

**Central Valley Progressive Political Action Committee
Endorsement Questionnaire for 2018 State Assembly/Senate Candidates**

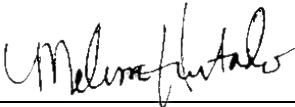
Name Melissa Hurtado District # Senate District 14

Name of Campaign Committee Hurtado for Senate 2018

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Candidate's Signature 

Date 3/5/2018

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

- 1) Do you support single-payer healthcare in the state of California? Why or why not? What will you do to ensure access to high-quality, affordable healthcare?

I support a single payer, universal healthcare system. I believe creating a universal healthcare system will require the collective efforts of a strong coalition of patients, nurses, doctors and policymakers dedicated to providing healthcare for all Californians. At Health Access, I have worked to ensure all Californians have access to quality healthcare by fighting all ACA repeal efforts, cuts to community health clinics, and CHIP. Furthermore, I worked on the passage of SB 17 seeking transparency in the pharmaceutical industry. Prescription drugs are one of the largest driving costs of health care premiums. In the State Senate, I will continue to fight to protect the ACA while pushing toward a single payer healthcare system. I look forward to working with CNA to achieve this important goal.

- 2) What will you do to address the pressing environmental issues faced by the Central Valley, including improving air quality, as well as access to clean water and promotion of water conservation?

The Central Valley has some of the worst air quality in the state. 1 in 6 children in the Valley have asthma, the highest level in the state. The American Lung Association's State of the Air report for 2016 reported that the Valley has the highest asthma rate for children in the nation – over 550,000 Valley residents have asthma, and of those 105,000 are children. With over 60% of smog forming pollutants generated by mobile sources, we need to invest in transportation. The Valley has some of the worst quality of drinking water, with more than 1 million people in the region having been exposed to unsafe drinking water in recent years from pesticides, arsenic, nitrate and uranium. Unsafe drinking water disproportionately affects small, rural communities, which are disproportionately poor and Latino. While long-term fixes are in the works, many solutions will take years to implement because not enough funding is available for the people who need help immediately. Government has an important role to play in these areas, and in the State Senate, I will work to improve our region and state's air and water quality by fighting for funding in this area, which will also improve public health.

- 3) Are you supportive of California's leadership in defending immigrant communities and resisting national policies attacking immigrants, particularly undocumented communities? Would you work to strengthen this role? Explain.

Yes absolutely. As the daughter of Mexican immigrants, I know firsthand what it means to have a chance at the American Dream. From my father, I learned the value of hard work, and my mother instilled in me integrity, compassion and perseverance. Immigrants and immigrant communities are a key part of our local, state and national identity, contributing to the fabric and economic prosperity of our society. In Sanger, I sponsored a resolution supporting a clean Dream Act to support DACA students and a pathway to citizenship. While this resolution is largely symbolic, I believe symbolism matters in our fight against a racist national agenda. I support California becoming a sanctuary state, and I will never stop fighting to protect our immigrant communities against the federal government's attacks.

- 4) Consider the state's \$7.5 billion state general fund surplus. What would be your top three or four priorities for this money?

My top three priorities for state spending are healthcare, education and public safety. We need to fund the basics first.

- 5) What will you do to defend, support, and expand access to high-quality public education in the state of California? Be sure your answer addresses the public university as well as K-12 systems.

As the first in my family to graduate from college, I know how important a quality education is to achieve the American Dream. From K-12 to higher education, we need to increase funding for public education. I believe tuition-free college should be a part of the state's budget and negotiated through the state budget process to ensure sustainable and predictable funding for students to receive a quality college education and ensure higher education is accessible to all, and not a crippling burden that saddles young people with debt.

- 6) What concerns you about the state's criminal justice systems? Include in your discussion your thoughts on the elimination of the state bail-bond system. What will you do to address these concerns?

I will support policies that reduce recidivism. I support eliminating California's bail system, which I believe disproportionately impacts communities of color.

- 7) What will you do to support and protect equality in voting access, encourage equal voting participation and combat voter suppression in the State of California?

This is a big problem, particularly in the Central Valley, and we need to work with organizations that will make legal challenges, such as the recent one in Kern County that will redraw lines in a more equitable manner. We also need to ensure votes are not suppressed by the merging of polling sites by counties. We need to ensure all voters, regardless of age, race, gender identity or sexual orientation have equal access to voting. I support the new laws in California to encourage voter participation such as registering everyone to vote through the DMV.

- 8) What will you do to address poverty and lack of high quality jobs in the Central Valley?

Serving on the Sanger City Council, I have worked to improve the local economy and bring high-wage jobs to our community. During my first term in office we saved a local production company from closing and even expanded the number of good paying jobs there. Our Valley needs leaders who know how to spur economic revitalization and job growth. In the State Senate, I will fight to bring high-paying jobs to the Valley.

- 9) What specifically do you plan to do to help ensure the state's stock of affordable, safe and decent housing increases significantly?

The housing crisis has reached dire levels, and we need to have every option on the table to increase the supply of affordable, safe and decent housing. I support increased funding for housing construction and incentivizing the construction of new affordable housing.

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).

Increasing access to quality healthcare, increasing access to education and making it more affordable for all Californians, and protecting our immigrant communities are among my top priorities. I would welcome the opportunity to partner with Central Valley Progressives PAC in shaping and executing these priorities.

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.