

**Central Valley Progressive Political Action Committee**  
**Endorsement Questionnaire for Fresno City Council Candidates**

Name Esmeralda Soria District # 1

Name of Campaign Committee

Soria for City Council 2018

Address 1341 N. Lucerne Ln City Fresno Zip 93728

E-mail: soria4council2018@gmail.com

Phone: (559) 920-0579

Campaign Manager: Terry Cox

Candidate's Signature  Date 3/8/18

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

- 1) As a City Council member, describe what you will do in each of the following areas:
  - a) Improving air quality - I help promote this by supporting bicycle infrastructure, infill development to decrease vehicle miles traveled. I am also a big supporter of planting more trees in our community.
  - b) Improving Fresno's public transportation levels of service - Strong supporter of public transit, helped with agreements to provide students at FCC free bus passes.
  - c) Reducing urban sprawl - I am a strong supporter of investing the inner city, infill areas and disadvantaged neighborhoods. I was successful in getting an incentive program passed to help incentive infill development and investments in poor neighborhoods.
  - d) Supporting high-speed rail - I have been a strong and avid vocal supporter of HSR and making sure that our local businesses and workers benefit from the employment opportunities.

- 2) What specifically do you plan to do to ensure that Fresno's stock of affordable, safe and decent housing increases significantly while you're on the City Council? Include in your answer if you support and would you strengthen a comprehensive routine interior code inspection program for rental housing?

I am one of the strongest supporters of building more affordable housing developments for poor and working families in our city. I secured \$1million of general fund money to be utilized for affordable housing. I am working hard to get the financing from the State of CA to build the Blackstone and Mckinley affordable mixed-used housing development, that will bring a senior center space and a health clinic on site. I introduced a tiny house ordinance - they can be used a second dwellings in the city. We need to continue to move the needle on housing not just for the poor but homeless. I support building a shelter and would like to see women and children be a priority for our city.

I would support a re-evaluation of the rental housing inspection program. Currently the ASSET program that was created has been successful and we have a former CRLA attorney spearheading this division in the city.

- 3) Evaluate the successes and failures of City Hall's approach to ending homelessness and what, if anything, you would do differently. Include your position on the new anti-camping ordinance.

I was a NO vote on the anti-camping ordinance. We have done a terrible job on addressing the homelessness issue. We cant just have one solution to the problem; we must be creative and try a variety of housing options. From shelters, to Eco Garden style facilities, to tiny home villages and affordable housing.

- 4) What do you see as the most important components in cultivating a productive and cooperative and useful relationship between the Board of Supervisors and the City Council? It is a very positive thing, it will help us address the homelessness issue. The relationship that I have been able to build with the Board has been great and beneficial to my West of 99 families. I am working with Supervisor Pacheco to bring the first and only Public Library to West of 99, in the Highway City Area.

- 5) Police accountability in Fresno has been a longstanding concern of the progressive community. What exactly do you propose to require greater accountability of the police to the citizenry of Fresno, especially in interactions within neighborhoods of color and the LGBTQ community?

- 6) Given national attacks on immigrants, what steps should the City Council take to support our vibrant immigrant community, especially our undocumented neighbors and DACA recipients?

I am extremely passionate about this issue and think the City of Fresno can do more to help and support our immigrant community. I have been vocal about Sanctuary City status, legal defense fund and immigrant affairs office. Absent any support for local policies that are more welcoming, I will continue to be vocal about the needs locally and the need for comprehensive immigration reform at the federal level.

I have raised money for scholarships that will directly benefit our dreamers. And, had a DACA beneficiary working for me, until she became a Legal permanent resident.

- 7) The city has uneven park and green space distribution. What are two specific ways to address this issue, ensuring more access to green space, particularly in low-income neighborhoods?

We need to increase the partnership we have with schools to open more green and blue (pool) space for the the disadvantaged neighborhoods. Consider opportunities for pocket parks. I represent a district with the least amount of green space and I fight hard every day to ensure we are investing more dollars in PARCS. I pushed for the PARCS master plan. We need to get creative about finding additional revenue streams to build and maintain new parks. Priority should be placed in the areas with highest needs, which is in South Fresno.

- 8) What is your stand on unions and unionization? What will you do to support city workers? As a union member myself and former SEIU union organizer, I personally understand the value of our labor groups. I have always stood with our working families. Before council I fought against Measure G and during my tenure I have fought to ensure that our workers are adequate compensated.

- 9) What is your position on medical marijuana and recreational marijuana dispensaries within the city?

I support implementing what the voters supported through Prop. 64. Looking forward to support a policy that will address the need of proving a legal and safe way to access

medicinal marijuana and create a revenue stream that can help address some of the fiscal challenges we face.

10) In conclusion, tell us what you consider to be the top three progressive priorities of your campaign (these can include issues addressed above, or add details not yet addressed in this questionnaire).

-Affordable Housing

-Infrastructure investments in disadvantaged neighborhoods

-Ensuring young people have access to paid opportunities (target disadvantaged youth)

-Women having a voice in the policy making process

*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.*