

Central Valley Progressive Political Action Committee
Questionnaire for 2018 U.S. Congress Candidates

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Candidate's Signature _____ Date 3/7/2018

Please limit your responses to no more than 300 words per question

- 1) What do you feel have been the three major shortcomings of current Central Valley leadership in the national Congress? What would you do differently?

Health care

I entered the race for Congress when I saw the frontal assault that the GOP Congress was making on the ACA. Every GOP member of Congress in the Valley Nunes, Valadao, McClintock, Denham all voted to repeal the ACA. If they had been successful more than 200,000 Valley would have immediately lost their affordable health care. That's disgraceful. In Congress I would support a national single payer health insurance plan.

Agriculture

While farmers are quick to blame government for water shortages in the Valley they have been behind in finding more sustainable methods of farming. Part of the problem is that small farmers have been moved out of the market by farm giants. This is devastating to Valley residents who can still use farming to rise into the middle class. In Congress, I would propose protecting much of our farmland, so that agriculture can continue and will always be an important part of our local economy.

Guns

I am not afraid of the NRA and in Congress I would propose the following gun safety laws:

- Mandate gun insurance for all gun owners just like we do or people who drive a car. To obtain the insurance one must prove ownership of a gun lockers and guns safety locks.
- Mandate yearly gun safety classes for all gun owners. These would include a gun safety test and a shooting range test.

- Make passing a mental health evaluation a stipulation for gun insurance and permit renewal. Mandatory background checks and waiting periods for everyone buying a gun at a gun show. This would include monetary fines for the first two strikes and the permanent termination of their show permits upon the third strike.
- Raising the national age for buying a gun or rifle to 21 years of age.

2) What are your top concerns with the current administration's enacted and proposed tax plans? Explain.

As with most policy proposals adopted by this horrible administration, the tax plan overwhelmingly favored the top 1% of our society and disregarded the needs of the people. The tax cuts will balloon the budget deficit and put stress on having the needed funds to protect healthcare, secure Social Security, rebuild our infrastructure, ensure access to higher education for our children and secure our environment. Instead of believing in a false "trickle-down effect," one that was evidently proven wrong by the recent actions of AT&T; where the gains from the tax proposals resulted in many losing their job, we need to vote-in leadership into Congress that will stop securing the greed of the 1% and start working to restore the American Dream.

3) Do you support a single-payer healthcare system? Why or why not? What will you do to ensure access to high-quality, affordable healthcare?

Yes, I fully support the passage and implementation of a national single payer healthcare system. As a healthcare professional responsible for running two large non-profit healthcare organizations, I understand fully what the ACA has meant to healthcare access for all Americans. Without the ACA we would still see large segments of our most vulnerable communities unable to access healthcare. The ACA is a good start to providing a bridge to single payer. Single payer will allow our nation to provide quality care for everyone and bring costs under control. The adoption of a single payer healthcare system may be the most important legislative priority in our nation at this point in time.

To accommodate any a shortage of providers, I would support alternative methods of providing care such as telemedicine through technology and/or store and forward. At the same time, by streamlining many of the daunting administrative tasks, more healthcare providers will be able to concentrate on quality of care, leaving room to improve upon the many measures used in testing quality of healthcare. We will also work on studying environmental issues that contribute negatively to many health conditions such as broken roads, hazardous work places, pollution, etc.

4) What will you do to defend, strengthen and expand access to Social Security?

I think one of the most important things we can do to secure Social Security is to remove the current cap on taxable wages. Currently Social Security taxes are capped to only the first \$118,500 earned. By removing the cap and taxing all wages, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities projects we would close 9/10 of the current projected funding shortfall for Social Security. It is time the 1% pay their fair share of taxes to support crucial public safety net programs such as Social Security.

Also, I support some means testing for social security. Certainly, an individual making a pension of more than \$100,000 a year should not be eligible to receive Social Security benefits. The saving from these efforts could be used to expand services to those modest incomes that receive benefits.

5) What will you do to help the United States establish a fair immigration policy, including recognition of the importance of protecting those seeking political asylum, a clear path to citizenship and protection for recipients of Deferred Action for Early Childhood Arrivals (DACA)?

Whether your family came to the United States on the Mayflower, through Ellis Island, from Mexico or Latin America, or like mine as refugees—we all have one thing in common—we came for political freedom, economic opportunity, and the protection of the Bill of Rights.

I support both DACA protections and the Dream Act. It is both right and smart to promote a legal path to citizenship for our best and brightest young people. The fact that the Trump administration is renegeing on their promise is both cruel and unintelligent. What value is there to our society to deport a college student on their way to the Ivy League? We need to keep our promises.

Last year, many of us watched nervously as wild eyed supporters at Trump rallies chanted, "Build a wall." Building a multi-billion-dollar wall across the U.S./Mexico border is bad idea. The U.S. conducts more than half-a-trillion dollars a year of trade with Mexico. So, damaging relations with such an important trading partner is short-sighted and will cost Californians jobs.

A wall can't be established in many areas and where it can be built it will cost U.S. taxpayers billions of dollars that can be better used for things like expanding health care.

The truth is that most undocumented immigrants enter the U.S. by overstaying their visas and not by crossing the border, making the wall useless.

Our current immigration policy is fraught with hypocrisy and inconsistencies. On one hand, we have severely restricted people's ability to obtain a visa, on the other hand, we covet the labor of many undocumented immigrants. I support reshaping the U.S. visa policy to create

legal categories for entry that mirror the actual reality of immigration into the U.S. and supports fair wages as to protect jobs for Americans.

6) Do you support federal action on gun control? If so, what are your priorities for such efforts? If not, why not and what would you do to decrease gun-related violence in the United States? Explain.

As a gun owner, I understand how important it is to stand up to the extremist and corporate controlled gun groups that are holding our nation hostage. The NRA is completely controlled by fringe gun extremist and giant corporate gun makers who place profit over the safety of our children. As a Member of Congress, I will move to reverse the Dickey Amendment and enact the common-sense gun controls an overwhelming majority of Americans support. We need to stop the proliferation of guns in our communities by standing up to NRA extremist who want to make it easier to get a conceal gun permit. We need to stand up to those who would rather make our schools unsafe by arming teachers and demand they fully fund and support measure to ensure those who should not have access to guns never get them.

Here some examples of regulations that I would support:

Mandate gun insurance for all gun owners just like we do or people who drive a car. To obtain the insurance one must prove ownership of a gun lockers and guns safety locks.

Mandate yearly gun safety classes for all gun owners. These would include a gun safety test and a shooting range test.

Make passing a mental health evaluation a stipulation for gun insurance and permit renewal.

Mandatory background checks and waiting periods for everyone buying a gun at a gun show. This would include monetary fines for the first two strikes and the permanent termination of their show permits upon the third strike.

Raising the national age for buying a gun or rifle to 21 years of age.

7) What do you feel can be done to address increased militarization within the United States? Address both militarization within foreign policy, including our increased reliance on military rather than diplomatic solutions to international conflict, and militarization within the United States, including our increased militarization of local law enforcement?

As our world continues to shrink, it is imperative that the United States move the world forward in finding ways to negotiate away our differences instead of resorting to military force. As Congresswoman Barbara Lee has advocated since her historic solitary no vote against Congress giving President Bush a blank check for the use of military power, Congress must stand up and restore the Constitutional Checks and Balances on the use of military force. It is imperative that we have a Congress that will stop providing the President, of any

party, with the ability to use military force without the consent of Congress. We must repeal the Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF). This mistake has allowed us to spend the last 15 plus years in a cycle of endless wars and the expansion of militarization.

Additionally, this blank check to use military force given by Congress to the President, has helped create a situation where declared excess military equipment has been provided to our local law enforcement. The increased militarization of our law enforcement helps feed the growing discourse between communities and police departments. We must move away from this militarization effort and refocus on proven community-based policing that helps solve problems without the use of over force.

- 8) What are the four most pressing civil rights issues facing the United States? What could/should Congress do to help address these?

The past election has demonstrated that one of the most pressing civil rights issues facing our nation is the protection of the right to vote. This Republican led Congress has taken every opportunity to undermine key civil rights legislation such as the Voting Rights Act to suppress the rights of underrepresented communities to vote. In addition, more and more states have utilized this dismantling of voting protection to gerrymander districts at all levels of government and deny representation to communities who deserve it.

In addition, we must address the criminal justice system. Our current system deliberately harms our most vulnerable communities and denies basic human rights to many. Movements such as Black Lives Matter clearly capture the fundamental civil rights issues that must be addressed in our criminal justice system.

We will continually need to address the issues around equal pay. We can no longer tolerate the injustices that are occurring in the work place due to gender, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, religion, etc. Congress must always support equal pay for equal work and hold all employers accountable for any violations of such civil rights.

Finally, I believe the treatment of immigrants is a key civil rights issues that we must stand up and protect. DACA and Dreamers, although usually couched as an immigration issue, are much broader and at their core are a reflection of our nation's commitment to civil rights. We must stand up for these families and protect their right to due process.

- 9) What policies do you support to help reduce the growing economic disparity between the top 10 percent and the bottom 50 percent of the American population? Explain.

Adopting a living wage, instead of a minimum wage, is crucial to creating a new economic foundation for American families. It is unacceptable that we have individuals and families being forced to work two or three jobs per person to attempt to provide themselves with

food and shelter. This is especially true in California as the cost of living is forcing more and more families into desperate living conditions.

In addition, we must protect the very basic rights of people to organize into a union. As a Member of Congress, I will always vote to protect the rights of workers to organize and have union representation. The attacks on organized labor by Republicans, see Wisconsin, have been successful and have hurt the ability of families to protect themselves from horrible legislation like President Trump's tax cuts for the 1%.

Finally, I believe that the American Dream has always been built on the access to higher education. It is unacceptable that the rising costs of higher education has made this path to economic security unaffordable to a growing number of our friends and neighbors. Even when able to attend college, new crushing student loan debt ensure that any economic gains associated with earning a degree are immediately lost to repaying of crippling loans. In addition, we must find new and sustainable programs that provide young people choosing not to attend college with the opportunity at apprenticeships in skilled labor that will provide real economic security. Growing fields like renewable energy, especially the installation of solar panels, is an example of economic opportunities available if we support them.

10) Do you support efforts to forgive student loan debt and establish a policy of providing free public higher education in the United States? Explain.

Yes, I fully support forgiving student loan debt and providing free public higher education in the United States. The rapidly rising costs of higher education, in combination with crippling student loans, has created an oppressive "opportunity tax" on students and families that ensure they will never be able to fully reach the American Dream. Just a few decades ago, obtaining a college degree allowed families to find economic stability and growth. Now, even after obtaining a college degree, students face the daunting task of paying of student loans. This student loan debt cripples their ability to buy homes, take care of their parents and provide for their children. We must address this issue to ensure opportunity for future generations.

11) What do you see as the main issues affecting organized labor, and what will you do to support and strengthen access to labor unionization within the United States?

The very right to organize and be represented by a union is under attack by President Trump, Republican Congress, Republican Supreme Court and corporate America. Congress must ensure the fundamental right of workers to organize and collectively bargain. As a Member of Congress, I will stand up for this right and support legislation to ensure it is fully protected by law.

In addition, the Supreme Court will soon be ruling on *Janus v American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees* that could cripple our public employee unions. This is an

attempt by the far corporate right to expand their assaults on unions and impose right-to-work laws on the entire nation. We need a Congress who will be willing to fight to uphold the fundamental basic rights to organize and collectively bargain.

12) What will you do to support and protect fairness in voting access, encourage voting participation and combat voter suppression?

We must restore and expand the Voting Rights Act. Since the Republican Supreme Court struck down parts of the Voting Rights Act, Republican Governors and State Legislatures have taken this opportunity to attack voting rights and to gerrymander their way to an artificial majority in Congress. The recent court decision in Pennsylvania regarding the gerrymandering of their Congressional Districts demonstrates how we must work to restore the full power of the Voting Rights Act.

In addition, we must stand up to efforts to suppress voting by stopping Voter ID laws, the purging of voters off voting lists, restoring voting rights of those once incarcerated and fully embracing early and mail in voting. Every ounce of progress made over the last 50 plus years in the expansion of voting rights is under attack by Republicans. We must have a Congress who will stop this attack on our most fundamental right, the right to vote.

Thank you so much for your time and energy in completing this questionnaire. Your answers will be distributed to our members prior to our March endorsement meeting through the CVPPAC Web site.