health Services Program and Bond Measure)

Proponents of Proposition 1 argue that its passage would provide the funds to expand California's lacking infrastructure around mental health and substance abuse care. The measure has two main components: the first part would fund a \$6.4 billion bond to create new treatment beds and permanent supportive housing across the state. The second part would mandate changes to County level policies, with a focus on directing dollars toward the long term homeless population.

On its face, a measure that provides more resources for treatment services seems like something worth supporting. However, a closer look at the proposition raises red flags about its ability to make a meaningful dent on homelessness or our State's lack of treatment options for mental health and substance abuse. Opponents point out that in 2004, voters passed the Mental Health Services Act, which dedicated funds for community based mental health services. The passage of Proposition 1 would actually redirect nearly a third of those funds, harming the already scarce ecosystem of care. Opponents also critique the 'one size fits all' approach for Counties across the State, without consideration of the drastically different contexts and needs.

Additionally, a last minute amendment to the measure now allows for funds to be spent on involuntary treatment. This is an archaic practice resulting in harmful outcomes and elevated suicide risk for patients. To truly achieve a system that provides for the people of our state, we have to reject the idea that carceral policies are the only tools that will move folks into services. It's in these talking points where we see the right wing getting a foothold in the wider discourse around homelessness and end up directing the conversation back to the same failed systems that dig us deeper into the hole. **Vote No on Proposition 1.**

25th State Senate District

Monterey Park City Councilmember Yvonne Yiu is second-time self-funding vanity candidate relying on an advertisement blitz that's long on money (\$3 million) and short on truth, who lost a race for Controller in 2022 running to the right of the eventually winner (Malia Cohen) and who thinks the same strategy might work this time. Yiu, a former Republican, changed her registration to run for office in 2022, and has maintained an obfuscatory and inconsistent political identity to secure support.

Yiu previously worked in the banking and finance sector and was CEO of an investment company, Key West. That company was censured and fined by the Finance Industry Regulator Authority, and their investment advisor certificate was revoked because she was putting investor funds in to her husband's real estate fund. Since then she's been spending her wealth running for office. Her stances against abortion, failure to show up for the Monterey Park mass shooting and inability to respond to environmental issues have raised the concerns of residents.

Yiu is trying to reheat old politics—through red-baiting, cop-hugging, and big money, she hopes to organize a conservative coalition to send her to Sacramento and ratify a new generation's support for pro-landlord, pro-police, anti-worker policy in the Legislature.

Vote against Yvonne Yiu.

27th State Senate District

Surprisingly given he represents a suburban and fairly moderate district, which encompasses Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, and much of the San Fernando Valley, Henry Stern has maintained a solid voting record in the state legislature. Stern mounted a bid for a prestigious spot on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in 2022 and was backed by the Working Families Party and United Teachers Los Angeles but ultimately finished in third, narrowly behind fellow progressive Lindsey Horvath, who went on to win the runoff. He's now running for re-election as a result, and though he'll easily win re-election, he is being challenged by a fellow Democrat: Sherman Oaks neighborhood councilmember Susan Collins, who's running to Stern's right on a platform that includes anti-trans dogwhistles and support for increased police funding.

We recommend a vote for Stern and hope he leaves Collins's campaign consigned to irrelevancy.

33rd State Senate District

Incumbent Lena Gonzalez faces two Republican challengers in this district that covers Huntington Park in the north and heads down to Long Beach, touching South Gate, Lynwood, and Lakewood on the way. And then it keeps going into the ocean to Catalina and a single Channel Island. Gonzalez looks to handily win this race, with nonexistent donation reporting from the two challengers. Gonzalez's term in the senate has seen some wins for her, with the passage of SB 616 that grants five paid sick days to all California workers (albeit a downgrade to her initially proposed seven days). She's fought for state pensions divestment from fossil fuels (now a two-year bill, so let's put her back in office), and saw her bill, SB 556, that would have made oil and gas companies liable for healthcare expenses related to pollution-caused respiratory illnesses. As a stalwart advocate for the environment, labor issues, and other progressive causes, **we recommend that Lena Gonzalez should be sent back for another term.**

39th State Assembly District

AD-39 was a brand new redistricting creation in 2022, which includes Palmdale, Lancaster, and parts of San Bernardino County, including Victorville. A Latino-majority district, Juan Carrillo won this seat against a Republican challenger in 2022 and he most likely will handily win this seat against the same Republican challenger. He's conveniently abstained for some consequential votes on environmental conservation and the fast food council. This district is ripe for more progressive, and dare we say, socialist, representation. **Until we get that, no recommendation from us.**

40th State Assembly District

Pilar Schiavo was elected to this district that covers Santa Clarita and the northwest San Fernando Valley, including Northridge and Granada Hills in 2022. Her win was deeply helped by a redistrict that swung the district in her favor to eke out a 50.2% win over a Republican. This year, she sees another match up against a Republican, retired deputy

chief Patrick Lee Gipson, who is running on your standard CA Republican platform of “repeal gas tax,” “law and order,” and “school choice.”

Pilar Schiavo has labor’s backing in this race, with the bulk of her campaign donations reflecting that. During her first term in office, she’s fought to shut down the Aliso Canyon gas facility in the face of the utility commission’s approval to ramp up its production, fought against anti-abortion practices in the state, and has supported pro- worker, -social housing, and -CalCare bills in the Assembly. **As a solid progressive vote in the Assembly, we recommend keeping Pilar Schiavo in the legislature.**

41st State Assembly District

Chris Holden has termed out of this seat and is running for Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, so AD-41 sees an open race for this district that covers Pasadena and heads east and north into the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains. A heavily Democratic district, there are three Democrats running in this primary and the General Election is likely to be a two-Democrat race.

John Harabedian used to work in the LA district attorney’s office and was on the Sierra Madre city council. His website lists endorsements from various elected officials, unions, including the California Nurses Association, and California Environmental Voters. Yet, his campaign donations reveal maximum donations from the California Apartment Association, a handful of corporations (like Doordash and McDonald’s), and real estate interests.

Phlunté Riddle is a former Pasadena police lieutenant and is Holden’s anointed successor in this race. She also has the endorsement of a handful of unions, including SEIU California, as well as the California Renters Council and ACCE. Yet, predictably, when you dig into her campaign donations, you see a whole lotta of cop money.

Jed Leano is an immigration attorney and the former mayor of Claremont. Raising significantly less money than the other candidates, he also has fewer endorsements from unions, as much of his support comes from the California YIMBY realm, a few tenants unions, and a smattering of electeds from a hodgepodge of LA County municipalities. His website leans very heavily on his experience building housing and reducing homelessness in Claremont working with housing trusts.

There seems to be very little daylight between the three's policies, albeit Riddle is the only candidate who is on the record supporting a California single-payer healthcare system.

With roses and thorns attributable to each candidate, we're leaving no recommendation.

42nd State Assembly District

So, incumbent Jaqui Irwin is gonna win this race again handily, as she faces no viable Democratic challengers against a Republican candidate in a safe blue district. Her district includes parts of Ventura County, Malibu, Agoura Hills, and Calabasas (hello to all the celebrities reading this voter guide blurb. If you are a member, please switch to paying Solidarity Dues: https://act.dsausa.org/donate/ibd_campaign). She takes hundreds of thousands of dollars from real estate interests, the cops, and gas companies. And also either outright opposes or finds herself conspicuously absent on votes in these areas. **Jaqui Irwin is bad news, so no recommendation here from us.**

43rd State Assembly District

We thought this would be a simple blurb! Nothing in California is ever simple! In late November, Congressman Tony Cárdenas announced he would not seek reelection to Congress, Assemblymember Luz Rivas leapt into the race to replace him. Six candidates scrambled to run in this San Fernando Valley district. Well, technically six candidates filed, but only three of them have any sort of campaign finance data, so who knows if the other three exist?

Of the three that do exist, we'll most likely have a face-off between two Democrats in the general: we have the current Mayor of San Fernando, Celeste Rodriguez, and Walter García, who has served in communications roles for a variety of California politicians, including California Attorneys General Xavier Becerra and Rob Bonta and LA City Councilperson Monica Rodríguez, one of the more right-leaning members.

Celeste Rodriguez seems to be an extension of LA establishment politics, receiving the blessings of the SFV players, including Rep. Brad Sherman, Senator Alex Padilla, Karen Bass, SEIU California, and the LA Fed. Walter Garcia doesn't show any endorsements or

red flags in his donations, but rests a fair amount of his cred on his time working in the offices he's worked in. García's website and platform hits a lot of the progressive keywords we like to see in candidates: "permanent supportive housing," "alternative crisis responses," "Medicare-for-All," and "pro-worker agenda." With that, **he has an edge over Celeste, and it would be interesting to see a García campaign run with over six weeks of preparation time.**

44th State Assembly District

The fighting 44th district covers Burbank, Sherman Oaks, North Hollywood, Studio City the tippy-top of Glendale, and Warner Bros. Studio Water Tower Autonomous Zone (pop. 3 Animaniacs). The seat has been held by reliably progressive (and apparent pool shark?) Laura Friedman, who is now running to represent the area in Congress (see our 30th Congressional District race info for more about her.) There are eight candidates running to replace Friedman, including multiple progressives in this race. Those include commendable candidates like Steve Pierson, who's worked for organizations like SwingLeft and is endorsed by labor hero Dolores Huerta.

But we're going to agree with Friedman's endorsement for **Burbank Mayor Nick Schultz and recommend him to succeed her.** Schultz has worked closely with DSA-LA member Konstantine Anthony on Burbank's City Council, stands for affordable housing and workers rights, and is endorsed by lefty unions like UAW.

46th State Assembly District

Assembly district 46 covers a big chunk of the West Valley – Encino, Reseda, and Canoga Park. Jesse Gabriel is virtually unopposed, just running against one Republican in this safe blue district. Current chair of the state budget committee, where he will oversee budgeting within a deficit, he's taken money from the California Apartment Association, private insurance companies, and AirBnB. **He's not really providing the state with any sort of transformative vision, so we have no desire to recommend him either.**

48th State Assembly District

Blanca Rubio is the convenor of the infamous and informal “mod caucus” – that collection of Democratic legislators that works reliably and assiduously for oil, business, pharmaceutical companies, police, landlord, and various other corporate interests. She’s also the center of a family-based political machine that put her sister Susan in the Senate and tried to impose formerly Republican sister Sylvia on Whittier, where she was beaten by another machine dynasty, Lisa Calderon. The Rubio sisters’ power in their own bailiwick isn’t impregnable, however – the region is heavily Latino, API, and working-class, and has historically elected more liberal (albeit not socialist) candidates like Judy Chu and Hilda Solis.

The Rubios are working to build a right-wing version of a multi-racial working class majority. The progressive wing of Sacramento’s “third house” (advocacy nonprofits, lobbying organizations, and issue-based coalitions) have identified AD 48 as one of their priorities for struggle and found Brian Calderón Tabatabai – a union educator, football coach, and West Covina Mayor as the best possible challenger or successor to Rubio in AD 48. The traditional liberal players – labor, environmentalists, and Solis – have endorsed early, with newer players like WFP and unexpected establishment supporters, like former Speaker Anthony Rendon and Senator Bob Archuleta, jumping in. The Rubios are among the worst examples of Democratic governance that California has to offer and knocking off Blanca (hopefully at the same time her sister loses a Congressional race to succeed Grace Napolitano) would be an earthquake for the right-wing forces that depend on her and a major message to California politicians. **Vote for Brian Calderón Tabatabai.**

49th State Assembly District

Assemblymember Mike Fong has been serving this San Gabriel Valley district since 2022. Lacking any serious Democratic challenger, he’s facing a Republican that has no shot in this safe blue district. Fong’s voting record is pretty much in line with the progressive wing of the Assembly, supporting bills that protect the environment and workers and authoring bills that allow undocumented students to access state financial aid and expanding gun control regulations. However, like many Democrats in the California state

legislature, he has accepted large donations from real estate, cops, and good ol' PG&E, **so we've got no enthusiastic recommendation for you here.**

51st State Assembly District

AD-51 covers Santa Monica, West LA, Beverly Hills, West Hollywood, the Hollywood Hills, Hollywood, and Hancock Park, a large district that mixes renters and some of the most wealthy areas of the city. While in 2022 we saw a more competitive election between Democrats, this year we have incumbent Rick Chavez Zbur running against two Republicans. Zbur is expected to handily win this race. A corporate Dem through and through, his current campaign contributions include Netflix CEO (and charter school supporter), Reed Hastings, PG&E, a handful of pharmaceutical companies, and the California Apartment Association. His donors represent CA-DSA's class enemies, while he's able to create some laurels supporting progressive legislation that has come through the assembly this past term. In a recent CalMatters story, he has conflated anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism.

With no good options in this race, we cannot issue a recommendation here.

52nd State Assembly District

The AD 52 covers all the way from Eagle Rock to its east, to East Hollywood to its west (confusing, we know), Glendale to its north and East Los Angeles to its south (even more confusing). The area is currently represented by Wendy Carillo, who is changing lanes and instead veering towards the Los Angeles City Council District 14 seat. It's a wide open field, but we're going to join Eunisses Hernandez in recommending Franky Carillo (no relation to Wendy) to represent the district in the California State Assembly.

Despite how wide open the field is, there seems to be very little room between the platforms of these various candidates, so we're digging really deep into them and looking at their endorsers and their money. We got David Girón, who has worked as a staffer to defeated-by-DSA-LA City Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell. We got Ari Ruiz, who is coming from more moderate Assembly offices of Autumn Burke and Blanca Rubio. These two candidates have the backings of their bosses and their cohort, so we remain very

skeptical of these progressive platitudes listed on their websites. We've got Jessica Caloza who is coming from Attorney General Rob Bonta's office and has received a huge chunk of change from the California Real Estate PAC and SoCal Edison.

Franky's personal story is extremely harrowing, having been framed for murder by a Los Angeles County Sheriff and forced to spend 20 years in jail. He is a fierce advocate for criminal justice reform that is desperately needed locally and statewide, and is a voice we desperately need talking about the moral rot at the center of our policing system. **Vote for Franky Carrillo, who stands out from this crowded AD-52 pack.**

53rd State Assembly District

As in AD 48, we have dynasties trying to hold a seat – incumbent Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez's wife Michelle is facing off against Congresswoman Norma Torres's son (and Pomona City Councilman) Robert in a brawl for first place in this mostly-Inland Empire seat that runs from Pomona in LA County to Ontario in San Bernardino. This warehouse-country, heavily-Latino, cross-county district has been dominated by trade unionists – Connie Leyva from UFCW, Torres and Rodriguez both out of AFSCME – but logistics, immigration, and environmental justice historically get short shrift from the existing power players.

Two Berniecrats are also in the race: Three Valleys water district director Carlos Goytia has a long-standing opposition to the Torres and Rodriguez machines and a cadre of supporters drawn from the Bernie/Young Democrats/DSA-adjacent community, but has struggled to raise enough money to take on two machine candidates with corporate and labor ties.

Sharing that base is Javier Hernandez, a recently-naturalized immigrant and executive director of the Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice, which has led local youth organizing and opposition to the jail and detention center in Adelanto. Hernandez's relationships with IE United (a local civic engagement table) and, by extension, the Working Families Party and local donors have held him in better stead on fundraising.

As much as we wish this could be a race between Hernandez and Goytia, we need to back a progressive who can win second place and fight off either Rodriguez or Torres. That seems to be Hernandez, right now. Recognizing Pomona is in Susan Rubio's district, we'd

look to Goytia as a potential challenger to her in 2026 to continue to cut down the “mod caucus’s” power in Sacramento. **Vote for Javier Hernandez.**

54th State Assembly District

This is a classic race illustrating the politics of deep-blue Los Angeles’ status quo coalition. Looked at one way, it pits Mark Gonzalez, current LA County Democratic Party chair and thus machine-anointed successor to (as well as senior staffer for) outgoing seatholder Miguel Santiago, against a progressive, grassroots community organizer and environmentalist John Yi. Vote for the upstart organizer and throw a wrench in the Dem Party machine, open and shut, right?

Well to be honest, that probably gets you most of the way there. It’s worth digging a little bit deeper. Gonzalez, the CDP-anointed candidate certainly takes plenty of random business interest money – max donations from DoorDash, Cruise, “Fox Corporate Services” and the like. His career as LACDP chair is littered with complaints by progressive activists and accusations of maybe-not-quite-illegal-but-certainly-shady machine corruption. On the flip side, his biggest source of funding is from the many organized labor unions that have, along with the California Labor Federation, endorsed him – because his boss, and by extension Mark in office, have been among the most steadfast supporters of LA County organized labor.

John Yi’s website and platform seem to be a left dream - he explicitly called for repealing the Costa Hawkins and Ellis acts to protect renters, for massive investment in public transportation, and for statewide single payer healthcare. But digging a little deeper, Yi’s left grassroots history looks a little bit more like a different part of the status quo coalition – the nonprofit industrial complex. From 2012 to 2015, John Yi was interim national director of Parent Revolution, a pro-charter policy non-profit, which launched his career deeper into Los Angeles social justice nonprofits.

Ultimately, we come down in favor of opposing the status quo labor-business machine and recommend voting for John Yi for his willingness to explicitly champion the policy priorities of single payer healthcare, rent control, and mass transit. But socialists should always remember to dig a bit deeper into how these machines work, and think critically about why organized labor may be willing to stick with the candidates that may otherwise seem to us to be uninspiring Democratic Party hatchetmen.

55th State Assembly District

Once again, incumbent Isaac Bryan is basically expected to outrightly win this race, as he faces no other Democratic challenger in this safe blue district that covers Culver City, Palms, Mid-City, West Adams, Crenshaw, Baldwin Hills, Ladera Heights, Leimert Park, Jefferson Park, West LA, Westwood, and Century City. He has one of the strongest progressive records in the State Assembly, with a record of advocating for decarceration and policing reform, workers' rights, social housing, and a CA single payer healthcare system. With this assessment of policy, **we recommend Isaac Bryan for another term.**

56th State Assembly District

The Fightin' Fifty-Sixth District covers much of east Los Angeles County, including South El Monte, Pico Rivera, La Puente, Whittier, Diamond Bar, and Walnut. Sadly, after feverish Googling, we regret to report that Walnut, California is not the walnut capital of the United States. Apparently, that's Santa Barbara.

Now, why are we talking about walnut facts? It's because this race is pretty boring. The incumbent, Lisa Calderon, has been in office since 2020. She's your garden average California Democrat, with basically every statewide politician and organization endorsing her. It's not a competitive district, and her only opponents are two Republicans. **Calderon doesn't need our recommendation, nor do the Republicans deserve our time explaining why they're evil.** We're going back to learning more fun nut facts.

Woah, did you know the world's largest pecan is in Seguin, Texas?

57th State Assembly District

As Reggie Jones-Sawyer terms out and seeks election to LA City Council, this South and Southeast LA seat is open, and brings strong prospects from both the Black and Latino communities.

We will dispense with realtor-and-police-endorsed Huntington Park City Councilmember Efren Martinez out of hand, but acknowledge he's likely to make it to the runoff, having ran in this same race in 2020 and earning 42% while running on his pro-cop, reactionary platform against a relatively progressive incumbent. In picking his challenger, we have Dulce Vasquez, Sade Elhawary, and Greg Akili.

Vasquez has run in this geographic area before, and recently, polled in the thirties against Councilman Curren Price in 2022. Her 2022 race was one marked by trying to court the progressive wing, while doing fundraisers with LA's last Republican mayor, taking money from our class enemies, like charter schools, defense companies, and real estate. She's using the same playbook in 2024, taking fossil fuel donations while saying she's "taking on corporate polluters" on her website. This repeat of her 2022 campaign doesn't don't inspire confidence about her plan to win or her plan to govern.

Between longtime union organizer and BLM leader Greg Akili and Community Coalition cadre Sade Elhawary, we have two principled, capable, and respected candidates. Sade's fundraising, however, and support from labor unions, leftward organizations like WFP, and even a candidate who had entered this crowded AD-57 race and since dropped out, Rene Romero indicate that, **for the best shot to keep Efren out of the Assembly, Elhawary is the best choice – though we recognize Akili's long movement service warrants serious consideration.**

61st State Assembly District

AD-61 covers the Los Angeles neighborhoods of Venice, Marina del Rey, Westchester, Inglewood, Hawthorne, and Lawndale. McKinnor is expected to coast to re-election here, with her only challenger a Republican that doesn't even have any campaign finance data listed as of writing this. A friend of labor, McKinnor has shown up at the picket lines in 2023 and has co-authored legislation allowing legislative staff the right to form a union. A strong and consistent progressive voice in the Assembly, **we recommend Tina McKinnor for reelection.**

62nd State Assembly District

After serving seven years as the Assembly's speaker, Anthony Rendon is termed out, leaving this district that covers the Southeast Los Angeles neighborhoods of Huntington Park, South Gate, Lynwood, Paramount, Bellflower, and Lakewood an open race. There are three candidates in this race, but one viable and serious candidate, who will most likely have an easy victory.

The frontrunner in fundraising (and having any sort of website) is current Democratic mayor of Lynwood, José Luis Solache. The anointed successor of Rendon, he's backed by statewide labor unions, the California Democratic party, and many of the Southern California crew already in the assembly. His website lacks any sort of policy positions, but with the Rendon and Dem establishment backing, we'll probably get more of the status quo out of him. Also running for the fourth election cycle in a row is Maria Estrada, who has been running since 2018 in response to Rendon tabling a single payer health care bill in 2017. Since we are currently experiencing *deja vu*, let us repeat DSA-LA's 2022 voter guide: "She has voiced support of universal basic income, investment in education and infrastructure, public banks, federal jobs guarantee, abolishing ICE, banning private prisons, protecting unions, stopping the expansion of charter schools, but there are reasons to be concerned about her candidacy. Her campaign's web presence now seems to be running entirely via Facebook, has no campaign finance on file for 2022 [edit: this is also true for 2024], and in the past has gotten into trouble with other progressive activists for public posts praising anti-Semitic preacher Louis Farrakhan and for other spats with activists." **Lacking any serious left or progressive candidate, we are not issuing a recommendation here.**

64th State Assembly District

If you live in Bell, Cudahy, Bell Gardens, Downey, Santa Fe Springs, Norwalk, La Mirada, or La Habra, you're a proud resident of the 64th California Assembly District. Your current Assembly representative is Blanca Pacheco, who took over the seat in 2022. She's not exceptionally a progressive leader, buddying up with Downey-area politicians fighting against tenants unions and touts numerous police association endorsements.

Pacheco's only opponent is anti-trans rights Republican Raul Ortiz Jr., who she already beat in 2022 by 22 points. **For that reason, we can't really recommend her in this race.**

We do recommend that if you're a lefty in the district, you should get involved with our Eastside Branch. Then, in 2026, we recommend looking into running against Pacheco, who's going to cruise to re-election this year.

64th State Assembly District

Incumbent Mike Gipson has no challenger in this race. He takes a lot of oil money, real estate, and cop money, too. What else is there to say? **No recommendation.**

66th State Assembly District

You might as well start calling the 66th Assembly District the Overlook Hotel, because it's got Torrance inside of it, and it has always been there. (Look, this voter guide is very long, and it's starting to drive us a bit wacky, so sorry if *The Shining* is on our mind.) Beyond Torrance though, this district covers much of the California coastline south of LAX, including El Segundo, Redondo Beach, Manhattan Beach, and Rancho Palos Verdes. Also Gardena too, but that's not the coastline.

Your perpetual overseer of the Overlook/66th Assembly District is Al Muratuschi, who's been in charge since 2016. There's nothing exciting to report about him - he's like so many California Democratic Assemblymembers, vaguely gesturing towards a progressive future but not doing much to really fight for it. He's endorsed by a ton of labor unions - including police associations. **Like the ocean he represents, Muratuschi is coasting to re-election, and doesn't need our recommendation.** His only opponent is George Barks, a business owner and a former Hermosa Beach city councilor in the 1970s and the 1980s... Including when *The Shining* was released in theaters. We'll go tell the Moon Landing truthers.

House of Representatives

California's 26th Congressional District

Incumbent Julia Brownley is fairly centrist, perhaps unsurprising for this suburban district that's home to the Ronald Reagan presidential library. She has a Democratic challenger, but Agoura Hills city councilmember Chris Anstead actually appears to be running to her right. **We are making no recommendation here.**

California's 27th Congressional District

Mike Garcia's three consecutive victories in this Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley based district have been cause for great frustration among Democrats, who have repeatedly narrowly failed to defeat him despite Biden carrying the district by double digits, primarily thanks to ancestrally Republican suburban voters and low POC turnout in non-presidential years. George Whitesides is hoping to put that issue to bed and flip the seat blue for good, but his business background—he's the former CEO of Virgin Galactic—isn't exactly inspiring to socialists, and he's certainly not expected to be a progressive. The only other candidate is comedian Steve Hill, who's made the news in his previous runs for his affiliation with the satirical Satanic Temple and public atheism, but he has no website, so his policy positions are unclear. **We're therefore issuing no recommendation here.**

California's 28th Congressional District

Judy Chu is expected to handily win this heavily Democratic district that covers Altadena, Pasadena, Alhambra, Monterey Park, and other parts of the West San Gabriel Valley in Los Angeles County. Chu has cleared 65% of the vote each year, both primary and general, since 2014. She's one of the top 30 or so more progressive congresspeople, supporting Medicare for All and the Green New Deal. This year, she's facing a moderately well-funded Republican candidate – Arcadia mayor April Verlato who wants to “restore America” and emphasizes “Creating Jobs” and “Securing Our Border” on her website.

None of the other candidates have raised any money, but if you want to cast a protest vote, Peace and Freedom Party candidate William Patterson says he “represents the working class” and uses a [big red flag on his campaign website](#). **Otherwise we’d recommend sticking with Chu, but again – your vote hardly matters here.**

California’s 29th Congressional District

This San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles district includes North Hollywood, Van Nuys, Panorama City, Pacoima, San Fernando, and Sylmar. The seat has been occupied since 2013 by Tony Cárdenas. Cárdenas started his political career on the Los Angeles City Council after being a real estate broker (gross), and then State Assemblymember, and has long been a standard pro-business Democrat, cultivating an influential political machine in the district. Each year since 2018, he’s been challenged by Angélica Dueñas, a Bernie to Jill Stein 2016 progressive activist. After losing in the primary in 2018 as a Green, Dueñas switched to the (D) line and took 42-43% against Cárdenas in 2020 and 2022, running on a Berniecrat platform that led with Medicare for All and incorporated various other left movement demands around racial justice, canceling student debt, Green New Deal, and more. It seemed like we were headed for a threepeat of Dueñas making the runoff and then losing by double-digits when Cárdenas suddenly (and conveniently, the minute it was too late for the CA Dem Party convention to endorse or run anybody else), announced he wasn’t running for re-election and was endorsing State Assemblywoman Luz Rivas.

This race is now headed to a three-way battle between Dueñas, Rivas, and perennial Republican crank candidate Benito “Benny” Bernal. Rivas has been a fairly progressive assemblywoman spanning the standard CA Dem status quo coalition – strong support from organized labor with a helping hand from a little bit of business and real estate money. The Jarvis Taxpayers Association hates her and the CA Labor Fed loves her, and if she wins the seat (as she’s likely to, given the strength of the establishment machine helping her), she’ll be a slight improvement over Cárdenas. She also took a sponsored trip to Israel in July 2023. But while Angelica Dueñas, who was [quick to support Palestine](#) and call for a Gaza ceasefire and continues to run on left movement priorities in the race, the choice is clear: **vote for Angelica Dueñas.**

California's 30th Congressional District

This Los Angeles district covers a big swath of Central Los Angeles, including Hollywood and Silver Lake, and then stretches up to include the eastern San Fernando Valley, Glendale, and Burbank. Centrist and liberal war hawk Senate candidate Adam Schiff has held a version of this seat since 2001. There are no fewer than 15 candidates on the ballot, so we won't be able to give you details on all of them.

Five candidates have raised over \$500,000 for this race, and safe money says that the runoff will be between two of them: State Senator Anthony Portantino, LAUSD Board member Nick Melvoin, Assemblywoman Laura Friedman, former Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer, and Boy Meets World sitcom star Ben Savage (yeah, it's weird. We'll get to it.).

Anthony Portantino is seeking to move up from his State Senate seat. He's a relatively standard LA status quo politician – endorsed by several local unions (AFSCME, CWA, CFT, SEIU), while cheerfully also scooping up support from the California Charter School Association and a grab bag of local business interests. But speaking of the privatized education lobby, Westside LA School Board member Nick Melvoin launched his career by primary campaign against the pro-union incumbent, funded by the charter industry and the Walmart-fortune Walton family to the tune of \$10 million, then the most expensive school board race in history. Though he's got a huge amount of money, he's running with relatively few sitting politician endorsements, with massive Israel Lobby champion and DSA Derangement Syndrome Sufferer Ritchie Torres (D-NY) a notable exception. Melvoin's generally anodyne issues page includes a call to "Stand will [sic] Israel and its people."

Speaking of enthusiastic Israel supporters, we come to the curious case of Boy Meets World star Ben Savage. He's running a campaign self-financed by over \$1 million in his own money, so it's probably safe to say he's not a "true" frontrunner, having previously lost a West Hollywood council race with only 7% of the vote.. But still, that's a lot of money. He's spent the past several months fervently supporting Israel in its assault on Gaza.

Then we get to Mike Feuer, former Los Angeles city attorney, now working part-time as John Turturro's innie on SEVERANCE (not really, but the likeness is alarming). Feuer has a small but significant array of local endorsements including LA Mayor Karen Bass and centrist Congresswoman Julia Brownley. He's trading hard on his City Attorney moves

against the Trump Administration, which are all well and good, but a Democrat whose only positive actions are rejecting Trump? Why, that sounds a lot like Adam Schiff! Indeed, as City Attorney Feuer staunchly fought to let the city keep arrested unhoused people and is loudly and proudly supporting Israel in its war on Gaza.

Finally, Laura Friedman. Friedman has been among the most progressive California state Assemblymembers, regularly sponsoring or authoring bills for state single payer, as well as leading on public transportation, bike lanes, and other environmental issues. In the LA area, she's considered more accessible than most sitting politicians to grassroots and non-moneyed groups, though she still has her fair share of business interest supporters. Beyond the Assembly, Friedman is endorsed by the LA Times, a handful of local unions, a bunch of Democratic Women orgs like EMILY's List, and overlapping DSA - Los Angeles elected officials Konstantine Anthony and Hugo Soto-Martinez.

After the five candidates, there are three more notable candidates that have raised over \$100,000: West Hollywood Mayor Sepi Shyne, former State Department staffer Jirair Ratevosian, and repeat left candidate and non-binary drag queen Maebe A. Girl. Sepi Shyne, a queer Iranian woman who came to the US as a refugee, ran for West Hollywood city council with major support from UNITE HERE Local 11, the hotel workers union. She's been a fairly progressive councilwoman and has leaned heavily into LGBTQ+ and reproductive rights as a campaign issue, but she's not earned nearly as much traction as the frontrunners. Still, she's one to watch in the future LA political landscape. Jirair Ratevosian, a gay Armenian-American and former policy adviser to Barbara Lee, is also leaning into LGBTQ rights (his first platform plank is "The Gay Agenda"). He's likely to win some support from local Armenian voters, but not a huge amount else with only a quarter the cash of the frontrunners.

The final candidate to break \$100k is perennial candidate and drag queen Maebe A. Girl. Maebe is a regular amongst the grassroots lefty scene in Los Angeles, and includes a Green New Deal, Medicare for All, and Palestinian liberation in her platform, as she has the past two times she ran for this seat. She rejects corporate funding and is running a small-dollar campaign to be the first drag queen and first trans congressperson.

By platform and left grassroots cred alone, Maebe A. Girl would be the obvious choice. But with the wealth of the front-running candidates and the prospect of this diverse and progressive district being represented by another dead-eyed establishment pro-business white male Democrat for another two decades, **we recommend voting for Laura Friedman, who while no socialist, would slot in among the most progressive congresspeople.**

California's 31st Congressional District

Current representative Grace Napolitano announced her retirement from Congress, so the field is wide open in this district that covers the swaths of the San Gabriel Valley and portions of Glendora, Industry and Monrovia. This is a crowded field of a bunch of centrist to milquetoast Democrats, two Republicans, and two No Party Preference candidates with zero internet presence.

Within the Democrat candidates, five stand out due to their fundraising, as well as ties to California establishment politics. We have Nancy Pelosi-backed and lottery winner Gil Cisneros, who after a two year stint representing Orange County in the House, was voted out, and has spent the last two years working for the Biden administration and living in Virginia before just moving into a district of his choosing. We have California State Senator Susan Rubio, who is one of the largest Democratic acceptors of oil money in the state legislature. We have yet another state senator, Bob Archuleta, who takes cop and oil money and is also the subject of a lawsuit from a staffer for sexual harassment and retaliation. Maybe the least bad, but not still not even progressive, option here is MaryAnn Lutz, who was an advisor to the outgoing Napolitano. Lutz's policy positions are a far cry from the Green New Deal or Medicare for All, but at least she doesn't have a spineless state legislature voting record to show for it, like Rubio and Archuleta. While not on her campaign website, [an LA Times candidate questionnaire](#) has her in support of a ceasefire in Gaza, while simultaneously saying the US should send more military aid to Gaza, which, yes, we are confused too.

This is a solidly blue district with uninspiring to downright bad options, so we can't offer a solid recommendation here.

California's 32nd Congressional District

Brad Sherman is notorious among the left for his vigorous support for Israel; until recently, he even held the distinction of being mentioned in the third sentence of AIPAC's Wikipedia article. He was the first congressman to accuse without evidence attendees of a DSA-cosponsored peace vigil for Palestine at the Democratic National Committee of threatening violence. His voting record on Palestine-related issues is the second worst among California Democrats, only better than Jim Costa, of course, and his views on

other issues are fairly bland. While he won't be unseated—he's targeted every cycle by longshot progressive bids that usually fail to crack double-digit vote shares—candidates will continue to try. He has four Democratic challengers: Dave Abbitt, who doesn't seem to have a website; and Christopher Ahuja, Douglas Smith, and Trevor Witt, who all appear to be running as progressives. **While none of these challengers are viable, Ahuja seems to be the most serious, so we're recommending a vote for him.**

California's 34th Congressional District

Third time's the charm? This Los Angeles district, covering Downtown LA, Koreatown, Chinatown, Northeast LA, and East Los Angeles, is among the most progressive congressional districts in the country. For the past four years, it has hosted a battle between David Kim, a grassroots leftist Korean-American attorney, and Jimmy Gomez, a staunch ally of organized labor in Los Angeles. After surprising Gomez in 2020 with a shoestring Andrew-Yang inspired left Universal Basic Income campaign that came within single digits, Kim ran again in 2022 and lost by a mere 1.5 points. Kim is a DSA member and regular in the LA grassroots progressive protest scene, describing himself as a democratic socialist and having sought DSA-LA's endorsement in 2022, and has built a coalition of outsider leftist voters, Korean- and other Asian-Americans, and others dissatisfied with the Democratic establishment.

Since 2020, Gomez has scrambled to shore up his left credentials going out of his way to align himself with the Squad, authoring and co-sponsoring of left congressional priorities like Medicare for All, Green New Deal, eviction moratoriums, and legislation to tax the rich, even voting against the most recent proposed military budget and immigration enforcement, and claiming screen time as the founder of the "Congressional Dads Caucus." He continues to take real estate, banking, and healthcare industry, and resisted cosponsoring Cori Bush's Gaza ceasefire resolution, although he did eventually call for a ceasefire himself.

The race this year also includes a Republican, Calvin Lee, as well as another DSA member running proudly as a socialist running on the Peace and Freedom Party line, Aaron Reveles. With neither having raised any money, there's little reason to believe the runoff won't be another Kim vs Gomez rematch. **Given that, there's not a ton of reason to believe your primary vote matters a ton here, and if you feel like a protest vote, you could do worse than Aaron Reveles on the Peace and Freedom line, but we're ultimately recommending a vote for David Kim.**

California's 35th Congressional District

This race looks like an exact repeat of the same district election in 2022 and 2020, when incumbent Norma Torres faced off against Republican Mike Cargile. The only difference is the two un-funded candidates running unviable campaigns on the edges: Vijal Suthar, a Republican, “active member of the Hotel Owners Association, and proud legal immigrant who wants to “FUND OUR PROTECTORS” and secure the border, and Melissa May, a Democrat who is running a local-issues-only campaign about investment in the (to be fair, historically drastically underinvested Inland Valley). She’s raised less than \$10,000. Anyway, for the rest of this entry, we’ll let the DSA-LA 2020 voter guide take it from here, because seriously – nothing’s changed:

Incumbent Democrat Norma Torres is seeking reelection to a fourth term in this SGV district after besting Republican challengers in 2016 and 2018. A member of the centrist New Democrat Caucus with important spots on the House Appropriations and House Rules Committees, Torres’ lowlights include voting to pass Trump’s USMCA trade deal and her rubber-stamp approvals of the yearly National Defense Authorization Act. Taking cash from the gambling, real estate, and agribusiness sectors, Torres is basically a middle-of-the-pack Dem—not openly corrupt, but she ain’t exactly Ilhan Omar, or even Ro Khanna.

Running against Torres is Republican army veteran Mike Cargile. In addition to the anti-immigrant policies proudly featured on his own website, a slapdash anti-Torres site Cargile seems to have set up features a whole page criticizing the Dem incumbent under a heading that just says “Islam.” In other words, Cargile is a nut—his own “Issues” page includes a big picture of the Soviet flag emblazoned with the word Socialism (he’s opposed), and the site he created to defame Torres claims that she “would be content with Sharia law instead of our Constitution.” **Torres should win easily - she doesn’t need our support.**

California's 36th Congressional District

Ted Lieu has been in Congress since 2015, before that having been in the State Legislature for nine years. His opponents this year are two Republicans, and one candidate without a party preference whose campaign digital footprint is almost nonexistent. In California, he was perhaps best known for passing a ban on conversion therapy centers in the state in 2012. A centrist through and through, Lieu has

consistently refused to call for a ceasefire in Gaza. Lieu is also something of an artificial intelligence (AI) apologist, known for pushing back against proposals to restrict AI technologies such as ChatGPT. That being said, Lieu is widely expected to win by default, having attracted only unfunded right-wing challengers in this heavily Democratic Westside Los Angeles district. **He doesn't need our recommendation.**

California's 37th Congressional District

The 37th district includes Mid City, some of West LA, and the northern portions of South LA. Incumbent Sydney Kamlager, who's endorsed by every center to left elected in the county and basically all of organized labor, is likely to coast to victory. Her votes during her first term in senate place her amongst the most progressive, yet she has yet to co-sponsor Rep. Cori Bush's bill calling for a ceasefire in Gaza and willingly takes corporate money.

Kamlager is facing no serious challengers in the race, so if you feel like a protest vote, **you have a stellar option in Metro train mechanic Juan Rey, running on a working class party line, but we're issuing no recommendation here.**

California's 38th Congressional District

This is a race that pits the incumbent, Linda Sanchez, a democrat, against three Republican candidates. She has been in Congress for over 20 years, maintaining a steady hold over her suburban, eastern Los Angeles County district. Considered one of the most influential Latina candidates in Congress, Sanchez currently chairs the Bold PAC, which is the campaign arm of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), giving her lots of clout in determining how Latinx congressional candidates will receive support in this year's election.

Her positions are fairly standard of most congressional Democrats, including support for gun control, affirmative action, abortion access, and immigration. However, she has taken some troubling positions on foreign policy, notably her unwillingness to call for a ceasefire in Gaza (the furthest she went is calling for a humanitarian pause), as well as support for funding the war in Ukraine. Sanchez is unmistakably a mainstream Democrat

which for better or worse should tell you what type of congressman she can be expected to be if re-elected. **As the lone Democrat running against three Republican candidates, Sanchez is the choice by default, but she's pretty unlikely to face a serious challenge.** Bonus: she flipped off the GOP dugout at a congressional baseball game last year.

California's 42nd Congressional District

This seat covers most of the city of Long Beach as well as parts of Southeast Los Angeles County. It's been represented since last 2022 by former Long Beach city mayor Robert Garcia, who had governed as a standard establishment semi-progressive neoliberal mayor. His 2022 campaign was backed by AIPAC and Democratic Majority for Israel, though he did issue a statement in support of a ceasefire in mid-November last year. Mixed record aside, he's almost certainly going to be repeating the 2022 runoff against perennial Republican candidate John Briscoe, who is self-funding his campaign to the tune of \$250,000. So instead you should vote for one of the other two candidates, not because either of them have a real chance of winning (neither have raised more than \$2000), but because they're both running to his left. **We recommend Nicole López, who also ran for this seat in 2022.** She's running a grassroots campaign and centering a demand for justice for Gaza, among other lefty planks.

California's 43rd Congressional District

Maxine Waters has held a version of this seat, which covers Inglewood, Hawthorne, and Torrance since 1991, and her influence in the South LA Democratic machine is substantial. She will have no trouble winning this election, against a Trumpy Republican and a small businesses and tax cuts Democrat, neither of whom have raised over \$2K. Your vote doesn't matter here at all, but we'll note that Rep. Waters joined the call for an immediate (and unqualified) ceasefire in Gaza early into November last year, and is generally in the top 30 or 40 "most progressive" Congresspeople. **Certainly neither of the other candidates deserve your support.**

California's 44th Congressional District

Nanette Barragán represents the district just to Waters' East, including San Pedro and the south LA County cities of Lakewood, Carson, Lynwood, and South Gate. Barragán is somewhat similar in voting record to Waters – reasonably but not extremely progressive, having launched her political career first in the Clinton White House, then as a lawyer, then as a Hermosa Beach City Councilwoman, campaigning against the oil industry. On the other hand, she has not called for a Gaza ceasefire as of this writing and she is only facing a Republican candidate with no money raised named Roger Groh. Groh's website explains that to get ready to be a Congressman, "I went through the Public Policy and Leadership programs at Harvard and Strategy program at Wharton. (I was probably the oldest student ever and enjoyed every moment!)". Last election, Barragán beat her Republican challenger by over 40 points. **Your vote here, sadly, doesn't matter.**

California's 45th Congressional District

This district, primarily based in western Orange County, is home to the largest Vietnamese diaspora community in the world; Vietnamese-Americans' sharp lurch to the right in the 2020 election as the Trump campaign fanned the flames of anti-communism caused the seat to fall out of Democratic hands, and it's been tough to claw back since.

Nevertheless, four Democrats are taking a shot this cycle. Derek Tran is the leading fundraiser in the group, but his endorsement from the centrist New Democrat Coalition's PAC makes him a no-go for us. Garden Grove city councilmember Kim Bernice Nguyen-Penaloza is the party pick and has amassed a wide range of endorsements, but she has no issues page on her campaign website; between her and attorneys Cheyenne Hunt and Aditya Pai (Hunt is also notably a TikTok influencer and boasts the distinction of being the only Gen Z woman running for Congress this cycle), no candidate stands out as anything beyond a standard party-line Democrat, **leading us to issue no recommendation here.**

United States Senate

The single biggest strike Californians can land against American militarism, American complicity in the ongoing genocide in Gaza, and a bipartisan and disastrous foreign policy this year is to send Barbara Lee to the US Senate.

From her early work with the Black Panther Party to her solitary opposition to the Authorization for Use of Military Force in 2001 to her lone support for a ceasefire in Gaza out of a crowded field of aspirants to succeed Laphonza Butler, Barbara Lee has been alone on the right side of history for sixty years. Between Katie Porter's "progressive except for Palestine" positioning and Adam Schiff's historic and ongoing embrace of the bipartisan forever war, Californians have a unique opportunity to not simply send a message but to materially shift the position of the Senate on an ongoing war.

The outrage over Gaza has only increased, not only within the American left but across the country and among mainstream Democrats. Los Angeles is home to 1 in 4 Californians, 1 in 4 California Democrats, and 1 in 4 registered voters: we, our comrades, and our neighbors could decide this just down here alone.

If you want a ceasefire, vote for Barbara Lee. If you want a Green New Deal, vote for Barbara Lee. If you think that Democrats can't be trusted and the war machine is bipartisan (protip: it is) vote for the only living member of Congress who has said "no" to war in the Middle East with their whole chest, nonstop, for the entire 21st century. **That's why we recommend voting for Barbara Lee.**