

Democratic Socialists of America



Los Angeles

November 3
2020
Voter Guide

Contact us
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Introduction

Thank you for using the DSA-LA 2020 General Election Voter Guide.

This guide was written by members of the DSA-LA Electoral Politics Committee with contributions from the 2020 primary guide produced in collaboration with the Future Left. Authors approached writing this guide with socialist values and a progressive, pragmatic lens. We see this as an opportunity to share information with fellow DSA-LA members, LA voters, and other community members about political forces shaping the many communities that make up Los Angeles.

The candidates in this guide are **recommended** by DSA-LA's Electoral Politics Committee, not the entire DSA-LA chapter. DSA-LA as a chapter votes for endorsements. Endorsed candidates are the candidates or campaigns DSA-LA commits to working for. Only Konstantine Anthony, Fatima Iqbal-Zubair, Nithya Raman, and Prop 15, are **endorsed** by DSA-LA.

Voting for the President this year might not bring us Medicare for All, but voting in municipal and state races arguably has more impact on our daily lives. Voting for Konstantine Anthony will get Burbank residents closer to rent control. Voting for Fatima Iqbal-Zubair will be a start to putting an end to energy companies' blatant environmental racism in South LA. Voting for Nithya Raman will bring a candidate demanding strong housing policies and advocating for renters and our unhoused neighbors onto our virtue-signalling, do-nothing city council. Voting for Prop 15 is voting to tax billionaire companies like Disney to properly fund our schools, public services and vital resources to fight the pandemic.

Join DSA-LA to work towards building a better future. Our government, our economy and our society has been stolen from us by plutocrats, but we can take it back if we band together and fight: www.dsausa.org/join

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DSA-LA VOTER GUIDE

NOVEMBER 3, 2020

Los Angeles

ENDORSEMENTS Shown in red box

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CONGRESS

CD 23	Kim Mangone
CD 25	Christy Smith
CD 26	No Recommendation
CD 27	Judy Chu
CD 28	No Recommendation
CD 29	Angélica Dueñas
CD 30	No Recommendation
CD 32	Grace Napolitano
CD 33	No Recommendation
CD 34	David Kim
CD 35	No Recommendation
CD 37	No Recommendation
CD 38	Michael Tolar
CD 39	Gil Cisneros
CD 40	No Recommendation
CD 43	Maxine Waters
CD 44	Nanette Barragán
CD 47	Alan Lowenthal

STATE SENATE

SD 21	Kipp Mueller
SD 25	No recommendation
SD 27	No recommendation
SD 29	Josh Newman
SD 33	Elizabeth Castillo
SD 35	Steven Bradford

STATEWIDE BALLOT MEASURES

Prop 14	NO
PROP 15	YES
Prop 16	YES
Prop 17	YES
Prop 18	YES
Prop 19	NO
Prop 20	NO
Prop 21	YES
Prop 22	NO
Prop 23	YES
Prop 24	No recommendation
Prop 25	NO

STATE ASSEMBLY

AD 36	No Recommendation
AD 38	No Recommendation
AD 39	Luz Rivas
AD 41	Chris Holden
AD 43	Laura Friedman
AD 44	No Recommendation
AD 45	No Recommendation
AD 46	No Recommendation
AD 48	No Recommendation
AD 49	No Recommendation
AD 50	No Recommendation
AD 51	No Recommendation
AD 52	No Recommendation
AD 53	Godfrey Santos Plata
AD 54	Tracy Bernard Jones
AD 55	Andrew Rodriguez
AD 57	No Recommendation
AD 58	Margaret Villa
AD 59	Reginald Jones Sawyer
AD 62	No Recommendation
AD 63	Maria Estrada
AD 64	Fatima Iqbal-Zubair
AD 66	No Recommendation
AD 70	No Recommendation

LA COUNTY

LA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS	
BOS District 2	Holly Mitchell
LA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY	
George Gascón	
LA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES	
Office #72	Myanna Dellinger
Office #80	Klint James McKay
LA COUNTY MEASURE J	
YES	

CITY OF LA

LA City Council	
Council District 4	Nithya Raman
Council District 10	No recommendation
LA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION	
BOE District 3	Scott Schmerelson
BOE District 7	Patricia Castellanos
LA Community College District Board of Trustees	
Andra Hoffman, David Vela, Mike Fong, Nichelle Henderson	

ENDORSEMENTS Shown in red box
 FOLLOW US @DSA_LOSANGELES

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY, SAN GABRIEL VALLEY, AND EAST LA

ALHAMBRA City Council District 4	Sasha Renée Pérez
BALDWIN PARK Mayor	Emmanuel Estrada
BURBANK	
City Council At-Large Seat	Konstantine Anthony
BALLOT MEASURE RC	YES
CENTRAL BASIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT	
Division 4 Director	Leticia Vasquez-Wilson
Division 5 Director	Rodolfo Cortes Barragan
COLLEGE OF THE CANYONS BOARD OF TRUSTEES	
Trustee Area 3	Sebastian Cazares
DOWNEY CITY COUNCIL	
Council District 3	Catherine Alvarez
Council District 5	Juan Martinez
EL MONTE	
Mayor	Irma Zamorano
City Council At-Large Seat	Gabriel Ramirez
MEASURE HN	YES
MONTEBELLO City Council At-Large Seat	Scarlet Peralta
MOUNTAINS AND RECREATION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY	
MEASURE HH	YES
WATER REPLENISHMENT DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS	
Division 5 Director	Leticia Vasquez-Wilson
WHITTIER City School District Board Of Education	
Trustee Area 1	Caro Jauregui

SOUTH LA, WEST LA, AND SOUTH BAY

CULVER CITY	
City Council At-Large Seats	Yasmine-Imani McMorrin, Freddy Puza, and Darrel Menthe
Board Of Education At-Large Seats	Kelly Kent and Paula Amezola de Herrera
MEASURE B	NO
MEASURE RE	YES
EL CAMINO COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES	
Trustee Area 1	George A. Turner, Jr.
Trustee Area 3	Peter Elhamey Aziz
MANHATTAN BEACH School District Board Of Trustees	
Board At-Large Seat	Jason Boxer
WEST HOLLYWOOD	
City Council At-Large Seats	Shepi Shyne and Marco Colantonio

Complete guide online at: dsa-la.org/2020voterguide

Congress

CD 23

Recommendation: Kim Mangone

Representing most of Kern County, including Bakersfield, Ridgecrest, and Quartz Hill, CD 23 is the most Republican district in California—and the 23rd most Republican district in the entire country. Unsurprisingly, House Minority Leader and Trump minion Kevin McCarthy has held this seat for years. It's pretty unlikely that he'll lose it now, but Kim Mangone is putting up a great fight—in the primary, she won 33.5% of the vote, a better showing than any primary challenger McCarthy has ever faced.

An Air Force veteran, systems engineer, and single mom with no political experience, Mangone has run a surprisingly strong grassroots campaign on a platform of not being Kevin McCarthy. She prioritizes universal health care, supports the Green New Deal, and promises to fight for working families and invest in bringing well-paying green jobs to her district.

Mangone raised a total of \$510,000, nearly 99% of which came from small donors who gave less than \$200. More than two-thirds of that funding came in a sudden surge in Q2 of 2020—she brought in \$360,000 in a single quarter. This still puts her severely behind McCarthy, who's raised over \$16.6 million, mostly from big donors like Comcast, Amazon, Big Pharma, and the fossil fuel industry. But Mangone's momentum in fundraising is a sign that her grassroots support is growing. If anyone has a shot at unseating McCarthy, it's her.

CD 25

Recommendation: Christy Smith

This suburban district is located in the northern part of Los Angeles and covers part of eastern Ventura County. It used to be a safe bet for Republicans, but the changes in demographics have increased its competitiveness. This congressional seat has been fraught with controversy for the past year, with former representative Katie Hill resigning after less than a year in office. Now special election incumbent Republican Mike Garcia will face off against Democrat Christy Smith.

Mike Garcia is absolutely awful. His background includes working as an executive for Raytheon, and he campaigned as a strong Trump ally, which he has proven true during his short time in Congress. His website literally lists “socialism” as an issue he fights against.

And yet, it is not easy to support Christy Smith. Her time in the State Assembly has shown her to be a corporate neoliberal who has cast plenty of bad votes. She voted against the California Tenant Protection Act of 2019. She also voted against allowing formerly incarcerated people to be on juries, against prohibiting landlords from rejecting applicants based on Section 8 status and voted in favor of eliminating oversight of telecom companies.

But at the end of the day, Christy Smith is massively better than Mike Garcia, and she needs support in this extremely tight race.

CD 26

No recommendation (change from primary guide)

While better than some of her 2020 primary challengers, incumbent Julia Brownley isn't great. She voted YES on NAFTA2, NO on COVID-19 assistance, YES on the Defense Appropriations Act, YES on warrantless spying, and YES on exempting insurance companies from antitrust regulation. Her votes were in line with Trump legislation from 2016-2018. Although increased scrutiny has pushed her to be a more consistent Dem vote since 2018, as socialists we know this is not enough.

CD 27

Recommendation: Judy Chu

Chu supports Medicare for All, and she's authored bills supporting women's healthcare access and good bills on immigration. She won her primary by a comfortable 70,000+ vote margin and seems well liked in her district. We recommend Chu.

CD 28

No recommendation

This reliably Democratic district is located mostly in the northeastern part of LA County, bordered by West Hollywood down to Pasadena in the south and Verdugo Hills in the north. Although mostly white, the district notably has the largest Armenian-American population of any district in the country.

Incumbent Adam Schiff is one of the most well-known members of Congress due to his leadership role in the impeachment process and all things Russiagate. Unfortunately, his power comes at the expense of his district, where he is known for ignoring issues that actually matter, like homelessness.

Despite being seen as a hero to the #resistance crowd, Schiff's hawkish and conservative record is both long and troubling. Back in 2003, he voted for the Homeland Security Act which created ICE. He supported the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. In 2015, he went out of his way to vocalize his support of Saudi Arabia's airstrikes against Yemen. He also sponsored legislation that would criminalize boycotts aligned with the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement against Israel's occupation and oppression of Palestine.

He is a reliable vote in support of any defense budget increase or military escalation—not surprising since he takes in loads of money from the likes of Raytheon, Boeing, Lockheed Martin, and Northrop Grumman. His deep connections to weapons manufacturers suggest a possible motive for his intense hawkishness and obsession with Russia.

Schiff is running against Republican Eric Early. In the primary, Schiff received almost 80% of the vote, so he will do just fine in the general.

CD 29

Recommendation: Angélica Dueñas

Covering the north-central San Fernando Valley, including Van Nuys, Pacoima, Sylmar and parts of Sun Valley and North Hollywood, CD29 is one of the most progressive districts in the country. However, incumbent Tony Cardenas is hardly a progressive leader—in fact, in 2013, GovTrack rated him as a “moderate Democratic follower.”

Rather than focus on what Cardenas has done, it’s easier to point out what he hasn’t. During his 7 years in this seat, he’s missed 6.4% of all roll call votes—an abysmal rate, compared to the median of 2.2%. He hasn’t supported the Green New Deal or Medicare for All, possibly because his biggest campaign donors are health insurance, pharmaceutical, and fossil fuel companies.

Luckily, he’s facing a challenge from Angélica Dueñas, a DSA member and former president of the Sun Valley Neighborhood Council. A working-class mother of five, born and raised in Sun Valley, Dueñas served as a delegate for Bernie Sanders at the 2016 Democratic National Convention. She supports all the good stuff: Medicare for All, universal rent control, a universal basic income and tuition-free education.

Having only received 23% of the primary vote, compared to Cardenas’ 58.5%, Dueñas is a definite underdog in this race—but she’s the candidate CD 29 deserves.

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CD 30

No recommendation

Brad Sherman is a Democrat incumbent facing Republican challenger Mark Reed for the fourth time. All of Reed's platforms are vile, particularly his plans to fight the "homelessness industrial complex" with punitive and inhumane policies. Sherman handily defeated Reed in the last three elections and in the 2020 primary. As a very moderate, anti-BDS Democrat who vocally supported Congressman Eliot Engel in his race against DSA-endorsed challenger Jamaal Bowman, Sherman does not get our recommendation.

CD 32

Recommendation: Grace Napolitano

This district is located in eastern Los Angeles County, encompassing El Monte, Baldwin Park, West Covina, Covina, Azusa, and southern Glendora. It is a solidly Democratic district, which Grace Napolitano has represented since 2012. Napolitano has been in Congress since 1999, representing multiple districts throughout that period due to redistricting.

Napolitano is a member of the Progressive Caucus and is a reliable Democratic vote. Last year, she signed on with the Green New Deal and also recently co-sponsored Rep. Ilhan Omar's bill HR 6515 that would cancel rent and mortgage throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Her opponent is Joshua Scott, a Republican who supports an immediate reopening of the state from COVID-19 restrictions and, according to his website, believes that the health insurance market should be able to "operate freely and compete for business."

CD 33

No recommendation

This district spans from Malibu down to the Palos Verdes Peninsula. It is mostly white and reliably Democratic.

Incumbent Ted Lieu is a powerful voice among the Democratic establishment, largely due to social media stardom. He supports some important progressive legislation as a co-sponsor of the Green New Deal and Medicare for All.

Unfortunately, Lieu also takes plenty of notably bad positions. He is a massive hawk who voted against the Iran Nuclear Deal and introduced legislation to co-develop directed energy weapons with Israel. In 2017, he also supported AIPAC-sponsored legislation that would make it a felony for Americans to support boycotting Israel. More recently, he voted against an amendment that would ban the military from recruiting teenagers on Twitch.

Lieu is running against Republican James P. Bradley, who received only 17.5% of the vote in the March primary.

CD 34

Recommendation: David Kim

David Kim is running against incumbent Jimmy Gomez who has long had the full backing of the California Democratic establishment, which anointed him successor to Xavier Becerra's seat in CD 34 during the 2017 primary. He's had a decent record over his three years in Congress—apparently Kenneth Mejia's Green Party campaign in 2018 helped push him left—but it's tough to see him advocating radical change, particularly given that the insurance industry is far and away his biggest source of campaign fundraising. While he can be proud of legislation like a bill he co-authored to ban private prisons, his climate

change platform is disappointingly timid in a year of West Coast infernos and what may be record-breaking hurricane activity.

David Kim is a progressive much more in the 2020 mold: a veteran of Mejia's 2017 campaign and a lawyer with past work in immigration and employment law, Kim boasts endorsements from Sunrise LA and Our Revolution. (who notably backed Gomez's run in 2017). There are a ton of policy proposals posted on his campaign website, and alongside old favorites like Medicare for All and a Green New Deal are a bunch of other good ideas—a tenants' bill of rights, ending the subminimum wage, police force reductions, and free public transit. He even advocates a \$1,000-a-month UBI.

Since Gomez has out-raised Kim by a 12-to-1 margin so far, this is a steep uphill battle. But Gomez has done the bare minimum to get the Bernie seal of approval in the past, and David Kim is running to truly push the status quo leftward.

CD 35

No recommendation

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."

Hopefully in two years a left-wing challenger will be ready to run against Torres, but this time the only other option is a loony Tea-Party throwback. No thanks.

CD 37

No recommendation

Karen Bass is probably as good as it gets as far as high-ranking progressive members of the Democratic Party go. She's on the Progressive Caucus, the Social Work Caucus, the HIV/AIDS Caucus, the Caucus on Black Men and Boys and she is chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. She is a co-sponsor of Rep. Pramila Jayapal's Medicare for All Act of 2019, supports DACA and the DREAM ACT, and worked on Prop 47. She voted against re-authorizing the Patriot Act and the National Defense Authorization Act. Good stuff. Glad to have her on our side for sure.

But she could be a little better, you know? She voted for NAFTA 2.0, endorsed Joe Biden (granted it was after the California primary which is kind of funny but still) and she was a co-sponsor of SESTA-FOSTA. We hate SESTA-FOSTA because it puts sex workers in danger. Sex workers were as vocal as they could have been about that (having no lobbyists and whatnot), but apparently no one cared enough about their concerns to strip the bill of language that puts sex workers' lives at risk.

Listen, all workers deserve to be safe and have legislators that work to keep them safe. We're not saying don't vote for Karen Bass so much as we're withholding a full embrace of her until she makes this right. Ro Khanna and Elizabeth Warren introduced H.R.5448 - SAFE SEX Workers Study Act which calls "to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study to assess the unintended impacts on the health and safety of people engaged in transactional sex, in connection with the enactment of the Allow

States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017.” Conducting studies is usually a way for people to pass the buck on action but this is what we’ve got to work with right now and Karen Bass should join her California colleagues Barbara Lee and Judy Chu in cosponsoring H.R.5448.

CD 38

Recommendation: Michael Tolar

Incumbent Linda Sanchez voted for Trump’s trade deal with Mexico and Canada and voted for each of Trump’s National Defense Authorization Acts, which included giving Saudi Arabia military aid to support their bombing of Yemen. Also, Sanchez doesn’t advocate for Medicare for All and her husband was indicted on federal corruption charges. Her opponent, Michael Tolar, campaigns for Medicare for All and rent control.

CD 39

Recommendation: Gil Cisneros

Gil Cisneros is in perhaps the most competitive race in Los Angeles after losing his primary by a mere 2,500 votes to Republican challenger Young Kim. We encourage you to vote for Cisneros so his seat does not flip into Republican control. But we’d be remiss if we didn’t mention that Cisneros has *not* supported the Green New Deal or Medicare for All and is heavily financed by the insurance, real estate and financial sectors.

CD 40

No recommendation

Lucille Roybal-Allard has been a US Congresswoman since 1993 when she inherited the seat from her father Rep. Edward Roybal, and after 27 years in Congress, her top donor industry is the real estate sector. Like so many of her fellow Dems, she has rubber-stamped all of Trump’s NDAs and waved through his USMCA trade deal. However,

unlike most she also voted against Obama’s Iran deal, and even against giving him power to lift sanctions on the country. A member of the important House Appropriations Committee, she was a co-sponsor of the boneheaded 2019 bill condemning the BDS movement. And despite her longtime association with the DREAM Act and other pro-immigrant measures, she has been against defunding ICE even though she represents the most Latino congressional district in the country (and the most pro-Bernie district in CA).

Roybal-Allard’s Republican opponent, C. Antonio Delgado, is a lawyer and businessman who owns a private immigration law practice and is pushing for “school choice, true family values and the rights of the unborn.” Unless you’re into charters and banning abortion, there’s nothing to see here.

CD 43

Recommendation: Maxine Waters

In 1996, DSA endorsed Maxine Waters—how the times have changed. Waters is a capitalist and she has vowed that the Democratic Party will never be socialist. Nevertheless, she’s going up against a significantly worse candidate: young Republican and U.S. Navy veteran Joe Collins, who works as a financial planning professional and certified counselor for rape and sexual assault victims. Maxine Waters isn’t great, and her most frequent topic of legislation is finance. However, since she was elected, she’s been a leader in housing and homeless legislation. Plus, while she didn’t endorse Bernie in the primary, she didn’t endorse Biden either. We recommend CD 43 voters choose Waters.

CD 44

Recommendation: Nanette Barragán

Covering South LA and the Los Angeles Harbor Region, CD 44 is heavily Latinx and very Democratic-leaning. Nanette Barragán is the incumbent and was first elected in 2016.

Since then, Barragán has been a solid rank-and-file member of the Democratic Party's progressive caucus. She's the natural choice against fellow Democrat Analilia Joya, who all but doesn't exist. Her campaign website is a 404 error. Barely a single piece of information is available on Joya, apart from the fact that, somehow, she won 14% of the primary vote. So, vote for her or don't, Barragán is going to win this one.

CD 47

Recommendation: Alan Lowenthal

Incumbent Democrat Alan Lowenthal is up for reelection to his fifth term in the CD 47 seat in a rematch against Republican challenger John Briscoe, who he wiped out in the 2018 election. Lowenthal's run has been heavily funded by unions in the transportation, building trades, and public sectors—and lo and behold, he's not the worst Dem in Congress! In fact, he's one of the most left-leaning of California's 53 US Representatives. He voted against Trump's USMCA trade deal, against reauthorizing the PATRIOT Act, against Trump's NDAs, and has cast outlier "no" votes on a few bipartisan bills that weakened financial regulations. He even endorsed Gascón for DA, one of just a handful in the House who did so. And he's expressed support for a single-payer healthcare system (co-sponsoring Pramila Jayapal's Medicare for All bill in the House, and the long-running John Conyers single-payer legislation before that) as well as a Green New Deal (he's signed onto the AOC bill). These positions are crucially the result of successful progressive organizing in Long Beach, a district that holds some strong and active labor unions including the ILWU.

Lowenthal's opponent is John Briscoe, a self-described "management expert" who owns and runs a property management company with his wife. In a campaign questionnaire he suggests that the greatest challenges facing America include high taxes, excessive reliance on China's economy, and "an EMP event whereby all electrical systems could be rendered useless by just one high altitude space launched atomic bomb."

Lowenthal might not be a socialist, but organizers in the district have been able to genuinely move him left, and voters in CD 47 should support them in that push.

State Senate

SD 21

Recommendation: Kipp Mueller

Republican incumbent Scott Wilk is being challenged by Kipp Mueller, a labor lawyer with an Elizabeth Warren social-democrat platform. Mueller formerly worked for the Obama Justice Department and he's been endorsed by California Teachers Association, Cal Dems, SEIU, Sierra Club, Planned Parenthood, Stonewall Club, NARAL, and other unions. The GOP incumbent won 100,000 votes to Mueller's 35,000 in the primary, with the other three Dem challengers pulling in around 20,000 votes each. Even combined, 85,000 votes can't win this race. However, we recommend SD 21 voters pick Mueller for the chance of flipping a State Senate seat blue.

SD 25

No recommendation

This suburban district lies in the foothills of the San Gabriel Valley and is traditionally a safe Democratic seat.

Incumbent Anthony Portantino is decent. His votes often align with progressive values, although he's received money from organizations like the California Charter School Association, Govern for California (an anti-labor organization run by millionaires that supports business-friendly Democrats), and the pro-cop Peace Officers Research Association of California.

He also seems to have a pattern of fearing confrontation and preferring the easy way out, as evidenced by his habit of quietly blocking bills in the Senate Appropriations Committee which he chairs. For example, AB 1022 would have required police officers to intervene

in situations of excessive force. It was stalled without explanation in his committee and Portantino declined to comment.

His challenger is Republican Kathleen Hazelton, who received less than one thousand write-in votes in the primary, so Portantino is coasting to victory.

SD 27

No recommendation

SD 27 covers the border of Los Angeles and Ventura counties, including Calabasas, Malibu, Thousand Oaks, and parts of northwest LA. This enclave of wealthy suburbs is not exactly a progressive stronghold, but in recent years, it has tended to go solidly blue.

The current incumbent, Henry Stern, is not great. A former environmental attorney, Stern prioritizes clean energy and transportation, and has received strong support from labor unions. But he's conspicuously refused to vote on several bills that would protect immigrant rights, reform sentencing laws, and provide oversight for police. He has raised \$1.2 million this election cycle, with most of it coming from trade unions—but also from Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Facebook, Google, Verizon, the Los Angeles Police Protective League, and our good friends in the Association for LA Deputy Sheriffs.

That said, the guy running against him is way worse. Republican Houman Salem is a former fashion executive with no political experience. He often retweets Trump. He plans to “resolve the Homless [sic] Crisis” by repealing a set of recent laws that made it easier for nonviolent offenders to get parole—so ostensibly his plan is, fewer people on the streets and more people in prison?

However, even with his endorsements from the California GOP and California Pro-Life Council, Salem pulled in only 36.2% of the primary vote—not exactly a close race. Stern will probably win whether you vote for him or not.

SD 29

Recommendation: Josh Newman

Josh Newman isn't a DSA politician, but he has a shot at flipping SD 29 from red to blue, so this is a race to watch. Republican incumbent Ling Ling Chang won 100,000 votes to Newman's 70,000, but the other Democratic primary challenger walked away with an additional 40,000 votes that are up for grabs. Newman advocates for renewable energy, quality affordable education, and funding mental health facilities for the homeless, and has the Cal Dems on his side as well as almost every union.

SD 33

Recommendation: Elizabeth Castillo

With just over a year in the State Senate, Democratic incumbent Lena Gonzalez doesn't have the lengthiest public record to judge, but she has sponsored and co-sponsored some progressive bills that would authorize Medi-Cal benefits for the undocumented, require the AG to investigate police killings of unarmed civilians, ban chokeholds, raise taxes on millionaires, and establish a right to affordable housing. While those are all good things, one issue to flag is that Consumer Watchdog has formally requested an investigation of Gonzalez's predecessor, Ricardo Lara, over what they believe is a pay-to-play scandal that may partly involve payments to and from Gonzalez's campaign fund. The consumer advocacy group refers to Gonzalez as "Lara's handpicked successor," and though their request to the AG came just over a year ago we haven't been able to find any public follow-up about an investigation. Meanwhile, almost 90% of the outside spending on Gonzalez's campaign in the 2019-2020 cycle came from a single SuperPAC funded by major oil companies in a district which California Environmental Justice Alliance has said "houses CA's worst environmental disasters and neighbors' communities at ground zero for West Coast oil and gas operations."

Gonzalez's opponent is registered nurse Elizabeth Castillo, who jumped into the primary in a last-minute write-in campaign that prevented Gonzalez from holding her seat unopposed. Castillo is running on a clear anti-corporate, pro-worker platform: her website's four listed key issues are rent control, pandemic protection, a clean environment, and single-payer healthcare, and she prominently declares her opposition to corporate campaign donors. In a candidate questionnaire she decries America's unequal healthcare system as "a human rights violation and a form of apartheid," and lists as a personal role model Mayan indigenous feminist Rigoberta Menchú. In other words, Castillo is a real-deal progressive, and though her campaign is a longshot, she's doing SD 33 a service by not allowing the incumbent to hold a safely blue seat unopposed.

SD 35

Recommendation: Steven Bradford

Stretching from Inglewood and Watts to San Pedro and the Port of Los Angeles, this district is population-dense and racially diverse. Incumbent Steven Bradford was elected to the seat in 2016, following five years in the State Assembly. As chair of the Assembly Committee on Utilities and Commerce, he authored a bill to increase penalties on natural gas pipeline operators for safety violations, as well as a bill to extend funding for solar energy subsidies. Throughout his career, Bradford has been dedicated to criminal justice reform—most recently, he authored a bill to decertify police officers who engage in serious misconduct. (It didn't pass.)

Bradford's challenger, former substitute teacher Anthony Perry, is a longshot, to say the least. He's only raised \$2,582, half of which was passed over from his failed campaign for the Compton Unified School District board in March. All in all, he seems like a wildcard. Perry won 24.3% of the primary vote, but the chances of him increasing that percentage in the general election are probably about zero.

State Assembly

AD 36

No recommendation

AD 36 has got to be one of the strangest elections in LA County. For the last ten years, incumbent Republican Tom Lackey and Democratic(?) challenger Steve Fox have been running against each other in a bid for the district. Tom Lackey has been the Assembly Person since winning against Steve Fox in 2014. Steve Fox, an alleged Democrat whose platform includes “We must make our schools SAFE, we must install metal detectors, cameras, and increase police surveillance,” cost California taxpayers \$100,000 for a sexual harassment suit filed against him by two co-workers the one time he was in office. COOL.

Incumbent Tom Lackey was a sergeant with CHP from 1995-2013 before becoming an assemblymember. His main contribution to his constituents has been advocating for and passing bills that crack down on intoxicated driving—which might seem reasonable on its face, but when you take into account that the North Antelope Valley is the third blackest area of LA County behind Inglewood and Compton and that Black people are pulled over and searched five times more than whites and Latinos, maybe intoxicated drivers aren’t the only thing the former sergeant is looking to crack down on?

Lackey was named Legislator of the Year by the California Police Chiefs Association in 2015 but it’s possible that they might not like him so much these days, as he voted in favor of AB 392, which limits when California police can use lethal force, and worked to get an investigation into the deaths of several Black men in the Antelope Valley. It’s a start in the right direction but isn’t nearly enough to make up for his long history of making the targeted harassment of black drivers easier for the police.

The Antelope Valley and AD 36 deserve representatives that are looking out for them. If you’re reading this and you live in AD 36, you should run.

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AD 38

No recommendation

Located in northwestern LA County, this district is traditionally Republican, but in recent years Democrats have stood a better chance. Current Assemblyperson Christy Smith was the first Democrat to be elected to this seat since 1978. In this election however, there are two Republicans running. Lucie Lapointe Volotzky and Suzette Martinez Valladares are both pro-cop, pro-charter school, anti-tax, and anti-union.

AD 39

Recommendation: Luz Rivas

Covering the northeast San Fernando Valley, including Sylmar, Sun Valley, and Tujunga, AD 39 is one of the most heavily Latinx districts in LA County. The current incumbent, Luz Rivas, was first elected in the 2018 runoff, but she's gotten a lot done in the past two years, including sponsoring a bill to require a state prosecutor to investigate certain officer-involved shootings. She co-authored a bill to create the first state-level office on homelessness, which was backed by organizations including Corporation for Supportive Housing and Housing California. She currently holds an "A" Courage Score from Courage California.

Rivas' opponent, Republican Ricardo Benitez, is in for his fourth consecutive failed campaign. He actually ran against Rivas in 2018 and lost, earning only 22.3% of the vote. In April, he was one of two plaintiffs in a lawsuit to block Newsom from giving stimulus checks to undocumented immigrants. With zero endorsements and \$1,454.59 in the campaign fund (\$1,100 of which was donated by the candidate himself), Benitez has no shot of winning this race. Which is for the best.

AD 41

Recommendation: Chris Holden

Incumbent Democrat Chris Holden is seeking reelection to a fifth term in this district, which stretches from Pasadena in the west to Upland in the East. Holden gets high marks from progressive organizations, with a 100% rating from the ACLU, the California Environmental Justice Alliance, CALPIRG, Health Access California and Planned Parenthood. In the final weeks of the last session, he voted in favor of the police reform measures and authored a bill that would have toughened penalties for police officers who fail to intervene when a fellow officer uses excessive force.

On the other hand, Holden's top donors include companies and unions that support the oil and gas industry, and he's been on the wrong side of some past legislation relating to fossil fuels, guns, workers' rights, immigration and housing.

He is defending his seat against longtime anti-immigrant activist Robin Hvidston (R), who leads nativist hate groups We the People Rising and The Remembrance Project. Hvidston got started in the nativist movement as national organizer for the Minutemen armed vigilante group and her priorities are building the border wall and repealing the Sanctuary Law. We are recommending Chris Holden for this race because his record is strong on most issues and the alternative is frightening.

AD 43

Recommendation: Laura Friedman

Since winning this seat in a blanket primary in 2016, Laura Friedman has been on the right side of progressive legislation and earns high marks from progressive groups. She authored a host of bills this session and as Chair of the Natural Resources Committee tends to focus on environmental issues like water conservation, single-use packaging and clean energy investment. Friedman voted for all the police reform measures proposed

during the final weeks of summer in the wake of George Floyd's murder and withdrew her endorsement of Jackie Lacey in June.

But the influence of almost \$40,000 in campaign contributions over the course of her tenure from police and prisons groups should not be discounted. Her legislative efforts can also be tepid and corporate friendly, nibbling around the edges of reform with market-based or means-tested solutions. For example, her answer to the COVID-19 crisis was a bill that doubles the amount Californians can borrow penalty-free from their employer-sponsored retirement accounts if they have been financially impacted by the pandemic. She also has major financial backing from a charter school PAC that poured over \$1.3 million into her 2016 campaign, as well as support from Govern for California, a network of philanthropists which promotes a neoliberal policy agenda within the California Democratic Party.

Friedman ran unopposed in 2018 and faces a long-shot challenger this year in Republican Mike Graves, whose pet issues are local control for schools and less housing in low density areas.

AD 44

No recommendation

Since flipping this seat in 2014, Democrat Jacqui Irwin has come under fire from progressive groups like Courage Campaign and Indivisible for a dismal voting record that caters to her big donors. She has taken in over \$100,000 from police and prisons, and her top contributor is the California Correctional Peace Officers Association. Her votes in support of police militarization and to weaken accountability for the deadly use of force are a clear nod to the police state that lines her pockets. Even amidst the uprising following George Floyd's murder, Irwin abstained from voting on a bill that would bolster oversight of sheriff's departments.

Irwin also doles out favors to the ag industry and big tech/telecom, each of which has contributed over \$100,000 to her campaigns. In 2016 she sided with agribusiness by helping to kill a bill extending standard overtime pay to exploited farmworkers. She also abstained from a bill to protect farmworkers from poisonous pesticides and helped contributor Amgen carve out an exemption to legislation banning a toxic rodenticide. A champion of the anti-privacy big tech/telecom industry and the climate-denying business sector, Irwin was honored as Assemblymember of the Year by TechNet and Woman of the Year by the local Chamber of Commerce. As legislator, Irwin has also done the bidding of the charter school movement (almost \$50,000 in funding), real estate/landlord lobbyists (almost \$200,000 in funding) and the healthcare industry (over \$200,000 in funding).

The constituents of AD 44 deserve better than Jacqui Irwin. But without a challenger from the left and with a comfortable 25-point lead over her Republican challenger Denise Pedro in the primary, Irwin will likely sail to victory in November and continue to carry the torch for the corporate wing of the Democratic Party.

AD 45

No recommendation

This suburban district is located in the San Fernando Valley, made up primarily of White and Latinx residents. It is regarded as a safe Democratic district.

Incumbent Jesse Gabriel is running against Jeffi Girgenti, who received less than a thousand votes in the primary, so he is not facing much of a challenge. Gabriel's record is mixed. He is noticeably absent on bills that would impose restrictions on policing, but he has also supported important legislation such as AB 1482, the California Tenant Protection Act of 2019.

Most alarming about Gabriel are his financial contributors. He is a popular candidate among real estate developers, realtors, and landlords. One of his top contributors is the

California Building Industry Association, which represents the interests of developers. He has also received money from the Building Owners and Managers Association, an organization that vehemently opposes Prop 15.

Other financial support comes from strong pro-charter school advocates, such as Bill Bloomfield, a super-rich former Republican who focuses on Democrats friendly to big business, and Govern for California, an anti-labor organization founded by David Crane, a former advisor to Gov. Schwarzenegger. Govern for California is made up largely of hedge fund managers and venture capitalists.

AD 46

No recommendation

Democratic incumbent Adrin Nazarian flipped this seat in a 2012 race with the support of outside spending from the AFL-CIO—and opposition from charter PAC EdVoice. For the most part he's a decent California progressive, voting for collective bargaining for childcare workers, union employment in the UC school system, and affordable housing. But Nazarian has also abstained from a few votes pertaining to his biggest donors: last year he elected not to vote on AB 290 which specifically targeted shady practices by a nonprofit front for one of his major contributors, dialysis giant DaVita, as well as on a couple of police reform bills (after taking money from the LA Police Protective League). Nazarian has also taken money from big pharma outfits like PhRMA, Merck, Pfizer and Gilead Sciences and is chairman of the Assembly Select Committee on the 2028 Olympics.

Opposing him is Lanira Murphy, running as a Democrat in her first race for the State Assembly. Despite a positive-sounding bio—she grew up working-class, supporting her mom through health-care struggles before becoming the first college grad in her family—there are a few reasons to be skeptical of Murphy's campaign. Murphy has spent most of her career in charter schools, first as a teacher before moving up to administrative roles in a couple charter networks. Most concerning of all is an entire section on her website

devoted to her commitment to repealing AB5, the hard-won bill that extends employee status to Uber drivers and other workers in the gig economy, a law she claims “is partially designed to funnel workers into union jobs at the expense of their independence and flexibility.”

The short version is that Murphy is unlikely to win this one—Nazarian has out-fundraised her about a thousand to one—and her push to repeal AB 5 (which Nazarian supported) makes it hard to root for her.

AD 48

No recommendation

Democrat incumbent Blanca Rubio is running unopposed for her third term in this majority Latino district, which primarily covers the eastern San Gabriel Valley and the surrounding foothill communities.

It’s unfortunate that no one is challenging Rubio from the left because she consistently advances corporate interests over poor and working people. Her abysmal voting record earned her an F from Courage Campaign and entry into the organization’s Hall of Shame. Among her top contributors are oil giants Chevron and Phillips 66 as well as dialysis centers DaVita and Fresenius which together forked over almost \$40,000 to buy Rubio’s abstention from legislation improving oversight of and care from dialysis centers.

Over the course of her tenure, Rubio has raked in a staggering amount in direct contributions and outside expenditures from the very industries wreaking havoc on her constituents and the planet: roughly \$300,000 from the fossil fuel industry and aligned labor groups, \$300,000 from the for-profit healthcare industry, \$160,000 from big pharma, \$100,000 from police and prisons, \$175,000 from real estate and developer groups, \$160,000 from charter school proponents, \$100,000 from big tech, and \$65,000 from agribusiness. The investment has paid off handsomely, as Rubio sides time and again with big donors, helping to block critical legislation on healthcare, the environment, police

abuse, housing justice and workers' rights. The time is ripe for a people-powered challenger to corporate Dem Blanca Rubio—let's hope we can recommend one in 2022.

AD 49

No recommendation (change from primary guide)

Incumbent Democrat Edwin Chau is seeking reelection to his fifth term in AD 49 against Republican challenger Burton Brink. Covering the western San Gabriel Valley just east of LA, the district is 53% Asian, 32% Latino and 13% White, and has a poverty rate of almost 25%.

Chau is moderately progressive and rated highly by some progressive organizations. But in the closing weeks of the last legislative session, as Los Angeles and cities across the country erupted in protest in the wake of George Floyd's murder, Chau bowed to the police lobby and failed his constituents by refusing to endorse SB 731. The bill would have decertified abusive cops—a basic form of police accountability that exists in 45 other states. Chau also ran afoul of consumer privacy groups by authoring legislation expanding facial recognition technology, and he recently abstained from an Assembly Constitutional Amendment repealing the State's '96 ban on affirmative action.

His challenger is Republican Burton Brink, a retired Sergeant with the LA County Sheriff's Department who lost by over 27 points in the primary. You would think a veteran Democrat with no chance of losing might be willing to go out on a limb and vote for incremental police reform in a moment of crisis, but no.

AD 50

No recommendation

Democratic incumbent Richard Bloom is seeking reelection to a fifth term in the district he flipped in 2012 after a campaign that pulled in donations from a gaggle of developers,

CEOs, and the California Chamber of Commerce PAC. Bloom ran unopposed last year and has already crushed his (fake) Dem opponent in the primary by pulling in about 80% of the vote.

Despite co-sponsoring important bills this session like AB 1436 (which would extend tenant protections during the pandemic), Bloom has sat out some easy progressive votes. He has taken money from healthcare provider lobby groups, from dialysis giant DaVita, and from retired businessman and “philanthropist” Bill Bloomfield, a “major supporter” of pro-charter StudentsFirst. Other unsavory donors include police PACs for the Santa Monica PD and the LA Police Protective League, real estate developers and some major corporations. He’s also donated to the Democrats for Israel Committee, a group that describes BDS as “anti-Israel and anti-peace.”

Appallingly, Bloom has also endorsed disgraced former WeHo mayor John Duran in his run to regain a spot on that city’s council—apparently Bloom saw fit to lend a hand to a fellow ex-mayor and longtime LA County Dem politico running in his district despite the years-long trail of sexual harassment and corruption allegations following Duran (allegations that resulted in a \$500,000 legal settlement with a former staffer who accused Duran of harassment).

Unfortunately, despite running as a Democrat, Bloom’s opponent Will Hess has declared his opposition to sanctuary states, illegal immigration, de-funding the police, “race hustling,” and BLM on a bizarre campaign website that also includes a list of his favorite “thinkers/philosophers” (Michelle Malkin, Alex Jones, etc.) and some photos of himself at Comic-Con.

Hopefully in a future race someone who isn’t an alt-right wingnut will step up to challenge Bloom.

AD 51

No recommendation

Democratic incumbent Wendy Carrillo is running uncontested in this district, which encompasses northeastern Los Angeles and is 71.6% Latino. In 2016, Carrillo lost a bid for Xavier Becerra's vacated congressional seat to former AD 51 Assemblymember Jimmy Gomez, and then immediately set her sights on Gomez's vacated Assembly seat. After running for Congress as a progressive outsider, she promptly abandoned her commitment to policies like single payer healthcare and was propelled to victory in the Assembly by a flood of cash from major PACs and charter schools.

Selling out has apparently been a winning strategy for Carrillo, who continues to rake in contributions from the usual suspects in big pharma, police and prisons, oil and gas, developers and charter lobbyists. Meanwhile, she has rejected constituents' efforts to reclaim empty government-owned homes to house vulnerable community members during the COVID crisis and abstained from bills that would hurt campaign contributors. For example, the cash from the charter school lobby seems to have bought her silence on legislation granting school districts more power to evaluate the economic impact of charters, and roughly \$19,000 from the notorious for-profit dialysis centers DaVita and Fresenius was enough to keep Carrillo from voting on a bill improving dialysis oversight and care.

AD 52

No recommendation

Democratic incumbent Freddie Rodriguez won this seat in a 2013 special election after Norma Torres moved up to the State Senate. This year he faces a rematch with his 2018 challenger, Republican Toni Holle, who he's already trounced in the primary.

Let's be clear: Freddie Rodriguez is probably in the bottom 20% of worst Democrats in the State Assembly. Despite representing a safely blue district that has twice voted for ballot measures fighting mass incarceration, Rodriguez routinely skips votes that would ameliorate the worst effects of the CA carceral system or restrain abusive over-policing.

He also stays off votes on environmental protection and has declined to vote in favor of public banking, worker and tenant protections, and protections for sex workers. He even joined with Republicans to kill a bill that would offer basic protections for arrestees like prompt hearings and reasonable limits to cash bail. He's taken money from Chevron, tobacco giant Reynolds American, a bevy of police PACs, Anheuser-Busch, PepsiCo, and more, and has benefited from sizeable independent expenditures by PACs bundling cash from cops, realtors, and big pharma, and from Dart Container Corporation, "the world's largest manufacturer of foam cups and containers."

Rodriguez's opponent, Republican Toni Holle, has been on the Pomona City Council for the last seven years. Her website advertises her support for Prop 13 property tax exemptions and her opposition to AB 5 (which extended protections to Uber drivers and other gig economy workers) and Prop 15 (the DSA-endorsed Schools & Communities First). She also decries mandatory childhood vaccination, sex ed in public schools, voter fraud, and "free healthcare to illegal immigrant."

AD 52 deserves better choices than these.

AD 53

Recommendation: Godfrey Santos Plata

Covering Koreatown, Westlake, DTLA, Boyle Heights, Vernon, and some of Huntington Park, this is a densely populated urban district. 68% of voters are Latinx, 19% are Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 58.6% of all households have a high housing cost burden. Especially amid the pandemic, housing and rent prices are a major concern for voters in this district — which is bad news for incumbent Miguel Santiago, who has taken a hell of a lot of money from real estate interests over the course of his career.

To date, Santiago's most notable move was co-authoring a bill to strengthen net neutrality protections—and then suddenly amending it to remove all the new protections, less than twelve hours before the bill was up for a vote. Interestingly, before that kerfuffle, Santiago

had taken over \$60,000 from telecom lobbyists, which is surely not related to his behavior here at all.

On the other hand, we have Godfrey Santos Plata, a DSA member, former teacher, Filipino immigrant, and Koreatown renter—if elected, he would be the second renter in the entire Assembly. His priorities include affordable housing, universal health care, clean energy, and fair wages and hours for workers. He has taken zero dollars of corporate money, instead raising over \$152,000 through energetic grassroots campaigning.

AD 54

Recommendation: Tracy Bernard Jones

Incumbent Assembly Member Sydney Kamlager-Dove was first elected in 2018 to represent AD 54, which stretches from the Crenshaw District and Leimert Park, through Culver City and Mar Vista, to Westwood and the UCLA campus. Kamlager-Dove succeeded Sebastian Ridley-Thomas, the son of outgoing LA County Supervisor and LA City Council candidate Mark Ridley-Thomas.

While in office, Kamlager-Dove initially voted against a renter protection bill in 2019, but later reversed her vote in response to pressure from constituents—a possible indication that she can be shifted in a more progressive direction. She voted against public banking and voted absent on bills to regulate dialysis centers and health insurance companies, while taking in funding from major dialysis company DaVita.

She also authored and played a lead role in passing AB 987, which facilitated expedited review for the construction of a new Inglewood arena for the Los Angeles Clippers. Major sports stadiums and arenas like the proposed Clippers arena typically rely on vast amounts of public funding and the exploitation of construction laborers in order to be built. Once constructed, they often fuel rapid increases in real estate speculation and gentrification. AB 987 banned any litigation from stalling the arena project for 270 days. This standard never applies to development proposals such as homeless shelters and

affordable housing, which delays and adds significant cost to meeting the housing and shelter needs of residents within and beyond AD 54.

Challenger Tracy Bernard Jones is a teacher, born and raised in South LA, who identifies as a socialist. He volunteered for both the 2016 and 2020 Bernie Sanders campaigns, supports public banking and Medicare for All, and opposes charter schools. Bernard Jones previously worked on establishing a gang truce in South Central LA. He is campaigning on issues of public education, the climate crisis, jobs, and healthcare for all. The clear choice in this race is Tracy Bernard Jones.

AD 55

Recommendation: Andrew Rodriguez

This suburban district includes parts of Los Angeles, Orange, and San Bernardino counties. It has traditionally been a reliably red district, but changing demographics have made it increasingly competitive.

Incumbent Republican Philip Chen is a former cop who touts a 100% rating from the California Police Chiefs Association. He receives an almost astonishing amount of contributions from pro-cop organizations. Jackie Lacey, LA's notoriously corrupt district attorney, has endorsed him.

His challenger is Democrat Andrew Rodriguez, former Mayor of Walnut. He doesn't seem particularly promising from a progressive standpoint—he holds a master's in real estate development and his website doesn't outline any concrete policy goals.

But we have a chance to vote out a Republican cop, so we recommend Andrew Rodriguez.

AD 57

No recommendation

This district in southeast LA County is heavily working-class, two-thirds Latinx, center-left, and has been controlled by the Calderon family since time immemorial.

Lisa Calderon is running to replace her stepson, Ian; who replaced his father Charles; who replaced his brother Ron; who replaced his brother Tom. Tom and Ron, for the record, have both pleaded guilty to federal corruption charges, and corruption seems to run in the family. Ian Calderon spent over \$13,000 of his 2014 campaign funds to maintain his personal car, and another \$11,000 was spent at “various gas stations and mini-marts.” The rest of his remaining campaign cash was rolled over to his stepmom Lisa.

Running to topple the Calderon dynasty is Jessica Martinez, who, incredibly, is even worse. A Republican currently serving on the Whittier City Council, Martinez was one of two plaintiffs who sued Newsom to block him from giving COVID-19 stimulus checks to undocumented immigrants. Her platform, according to her website, is: “Protect our FAITH, FAMILIES, FREEDOM, and Protect us from THE MARCH TOWARDS SOCIALISM!” A militant Christian, Martinez is a big pro-lifer, has some horrifying ideas about how to deal with homelessness, and has been endorsed by the NRA.

Calderon will probably win this one, but really, there’s no winning here for anyone.

AD 58

Recommendation: Margaret Villa

Incumbent Assemblymember Cristina Garcia’s career in politics has been mired in scandal. She styles herself as a hero of the #MeToo movement, but has been accused by her staff of creating a hostile work environment, and been accused of sexual harassment by a former Capitol staff member and a Sacramento lobbyist. While the

investigation into her misconduct was underway, her reelection campaign received over \$10,000 in contributions from fellow legislators, including the co-chairs of the subcommittee charged with leading the investigation.

Garcia has been accused of using racist and homophobic language to refer to activists and to her colleagues in the legislature and of using common slurs for gay men when talking about the first openly gay speaker of the California Assembly and the leader of a prominent California LGBT advocacy organization. She became the subject of another misconduct investigation when she reportedly said, “this makes me feel like I want to punch the next Asian person I see in the face,” in response to a group of Asian American advocates who were lobbying against overturning the statewide ban on affirmative action. The investigation concluded that Garcia had “commonly and pervasively” used vulgar language around staff, used staff to perform personal services, and “disparaged other elected officials.” She has also been found to have publicly lied about labor support for her campaigns and about her education background.

Garcia, herself a landlord, has received large campaign contributions from landlord and developer interest groups, as well as Chevron, Monsanto, and Clorox. She voted against or absent on bills pertaining to a statewide rent cap, just cause eviction, affordability requirements in new housing construction, consumer protection against predatory lenders, public banking, requiring the disclosure of ingredients used to produce household cleaning products, and providing information to residents potentially impacted by pollution in their preferred language.

Garcia’s challenger is Margaret Villa, a Green Party member who supports Medicare for All, the Green New Deal, ranked choice voting, rent and mortgage forgiveness, and free public college tuition. A vote for Villa is the obvious choice in this race.

AD 59

Recommendation: Reginald Jones Sawyer

Reginald Jones Sawyer boasts a strong progressive platform that includes Medicare for All, free public colleges and universities, amending Costa-Hawkins to enable rent freezes and other renter protections, canceling rent during COVID-19, accelerating public housing production, and more. Sawyer is in an extremely close race with Efren Martinez, a decidedly unprogressive challenger who formerly managed a Republican Political Action Committee and has been embroiled in corruption scandals.

AD 62

No recommendation

Incumbent Democrat Autumn Burke jumped from work in the NGO sector straight into a State Assembly seat in 2014, aided by the influence and reputation of her mother, former LA County Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, and by outside spending from PACs representing big oil (including the Koch-funded CJAC), agribusiness (including Prop 15 opponent CFBF), big tobacco, big pharma, charter groups, real estate, and prison guards. She also drew support in the 2014 race from scandal-plagued Inglewood mayor James T. Butts and Compton election fraudster Basil Kimbrew.

Since then, Burke has voted for some progressive legislation and introduced some good legislation herself—bills that would establish a right to affordable housing in CA and would promote public clean energy. But she’s also been absent from a number of votes to limit oil and gas extraction, increase penalties for oil spills, and restrain aggressive debt collectors, and even sat out a 2019 vote to limit crooked practices by a non-profit front for the dialysis industry while taking campaign cash from dialysis giant DaVita. Other Burke donors include the landlord lobby, Chevron, health insurers Blue Shield and UnitedHealth, and the casino industry—and if that’s not enough, she’s also acknowledged engaging in inappropriate workplace conversation that led to a sexual harassment complaint by a former staffer.

Unfortunately, her opponent is Republican Robert A. Steele, a “lifelong entrepreneur” and CEO pushing a long list of racist and right-wing policies: tax cuts, deregulation, repeal of

Props 47, 57, and of gig-worker protection law AB 5, ending sanctuary cities, building Trump's wall, and further empowering ICE and the Border Patrol. He also opposes Medicare for All and childhood vaccination.

Steele doesn't have much of a chance in this solidly blue district, so we see no reason to recommend a corporate Dem who could be doing a lot more for working Californians.

AD 63

Recommendation: Maria Estrada

Maria Estrada first ran against Anthony Rendon in 2018, after he single-handedly killed the single-payer healthcare bill SB 562. (Rendon has accepted more than \$500,000 in campaign contributions from health insurance and pharmaceutical companies.) Estrada lost her 2018 general election race by just under 10 percentage points. She was behind Rendon in the 2020 primary by 17 percentage points, earning 22,000 votes to Rendon's 31,000.

As Assembly Speaker, Rendon has consistently wielded his power to block or stall progressive legislation from moving forward in Sacramento. Under his leadership, the Assembly never figured out how to operate remotely in 2020 and the chamber accomplished virtually nothing of substance for working Californians in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Rendon has accepted more than \$8 million in campaign contributions since his first run for the Assembly in 2012. He has received contributions from the prison-for-profit corporation CoreCivic, formerly known as Corrections Corporation of America, which owns at least 6 private prisons in California, including the Otay Mesa immigrant detention center in San Diego. Some of Rendon's other notable corporate backers include the war profiteer Boeing, the police associations, Chevron, health insurance providers, pharmaceutical companies, big tech, and Dart Container, the country's largest producer

of the single-use Styrofoam containers that pollute our communities and exacerbate the climate crisis.

Estrada is campaigning on issues of economic justice, healthcare for all, and environmental justice, pointing out that her district has one of the highest rates of poverty in California, which is compounded by fossil fuel and polluting corporations that spew toxins into the Southeast LA air.

Estrada canvassed for Bernie Sanders in the 2020 primary and she is a known progressive community activist. Her campaign certainly is a long shot, but electing Estrada is a vote against Rendon and a clear repudiation of the Democratic Party's most corrupt, corporate, and spineless tendencies. Maria Estrada is the right choice in this race.

AD 64

ENDORSEMENT: Fatima Iqbal-Zubair

Encompassing parts of South LA, this district is mostly poor and working-class, with 22.5% living in poverty. Also significant is that 25% of California's oil refineries are located in this single district. For that reason, pollution is a major concern to everyone in the district except the incumbent Mike Gipson whose major contributors include fossil fuel interests.

A former police officer, Gipson has been representing the district since 2015. He has the distinction of being featured in Courage California's "Hall of Shame" for consistently failing to prioritize his constituents over his fossil fuel donors. He routinely abstains from votes on environmental bills, which is particularly egregious considering that the Californians most affected by big oil are the people in his very district. He also takes big money from real estate, pharmaceuticals, law enforcement—and, you guessed it, he has a disappointing record on housing, health care, and criminal justice.

The residents of AD 64 deserve someone who actually represents their interests, like Fatima Iqbal-Zubair, a public school teacher, community advocate, and DSA member. A political newcomer, she has served for three years on the leadership council of Watts Rising, which seeks to create green jobs in Watts. She supports everything Gipson won't: clean air and water; affordable housing for all; Medicare for All; divestment from police and prisons; tuition-free public universities. With endorsements from Our Revolution, Sunrise Movement LA, Ground Game LA, Progressive Asian Network for Action, and of course, DSA-LA, Fatima Iqbal-Zubair is the natural choice.

AD 66

No recommendation

Located in the South Bay, this district stretches from Manhattan Beach down to the Palos Verdes Peninsula, and includes Gardena and Torrance. The demographics are primarily white, Latinx, and Asian. This district is generally regarded as safe for Democrats, but this seat narrowly flipped red for one term in 2014.

Incumbent Al Muratsuchi is not a friend to progressive values. He is a former prosecutor and largely funded by pro-cop organizations, so it's not a surprise he has a terrible voting record on criminal justice. He's also received money from prolific donor Bill Bloomfield, a charter school advocate who gives money to Democrats aligned with big business interests.

Muratsuchi is running against Arthur Schaper, a right-wing blogger so vile that even the Republican Party of LA County has disavowed him. Schaper received just 33.8% of the votes in the March primary, so Muratsuchi is in a comfortable position to keep his seat.

AD 70

No recommendation

This district is largely composed of Long Beach and also includes part of the Channel Islands. It is a safe district for Democrats. Notably, this district is the home of several fossil fueled gas plants that are toxic to its residents.

Incumbent Patrick O'Donnell has demonstrated that he is not always aligned with the environmental concerns of his constituents. He voted against AB 936, which increases transparency surrounding highly toxic 'non-floating' crude oil, and abstained from SB 1, a bill that strengthens California environmental standards to pre-Trump levels. These decisions might have something to do with the large amount of money he pockets from the gas industry.

Other bad decisions include voting against allowing formerly incarcerated people to serve on juries and abstaining from voting on decriminalizing student truancy. He was also a no-show when it came to voting on capping rent increases.

O'Donnell is running against Republican David Thomas, a Construction Manager, who received about 25% of the votes in the primary.

Statewide Ballot Measures

Proposition 14

Recommendation: NO

The results of publicly-funded research should be provided to the public at a reasonable cost. Unfortunately, Prop 14 perpetuates the lack of accountability and makes it worse by exempting its programs from legislative oversight, with any amendment requiring a 70% vote. These flaws might be due to a real estate developer putting this measure on the ballot without even direct input from the existing stem cell board, the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM). Finally, as a bond measure, Californians will have to pay back nearly double the amount that we borrow from wealthy people to finance it. We support stem cell research, which is already legal and underway in California for over a decade, but Prop 14 isn't necessary and will undermine the public interest. We agree with the California Environmental Justice Alliance: vote No on Prop 14.

Proposition 15

ENDORSEMENT: YES

Proposition 15, Schools and Communities First, is on the ballot this November with the goal of ending a tax loophole that gives billions of dollars a year to large commercial property owners and wealthy investors. It reallocates those funds to K-12 public schools, community colleges, and local public services such as parks, libraries, homeless services, health clinics, and public transit. Prop 15 will reclaim \$10-12 billion annually by requiring wealthy owners of commercial properties with assessed value over \$3 million to pay taxes based on market value, rather than purchase price.

The current and foreseeable economic distress triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic and the demand for racial justice make Prop 15 urgent. This ballot measure will direct much-needed resources to working-class communities of color that for far too long have been

underserved and underfunded. The capitalist class continues to hoard absurd levels of profit while California schools, services and communities suffer, but we can begin to put a stop to that with a Yes on Prop 15. Now is the time to tax the rich to fund our schools and services.

DSA-LA as well as DSA chapters across California have endorsed Prop 15 and are working together to tax the rich to fund our schools.

Proposition 16

Recommendation: YES

This proposition undoes the 1996 Prop 209 “California Civil Right Initiative” which sounds nice but wasn’t. It was introduced by the high rolling, white Southern California Republicans that were defending their right to be at the front of the line no matter what, even if they were late. Prop 209 essentially banned any form of affirmative action in public education, public employment, or public contracting and really caused Black and Latino enrollment in the UC system to plummet. Prop 209 thought reverse racism is a thing, Prop 16 says it is not.

Proposition 17

Recommendation: YES

Changes the California Constitution to allow people on parole for felony convictions to vote. Everyone that wants to vote should be able to vote, period.

Proposition 18

Recommendation: YES

You can vote in a primary if you are 17 as long as you will be 18 when the general election takes place. Real simple stuff. I don't know what anyone opposing this law is trying to do with their lives but they should get a hobby.

Proposition 19

Recommendation: NO

It's no wonder that REALTORS® are spending millions to push Prop 19: it will increase displacement in rapidly-gentrifying neighborhoods while draining the state treasury to give some of the wealthier people in society more property tax breaks. Specifically, it will limit the value of the capped assessment that children who live in their parents' home can get to \$1 million, allowing the value above that amount to be assessed at a higher rate. \$1 million is already less than the market value of increasing numbers of houses in areas like the Crenshaw District and Echo Park that working class families used to be able to afford. Having to pay property tax on the full market value above the cap will force these working class families to sell and move out, which means more sales for REALTORS®. Also, Prop 19 increases the number of times homeowners can claim this cap from once (i.e., when you retire) to three times, further increasing inequality. While removing the current cap on houses inherited by people who don't live in them is good, and earmarking some revenue for wildfires is too, this ballot measure causes more harm than good. Some people might confuse this with Prop 15 because both change property taxes, but they couldn't be more different, so please let people know: No on Prop 19.

Proposition 20

Recommendation: NO

In 2011 the Supreme Court ordered the State of California to immediately let people out of jail so that their prisons were no more than 137% over capacity. Many jails are still in violation of this and operating at over 137% capacity which is cruel to people and a great way to spread COVID-19. In 2014, Prop 47 turned some felonies into misdemeanors

(shoplifting, theft up to \$950, personal use of most illegal drugs), and people convicted of those crimes were eligible to come out of jail. Two years later, Prop 57 changed the rules around parole, allowing people convicted of nonviolent offenses to be eligible for parole and requiring judges, rather than prosecutors, to decide whether or not to charge juveniles as adults.

Tough-on-crime politicians blame the rise in homelessness on Props 47 and 57. Prop 20 would turn some of these measures back so that it would be easier to put people in jail and change some misdemeanors back to felonies at a judge's discretion. The proposition also includes language allowing for the collection of DNA samples for state and federal crime databases—a red flag given the myriad ways California police can abuse that sort of information. This prop is being heavily funded by the FOP, the prison guards' union and the police union because it gives them the two things they love most: more hours to work overtime and more freedom to put more people in jail.

Proposition 21

Recommendation: YES

This modifies Costa-Hawkins, eliminating the statewide requirement that rent control cannot be applied to any housing built more recently than 1995, and imposes a new “rolling rent control” so that any housing unit over fifteen years old would be eligible for local rent control policy. The measure allows for vacancy control to be implemented where it already exists but is not currently allowed by Costa-Hawkins. According to a study from Stanford, people who lived in rent-controlled properties when Costa-Hawkins was passed ended up saving a cumulative total of \$7 billion over eighteen years, which is a hell of an argument that rent control is a big tool to have when trying to solve our homelessness crisis.

Proposition 22

Recommendation: NO

All the way back in the fall of 2019, AB 5 reclassified gig employees as employees of the companies they work for, not independent contractors. This meant that their employers had to pay them minimum wage and all worker protections from the state and federal government applied to the people from whose labor they were profiting.

The companies that built their business model on pretending they were just some tech company middle man and not, in fact, an employer of hundreds of thousands of workers didn't care much for this regulation—so they cooked up Prop 22 to rewrite it. Prop 22 reclassifies app-based drivers as independent contractors and not employees.

Needless to say, struggling mom-and-pop apps like Uber, Door Dash, Lyft, etc. have spent a whopping **\$181,389,136.51** trying to get this to pass! Have you seen that commercial about the hard working guy just trying to make a little dough on the side and how he will be financially devastated if his right to be an independent contractor continues to be infringed on? I don't think this proposition is about protecting that hard working guy! I don't think these tech companies would have spent **\$181,389,136.51** trying to help that guy. If they wanted to help that guy, they could have given him one million dollars—and at less than 1% of what they spent it would be a bargain!

Nobody spends this kind of cash unless they are betting that they will at the least double their money. And it certainly doesn't seem that paying their drivers minimum wage for a year has hurt their bottom line. Protect workers and vote no. And if you know anyone that owns Postmates, hit them up for a million dollars because they have money to burn.

Proposition 23

Recommendation: YES

Kidney dialysis centers are, for some reason, not subjected to the same levels of oversight as other healthcare centers. They go largely unregulated and cause harm not only to people's health but also to their finances. Prop 23 requires that dialysis centers have a

licensed physician or a nurse practitioner on site during treatment in outpatient facilities. You might think to yourself, why isn't there already a doctor on site?! How is there not a doctor on site?! They are cleaning people's actively circulating blood, how is this legal?!

The LA Times claims "there's plenty of evidence that [Prop 23] is being improperly used as a labor organizing tool." DSA-LA says there's plenty of evidence that dialysis companies like DaVita Inc. and Fresenius Medical Care have paid \$1.2 million dollars to the members of the State Assembly and State Senate in this election cycle alone. They've also given \$250,000 to the CA Democratic Party and even more to various Democratic caucuses. There's also plenty of evidence that DaVita and Fresenius have been using their front organization, The American Kidney Fund, to steer patients away from Medicare because it pays them less than private insurance.

There's also plenty of evidence that non-white residents of Los Angeles County have profoundly higher rates of diabetes than white residents. This is one of the ways global corporations profit from keeping BIPOC sick and giving them inadequate care. Assemblymember Mike Gipson has received over \$18,800 from dialysis companies in just this election cycle! His district, AD 64, is over 95% BIPOC. This is why you should vote for and volunteer to help Fatima Iqbal-Zubair win her election in AD 64—and vote yes on Prop 23.

Proposition 24

No recommendation

Prop 24 is tricky and everyone seems to be at odds on it. In theory, Prop 24 would establish the California Privacy Protection Agency, which enforces legislation targeting companies that don't respect that you pushed a button on a Conde-Nast site saying you don't want them to sell your data. It also closes a loophole in the California Consumer Privacy Act of 2018 which allows Facebook and Google to say they are "sharing" instead of "selling" your data.

Supporters of the measure say it will give consumers more control over their personal data, allow you to shield your precise location from tracking, and give you more ability to sue companies if your email and password are stolen or hacked—which sounds good because who isn't for suing companies that let your life get ruined?

On the other hand, folks like the ACLU say it makes confusing changes before the full California Consumer Privacy Act has taken effect and will make it harder for the Legislature to go back and add fixes for any unintended consequences that arise later. It will delay a rule in the California Consumer Privacy Act that allows workers to find out what information employers have collected about them, make it easier for businesses to charge you more if you don't let them sell your data, and allow tech companies to grab your data when you leave California. That all sounds bad!

Ro Khanna and the NAACP both like it, and applaud provisions discouraging the use of algorithmic racial profiling. The ACLU and Dolores Huerta don't and say there are too many loopholes to be exploited.

Proposition 25

Recommendation: NO

We advocate for prison abolition. This will have the opposite effect. Don't be fooled: Prop 25 (1) automates racial profiling through algorithms, (2) gives unchecked power to judges, and (3) increases power and funding for probation departments. Nor do we support keeping bail bonds. Instead we support Measure J, which includes elements of pre-trial reform, as well as a zero bail schedule similar to what California court temporarily implemented for COVID-19 this spring.

The influence of those who benefit from mass incarceration runs deep in the Democratic Party. Here, the probation officers' union, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), lobbied for amendments to give more power and funding to them. As a result, many advocates of eliminating bail, like the ACLU and public defenders, withdrew their support.

LA County

LA County Board of Supervisors

BOS District 2

Recommendation: Holly Mitchell

The five members of the Board of Supervisors oversee the county's \$30 billion annual budget. District 2, which covers most of south LA, represents nearly two million people. All this to say, it's one of the most powerful seats in the entire nation. The incumbent, Mark Ridley-Thomas, has reached his term limit, so he's attempting to swap jobs with LA City Councilmember Herb Wesson Jr.

As City Council President from 2012 to January 2020, Wesson ran the city like a game of political chess. Over 99% of City Council votes were unanimous, and Wesson has sometimes publicly clashed with colleagues who refused to fall in line. Meanwhile, under his watch, homelessness skyrocketed, as did rent prices—that is, for everyone except his son, who was getting a huge discount from his landlord in exchange for Wesson's help approving a controversial high-rise project.

On the other hand, his opponent, State Senator Holly Mitchell, has a plan to scale up affordable housing, combat gentrification, and provide immediate housing stabilization loans to people at risk of homelessness. As senator of California's District 30 (representing Crenshaw, Culver City, South Central, and parts of Downtown Los Angeles and Inglewood), she co-authored the "Equity and Justice" package, a set of bills to reduce sentencing for juvenile offenders and place more focus on preventative and rehabilitative services. Mitchell has also called for turning LA's run-down juvenile detention halls into centers for community services and mental health counseling.

In the 7-way primary, Wesson received 30.63% of the vote, to Mitchell's 28.43%. This could be anyone's race.

LA County District Attorney

Recommendation: George Gascón

By now, most Angelenos know about incumbent Jackie Lacey's appalling eight-year reign as District Attorney, thanks to tireless organizing by Black Lives Matter. BLM's anti-Lacey campaign has brought urgent attention to Lacey's negligence, with over 600 people murdered by police under her watch. Earlier this year, a BLM protest outside Lacey's home ended with her husband pulling a gun on protesters. Lacey has set an extremely low bar for DA, but George Gascón would be a notable improvement. As the former San Francisco DA, Gascón has a relatively progressive record that includes decriminalizing drug possession, expunging marijuana convictions, and advocating for divestment from jails and investment in mental health facilities. Gascón is far from perfect, but it is imperative that we vote Lacey out of office and this could be a close race. Vote Gascón, if for no other reason than '**Jackie Lacey must go!**'

LA County Superior Court Judges

Note: Superior Court Judge races in which we have no recommendation are not listed

Judge of the Superior Court - Office #72: Myanna Dellinger

Dellinger has a wealth of experience and is a former Fulbright Scholar in climate change law and policy.

Judge of the Superior Court - Office #80: Klint James McKay

Currently an administrative law judge trying Affordable Care Act appeals for the Department of Social Services, he describes himself as valuing empathy and mercy and approaches cases with an understanding of the lives of working people.

LA County Measure J

Recommendation: YES

If passed by voters, Reimagine LA would shift ten percent of unrestricted county funding away from law enforcement and into services and programs for under-resourced communities. LA County Sheriff Alex Villanueva is absolutely furious that this ballot measure is making its way onto the ballot because it takes money away from the LA County Sheriff's Department. While the ballot measure does call for access to capital for small minority-owned businesses, with a focus on Black-owned businesses, the other things its calls for are: rent assistance, housing vouchers and accompanying supportive services for those at risk of losing their housing or without stable housing, capital funding for transitional, affordable and supportive housing (job training for the construction of that housing!) as well as alternatives to incarceration, including community-based restorative justice programs, pre-trial non-custody services and treatment, and community-based health services, health promotion, counseling, wellness and prevention programs, and mental health and substance use disorder services. All of those things are absolutely worth letting that one business-friendly part of the measure fly.

City of LA

LA City Council

Council District 4

ENDORSEMENT: Nithya Raman

DSA-LA members voted to endorse Nithya Raman in December 2019, ahead of her primary run against incumbent David Ryu. In the March 3 primary election, no candidate received a clear majority of the vote, sending the two highest vote-earners to a runoff in the November 3 general election. Raman and incumbent Ryu were separated by fewer than 3,000 votes in the primary, with Raman earning 41% of the vote to Ryu's 44%. It is exceedingly rare for a primary challenger to force an incumbent LA City Councilor to a runoff election.

Raman is running on a campaign that highlights ending homelessness, a Green New Deal for LA, municipal broadband, and making City Hall work for the people. She has pledged “not to accept a dollar from developers, lobbyists, or fossil fuel companies.” Prior to her run for City Council, Raman, who is trained as an urban planner, served as executive director of Times Up Entertainment and co-founded the SELAH Neighborhood Homeless Coalition.

Ryu entered City Hall as a progressive outsider, but has quickly embedded himself within the Los Angeles Democratic Party establishment. His donor list reads as a who's who of corporate and real estate lobbies with profit-seeking interests in the city council district, including Disney, Amazon, NBC Universal, and others in entertainment, real estate development, and the hotel industry.

Raman is a dues-paying member of DSA-LA, and other endorsing organizations include national DSA, CHIRLA Action Fund, Ground Game LA, the LA League of Conservation Voters, People's Action, Sunrise Movement LA, and the Working Families Party.

Council District 10

No Recommendation

Mark Ridley-Thomas (MRT), who once upon a time was probably not half bad, has been either a State Assemblymember, a State Senator, or a County Board Supervisor for the last eighteen years—and when you include the FIRST time he was on LA City Council, he’s been representing the same general region of Los Angeles for twenty-nine years!

MRT is literally attempting to swap the LA County Board of Supervisors seat he is termed out of with Herb Wesson’s City Council seat that Herb is termed out of. He’s collected money from every bad capitalist sector for eons and will never truly pick the side of working people over the millionaires and billionaires that have hit his campaign Venmo on the regular for the last 600 years.

While we respect some of the good votes he’s made while sitting on the County Board of Supervisors, he also has a long track record of sketchy corruption, and just because for some weird reason the fairly recent city council term limits don’t apply to former councilmembers from before Bill Clinton was president doesn’t mean he should spend the next four years sitting on the council, again.

Then there’s Grace Yoo, who is running for the CD10 seat for a second time. Grace Yoo is likely preferable to MRT, but here’s the thing: Koreatown has seen an explosion in homeless residents over the last decade and it is a legitimate humanitarian crisis. Current CD 10 Councilperson, Herb Wesson, was going to put bridge housing in a space on South Vermont that currently is a city parking lot. However, there was a very vocal contingent of residents in Koreatown who felt that Herb Wesson was bypassing their wishes as constituents by not notifying the community of the plan or holding any public comment until it was already underway—which is a legitimate gripe to have. However, the campaign against it was clearly not just about a matter of process. You can be “for” bridge housing in theory, but when you’re against it where homeless people actually live, your

support becomes a hard purchase for us to make. It's understandable that Koreatown residents should want a public say about public works, but the unhoused are residents as well, and if their voices don't count then how is protesting bridge housing not the NIMBYism of the more fortunate?

Yoo's current platform is generally headed in the right direction, and she has a track record of fighting for more affordable housing in Koreatown, but it's difficult to square her sometimes vitriolic 2018 protesting of the proposed bridge housing with her 2020 proposals to create it. Vote your conscience CD 10, because you're getting one or the other.

LA Unified School District Board of Education

BOE District 3

Recommendation: Scott Schmerelson

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, providing a staff librarian for all elementary schools, and prioritizing public schools over charter school expansion. He also highlights eliminating the environmental hazards produced by the Burbank Airport, Aliso Canyon natural gas storage facility, and other sites across the San Fernando Valley, which all directly impact the health of SFV public school students. Schmerelson is endorsed by UTLA and the LA County Federation of Labor.

Schmerelson's opponent Marilyn Koziatek is a director of Granada Hills Charter School, a publicly-financed private school that has more students than 86% of school districts nationwide, and has grown recently to include pre-kindergarten through 8th grade. She attempts to hide this fact, however, by referring to herself on her campaign website as a public school teacher and by using the word "public" no less than fifteen times on her

campaign bio page. She is endorsed, and her campaign is funded in part, by charter school advocates and the pro-charter, anti-union Teach for America.

This summer, as the Black Lives Matter uprisings led to calls for defunding the LAUSD school police, Schmerelson voted against a measure to reduce the school police department's \$70 million budget by 35%. While this vote is problematic and it may cause voters to rethink their support for Schmerelson, there is no question that public education in Los Angeles would be further eroded if a cheerleader for the charter school industry like Koziatek were to be elected.

Schmerelson comfortably led Koziatek and another opponent in the primary election, but did not secure the 50% threshold required to avoid a runoff election in November. Vote for Scott Schmerelson.

BOE District 7

Recommendation: Patricia Castellanos

A pro-union public school champion, Patricia Castellanos is an excellent candidate in a very close race. She is facing charter-backed candidate Tanya Ortiz Franklin, who has benefited from more than \$1.3 million in independent expenditures by pro-charter school philanthropist Bill Bloomfield. Castellanos is committed to smaller class sizes, safe school recovery in the wake of COVID-19, increased social support for students, and reinvestment in public schools. If elected, she would be the only board member with a child attending LAUSD. DSA-LA joins a long list of unions and progressive groups supporting Castellanos including UTLA, Jackie Goldberg, Dolores Huerta and many more.

LA Community College District Board of Trustees

Recommendation: Andra Hoffman, David Vela, Mike Fong, Nichelle Henderson

In solidarity with the American Federation of Teachers, the faculty and the deans, we recommend incumbents **Andra Hoffman, David Vela, and Mike Fong** as well as challenger **Nichelle Henderson** - the #CollegesWeAllDeserve slate.

The LACCD Board holds significant power over the city college system's \$5,600,000,000 annual budget. Within this budget, the board oversees an \$18 million dollar contract with the LA County Sheriff's Department, allocating law enforcement resources to the city college campuses. Historically, this office has been a stepping stone for many politicians including former Governor Jerry Brown and AD 54 representative, Miguel Santiago.

It also should be no surprise that charter school advocates are also interested in controlling these education seats in order to take hold of public funds. A charter challenge slate is also running for these seats.

The #CollegesWeAllDeserve slate wants to keep public control of our schools.

Nichelle Henderson is an African American union educator at Cal State LA who teaches education. 20% of LACCD's students are African American, yet there is currently no black representation on the board. Henderson is a leader in California faculty and is endorsed by her colleague at Cal-State, Dr. Melina Abdullah, co-founder of Black Lives Matter LA.

Her incumbent opponent Scott Svonkin, a former parole officer, was censured after threatening Board President Andra Hoffman and frequently insults non-white students in public comment.

We also recommend Henderson's slate-mates, incumbents who vote on the side of unions and public schools.

David Vela is a Latinx and LGBT political consultant with the Lee Andrews Group. Formerly a jobs policy lead for Jackie Goldberg (LAUSD Board Member), Vela advocates for more community college funding in the state capital and in his past term advocated

for giving monetary and technology resources directly to students during the COVID-19 shutdown. He's also been endorsed by UTLA.

Mike Fong works for the Economic & Workforce Development Department and serves as Director of Policy and Government Relations of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, the city agency that oversees the Neighborhood Councils. With his connections in city hall, he's prioritized workforce development for the city by insisting on job programs that don't require students to transfer to four year universities.

Andra Hoffman is running for re-election for seat 1. In addition to her position on the LACCD board, she serves as Second Vice President of the Community College League of California Trustee Board, advocating for LACC funding at the state level. After the COVID-19 shutdown, Hoffman took swift action to ensure student workers continued to receive pay through the semester. She also worked to make community colleges "sanctuary campuses" that would protect students from ICE and the sheriff's department.

San Fernando Valley, San Gabriel Valley, and East LA

Alhambra City Council

District 4

Recommendation: Sasha Renée Pérez

Sasha Renée Pérez is a community organizer for first-generation BIPOC college students running against an incumbent who is a police officer. She supports the Alhambra Election and Campaign Finance Act, Climate Action Plan, affordable housing, and renter protections.

Baldwin Park Mayor

Recommendation: Emmanuel Estrada

Emmanuel Estrada is a progressive calling for affordable housing, parks, rent control and police accountability. The current mayor, Manuel Lozano, built industrial warehouses on public land. Also, after a cannabis distributor gave campaign contributions to politicians, Lozano supported granting the distributor a monopoly in the city.

Burbank City Council

Council At-Large Seat

ENDORSEMENT: Konstantine Anthony

DSA-LA members voted to endorse Konstantine Anthony in August 2020, in his run for a seat on Burbank's entirely at-large City Council. Konstantine is autistic and has experienced homelessness. He is a DSA member who makes his identity as a socialist a major piece of his campaign, his online presence, and his analysis of the problems facing

Burbank residents. He is a leader in the campaign to pass a rent control ballot measure in the city. He is also campaigning on issues of a just post-pandemic recovery; improving shelter and services for homeless Burbank residents, where currently no homeless shelters exist; bringing better public transportation to the city; a Green New Deal for Burbank; and other issues of substance to working class and renting residents of Burbank.

The Burbank City Council has only five seats, so working to get him elected could significantly sway decisions made in the city of approximately 100,000 residents. This is an opportunity to build the bench of socialist elected officials in greater Los Angeles and put socialist policy to work where people might least expect it.

Burbank Ballot Measure RC

Recommended: YES

Measure RC, backed by the Burbank Tenants' Rights Committee and DSA-LA Burbank City Council candidate Konstantine Anthony, would significantly improve the stability of renters in Burbank. Despite common misperceptions about the City of Burbank, renters make up 59% of the city's population, which is 14% higher than the statewide average, and the median household income in the city is \$69,000. Bernie Sanders won a clear plurality of the 2020 primary vote in Burbank, where he earned 8,500 votes. 5,400 Burbank voters went for Joe Biden, 5,100 for Donald Trump, and 5,000 for Elizabeth Warren.

Without meaningful controls on the cost of renting a home in Burbank or elsewhere, the property-owning class is essentially free to increase rents as it pleases. Renters also tend to have very little power in the court system compared to landlords, especially in eviction cases, where renters rarely have legal representation but landlords almost always do. Unregulated increases in the cost of renting a home lead to frequent moves among low-income renters, which destabilizes communities and inhibits childhood development among kids growing up in working class households. Uncontrolled rent increases also

lead to new instances of homelessness as households with the lowest incomes are “priced out” of not only their homes, but also—in the worst cases—entire communities or cities.

Enter Measure RC. This measure applies a rent cap on homes built before February 1, 1995, capping annual rent increases at 7% or the increase in the Consumer Price Index, whichever is lower. The measure implements a “just cause” standard on eviction proceedings in the city. The measure also establishes an updated Landlord-Tenant Commission with the ability to initiate lawsuits, implement new renter protections, and operate independently from the city council, city manager, and city attorney. Measure RC would add stability to the lives of the 59% of Burbank residents who rent their homes and expand the possibility of who can afford to live in the city in the future. Vote YES on Measure RC.

Central Basin Municipal Water District

Division 4 Director

Recommendation: Leticia Vasquez-Wilson

Vasquez-Wilson, an incumbent, led the effort to stop the state legislature from placing the Central Basin Municipal Water District in receivership (SB 625), a step that would have taken away voters’ right to control the district and led to the privatization of another nearby water district recently. This guide also recommends Vasquez-Wilson for the Water Replenishment District of Southern California, Division 5 (see below).

Division 5 Director

Recommendation: Rodolfo Cortes Barragan

Barragan organized protests to stop the state legislature from placing the Central Basin Municipal Water District in receivership (SB 625), a step that would have taken away voters’ right to control the district and led to the privatization of another nearby water

district recently. By contrast, the incumbent supported SB 625. We recommended Barragan in a prior race for Congress as well.

College of the Canyons Board of Trustees

Trustee Area 3

Recommendation: Sebastian Cazares

Cazares is a DSA-LA member, a Bernie 2020 delegate, and a former COC student body president running for a seat on the board. The board has a lawyer, a realtor, a doctor, a financial manager, and one retired professor, but no student representation. Cazares is advocating for services to students during COVID-19 by directly budgeting for services (buying books, giving food, etc.) for students in need. His website says he “believe[s] that trustees should also be advocates for affordable housing in the community,” and cites the rising cost of housing as a problem felt by the student body. He’s endorsed by the teachers, faculty, his colleagues from student government, Our Revolution *and* the Los Angeles Democrats. He’s a great candidate and if you can vote for him, we give Sebastian Cazares for College of Canyons Board of Trustees a strong recommendation.

Downey City Council

Council District 3

Recommendation: Catherine Alvarez

Catherine Alvarez founded the Downey Tenants Union and has rent control and eviction protections as her priorities.

Council District 5

Recommendation: Juan Martinez

Juan Martinez is a Downey Tenants Union volunteer whose platform includes rental assistance in the wake of COVID-19, environmental sustainability, and expansion of community services.

El Monte Mayor

Recommendation: Irma Zamorano

Irma Zamorano has experience as a city commissioner and elected school board member. Her top priorities are housing issues: affordable housing and rent/mortgage forbearance and forgiveness. The current mayor, Andre Quintero, a Biden DNC delegate, not only sold a public park to a developer, he shielded Councilmember Jerry Velasco from the release of public records about Velasco's workers' compensation claim, even the amounts paid.

El Monte City Council

Council At-Large Seat

Recommendation: Gabriel Ramirez

Gabriel Ramirez is a community organizer for renter rights, campaign finance reform, and police accountability in a city whose officers have been caught on video beating unarmed, nonviolent people. His main opponent is an incumbent, Jerry Velasco (a Biden DNC Credentials Committee appointee), who received workers' compensation from the city for a collision in which he injured a driver after drinking at an El Monte police academy graduation. Victoria "Vicky" Martinez, the other incumbent, is the only council member who supports members of the public who speak out against Councilmember Velasco. The other challenger, Alma D. Puente, is a lawyer who hasn't posted much about policy, but shared a post from the former President of Mexico, Enrique Peña Nieto, who left office under accusations of massive bribery in an attempt to privatize the national oil company.

El Monte Measure HN

Recommendation: YES

HN will authorize the city to build more subsidized affordable housing.

Montebello City Council

Council At-Large Seat

Recommendation: Scarlet Peralta

Scarlet Peralta was a Bernie 2020 campaign staffer who serves on the Montebello Investment Committee and volunteers with numerous community groups. Her priorities include public banking, sustainability, housing, and increased transparency in City Hall. She's been endorsed by State Controller Betty Yee and is running against incumbent Jack Hadjinian.

Mountains and Recreation Conservation Authority Measure HH

Recommendation: YES

This is a parcel tax to pay for fire protection. While parcel taxes usually are regressive because they're the same amount for any property, regardless of value, this tax is levied only on affluent homeowners in the hills between the 405 and the 101 Freeways to pay for part of the cost of their fire protection.

Water Replenishment District of Southern California Board of Directors

Division 5 Director

Recommendation: Leticia Vasquez-Wilson

Vasquez-Wilson led the effort to stop the state legislature from placing the Central Basin Municipal Water District in receivership (SB 625), a step that would have taken away voters' right to control the district and led to the privatization of another nearby water district recently. This guide also recommends Vasquez-Wilson for the Central Basin Municipal Water District, Division 4.

Whittier City School District Board of Education

Trustee Area 1

Recommendation: Caro Jauregui

Caro Jauregui supports workers' rights to collective bargaining, a moratorium on new charter schools, reallocating school police funding for other purposes, and increasing funding for special education. Through her advocacy at California Walks, Jauregui has a professional background in promoting pedestrian safety, which is also important for schools.

South LA, West LA, and South Bay

Culver City Council

Council At-Large Seats

Recommendation: Yasmine-Imani McMorrin, Freddy Puza, and Darrel Menthe

Eight candidates are vying for three open seats on the five-member Culver City Council this November, and the top three choices are clear: Yasmine-Imani McMorrin, Freddy Puza and Darrel Menthe. Göran Eriksson is the only incumbent seeking reelection, as the other four councilmembers are either mid-term (Fisch and Lee), termed out (Sahli-Wells) or declining to seek a second term (Small).

Incumbent Eriksson, together with the other right-leaning candidates Robert Zirgulis and Heather Wollin, are the darlings of Protect Culver City, a landlord-funded PAC which bankrolled the anti-renter Measure B. The PAC went from decrying the hardship of “Mom ‘n Pop” landlords who couldn’t throw tenants on the street during COVID-19 to adopting a black badge favicon and “defend the police” platform amidst the George Floyd “riots”. While Zirgulis and Wollin are running on an explicitly pro-cop agenda, Eriksson has a track record as the sole dissenting voice on a progressive Council.

The candidates in the center are native son Albert Vera and Khin Khin Gyi. Vera has a nice-guy reputation in Culver City as the son of a former City Councilmember and owner of the landmark Sorrento Italian Market. A former cop, he also has a criminal record stretching from 2004-2008 marked by unusual leniency from prosecutors, thanks no doubt to his family’s prominence in the community. His campaign walks a centrist tightrope, calling for affordable housing without rent control, dialogue around systemic racism without defunding the police, and bold action on the environment without mentioning fossil fuels. Khim Khin Gyi is a physician and past president of the Culver City Democratic Club who opposes defunding the police.

Thankfully, the group of eight is rounded out by three true progressives who would continue the Council's efforts to center underrepresented voices in Culver City. Yasmine-Imani McMorrin, who has pledged not to accept contributions from developers, tobacco, fossil fuel or law enforcement, supports a 50% reduction in the CCPD budget and is committed to upzoning and strong renter protections. She has racked up endorsements from US Representative Karen Bass, the Heart of LA Democratic Club, the Stonewall Democratic Club, Westside Young Democrats and the California Young Democrats. Like McMorrin, Freddy Puza is a member of Protect Culver City Renters and has echoed the need to cut the police budget in half. Darrel Menthe also supports renter protections and inclusionary zoning to increase the housing stock, but offers less explicit support for other reform measures including defunding the police. McMorrin is the clear leader in this group of three progressives, who if elected would join forces with incumbents Alex Fisch and Daniel Lee for a sweep of the Council and a new era for the city.

Culver City Unified School District Board of Education

Board At-Large Seats

Recommendation: Kelly Kent and Paula Amezola de Herrera

The race for the five-member Governing Board of the Culver City Unified School District features incumbents Anne Allaire Burke and Kelly Kent, as well as challengers Scott Zeidman and Paula Amezola de Herrera. Chamber of Commerce-backed incumbent Burke is running for another term, while former Board member Scott Zeidman is coming out of retirement after being urged to step into the race "by numerous stakeholders." Zeidman apparently intends to focus on "fiscal responsibility" and "safety in our schools" (i.e. cutting budgets and keeping cops in schools) and, not surprisingly, he's endorsed by the Culver City Police Officers' Association.

Challenger Paula Amezola de Herrera is a Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commissioner with an MPH in epidemiology. As a child, she was shuttled back and forth between the U.S. and Mexico nearly every year in response to the financial pressures

faced by her family, and her campaign underscores the critical importance of racial, housing, health, and environmental justice to a student's educational experience and outcomes.

Incumbent Kelly Kent is a neuroscientist who has racked up endorsements from the California Democratic Renters Council, The Sierra Club, the Culver City Federation of Teachers, US Representative Karen Bass and the four progressive members of the City Council, among others. Calling out the need for a racial justice framework to meet each student's needs, she commits to "continuing to put our city's historically underserved students first." Kent and her father were recently the subject of an online attack by the Culver City Police Officers' Association, which overlaid footage of violent rioters and looters on her tweet supporting the LA protests against police brutality, along with the caption "Do we want this in our community?" Yes, indeed we do. Vote for Kent and Amezola de Herrera.

Culver City Measure B

Recommendation: NO

Measure B would require voter approval of any rent control measures in Culver City and was introduced as a direct attack on much-needed renter protections passed last year by a newly progressive City Council. Measure B would repeal all local rent control, including any permanent protections passed prior to the November election. The only prospect for renter relief would be some future voter-approved ballot measure.

Even before COVID-19, the housing crisis had reached a breaking point in Culver City, which is the only city on the westside with no renter protections. Nearly half of the city's households are renters, of which 43% are rent-burdened (paying more than 30% of their income on rent) or severely rent-burdened (paying more than half their income on rent). Last August, local groups loosely organized as "Protect Culver City Renters" successfully petitioned City Council to adopt a year-long rent freeze capping increases at 3%, with the goal of protecting tenants from retaliatory eviction while the city debated a permanent

measure. Predictably, a PAC funded by out-of-town landlords and cynically dubbed “Protect Culver City” quickly emerged and paid canvassers \$15 per signature for Measure B, which they frequently mischaracterized as *for* rent control. Against the backdrop of the spiraling pandemic-induced rent crisis, the City Council voted in July to continue the interim freeze through October 31st.

Proponents of Measure B argue that renters can rely on the statewide Tenant Protection Act, which caps annual increases at 10% and places the burden of enforcement on renters. But as families across the city face severe housing instability, the statewide backstop measure doesn’t cut it and the City Council should retain the ability to work with the community to craft meaningful and tailored relief. “B” is for Bad - vote No on Measure B.

Culver City Measure RE

Recommendation: YES

This progressive real estate transfer tax was placed on the ballot to help fill the gaping hole in the city’s general fund caused by the COVID-19 crisis. A real estate transfer tax is essentially a one-time sales tax for real property, except that unlike the 10.5% paid by everyone in the city on almost everything they buy, it’s currently set at a miniscule 0.45% flat rate payable upon sale of real estate. Under the current system, Symantec Corporation gets to pay the same 0.45% rate on the \$120M sale of their business park that a homeowner has to pay when selling their \$1.5M property.

Measure RE introduces a progressive marginal rate structure akin to the income tax structure, with four brackets: 0.45% for sales of up to \$1.5M, 1.5% for \$1.5-3M, 3% for \$3-10M and 4% for sales over \$10M (adjusted for inflation). The tax will only affect roughly 30% of all property sales in the city and will be concentrated among those who are most able to pay: luxury and commercial property owners and real estate flippers.

Wealthy property owners and flippers who have benefited from the significant appreciation in Culver City property values year after year should pay their fair share when cashing out, especially in this time of fiscal crisis.

El Camino College Board of Trustees

Trustee Area 1

Recommendation: George A. Turner, Jr.

George A. Turner, Jr. is a public defender lawyer who is running in Inglewood to address a lack of full-time faculty and staff, a lack of diversity in those full-time positions, a reimagining of the relationship between alumni and the campus, and the desperate need to address food insecurity among current students. He's running against incumbent Kenneth A. Brown, works as an engineer for Northrup Grumman, one of the nation's largest military contractors.

Trustee Area 3

Recommendation: Peter Elhamey Aziz

Peter's priorities are equal access to online education, onsite housing for low income students, resources for students who can't afford food, and collaboration for trade professions with the Southern California Regional Occupational Center (SCROC).

Manhattan Beach Unified School District Board of Trustees

Board At-Large Seat

Recommendation: Jason Boxer

Jason Boxer is a DSA-LA member, a Bernie 2020 delegate, and an educator who's running for a seat on a board currently controlled by business and finance leaders. Jason

is fighting for more school funding, better teacher pay, no cuts to students, YES on Prop 15, and bringing democracy to the classroom by giving students the opportunity to design their own curricula. Jason is a grassroots activist in Manhattan Beach with firsthand classroom experience as a teacher and student in the district. They're another great DSA candidate and if you're in this district, we give Jason Boxer for Manhattan Beach Unified School District a strong recommendation.

West Hollywood City Council

Council At-Large Seats

Recommendation: Shepi Shyne and Marco Colantonio

First and foremost, let's talk about how unacceptable it is that long-time city council member and former Mayor John Duran is even running. Duran has been accused by employees at city hall of sexual harassment to the tune of \$500,000 in settlements. He gave city jobs to Grindr hookups. He doesn't pay his taxes. He used his position on the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles (where there were also accusations of sexual harassment) to funnel political donations from Athens Disposal, who were rewarded with a fifteen-year city contract. We could easily add another fifty pages to this guide going into detail about how John Duran is an out of control garbage monster.

The LA Times demanded he step down, and that's before you even get to his friendship with Ed Buck, whom Duran has allegedly been harassing sex workers to not testify against in Buck's upcoming murder trials. He is d-r-i-p-p-i-n-g in real estate and developer money. Despite the West Hollywood City Council voting to censure Duran last year, he has gotten an endorsement from State Assembly member Richard Bloom (who is another person we don't think you should vote for) and for some reason, Antonio Villaraigosa, which we'll be sure to file away for later.

Once upon a time West Hollywood was a pretty progressive place. Having been unincorporated until 1984, it was formed by a coalition of renters to implement rent control

when LA County was looking to abolish it. Once incorporated, West Hollywood immediately put some of the strongest rent control laws in the country in place (that the 1995 Costa Hawkins Rental Housing Act took the teeth out of FYI). It was the first city to create a domestic partner registry as well as extending benefits to domestic partners of city employees. It was the first city in Southern California to decriminalize marijuana. Over time like a lot of progressive things and the LGBTQ movement in general, West Hollywood slowly slipped into the comfort of liberal stability and focused its energies on the production and maintenance of rainbow capitalism and becoming one of the most concentrated populations of gay white men in the world.

West Hollywood isn't going to return to its progressive roots anytime soon but that isn't to say that the possibility isn't always stirring below the surface. The options here are not great; most of the candidates are either extremely focused on businesses, have fairly open disdain for their homeless neighbors, are against defunding the police or are part of the non-profit industrial complex. The one thing most of these candidates do agree on is renter protections. This is especially important because there is a significant population of seniors from the LGBTQ community who are dependent on living in their rent-protected apartments and often do not have family members to count on for help. West Hollywood residents that look at the DSA-LA voter guide for advice on who to vote for would be best off electing Shepi Shyne and Marco Colantonio.

Shepi Shyne has pledged not to take any developer money, which is something she has actually stuck to and is calling for increased renter protections and supportive and transitional housing. She wants to move some of West Hollywood's funding from their contract with the LA County Sheriff's Department to more public works and social programs to address crime and increase MET teams. She also calls for making bathroom and laundry facilities available 24 hours a day for houseless residents. She is endorsed by AFL-CIO and UNITE Here Local 11

Marco Colantonio is a realtor and the publisher of WeHo Times. The only reason we're even suggesting him is because unlike most of the other people running in this race, at

least Colantonio doesn't want to push his unhoused neighbors out of the city limits and understands that trust from the unhoused community is something that must be built for programs to succeed. He supports transitional housing and wants the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce to dissolve its political PAC.



**Democratic
Socialists of
America**

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DSA LA
November 3, 2020
Voter Guide

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