

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Ricardo Franco \_\_\_\_\_ District # \_\_\_\_\_ 22 \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Campaign Committee \_\_\_\_\_ Franco for Congress \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ PO Box 27830 Fresno, CA 93729 \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Fresno \_\_\_\_\_ Zip  
\_\_\_\_\_ 93729

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ contact@ricofranco.com \_\_\_\_\_ Web Site \_\_\_\_\_ ricofranco.com \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ 559.259.8899 \_\_\_\_\_ Campaign Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Sarah  
Bentley \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date  
\_\_\_\_\_ 3/10/2018 \_\_\_\_\_

**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?

Not fighting for single-payer healthcare, not being a champion for a comprehensive water strategy for the West and not controlling the costs of college tuition. I would immediately sign on to Rep. Conyers bill to sponsor medicare-for-all, work with members across the aisle from all parts of the country to develop a water strategy that addresses our Ag and residential needs, and redesign the way we pay for tuition at public universities and colleges. We must start to forgive student loans and turn to grants to help fund higher education.

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

This will fundamentally drive the country into a deep recession within 10 years and erase the middle class. Trickle-down economics does not work. By 2030 we are poised to no longer be the world's leading economy which will be our largest national defense issue. Our debt, at that time, will be a major issue. Republicans have realistically put austerity on the national horizon.

- 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?

Absolutely, because it is the right thing to do. We can do it to take the burden off of employers so that American businesses can be more competitive on the world market. I will be a solid champion of medicare-for-all and campaign for the issue all around the country if need be.

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

Make sure we keep the age limit at 65, not raise it. Resist any attempts to privatize social security and properly fund it.

- 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)?

We must immediately pass a clean DREAM ACT and adhere to our American tradition of accepting refugees, be they due to climate change or political reasons. We must also repatriate ALL deported veterans and grant them citizenship. The prioritization for who gets into the United States on work visas must be determined by business, not some arbitrary definition of “skilled” or “non-skilled” labor.

- 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.

California has led the way in enacting reasonable gun safety laws and it's time the rest of the nation follow suit. I would propose a ban on assault weapons nation-wide as we have in CA. Furthermore, we must realize how much gun violence disproportionately affects communities of color in our discussions of gun violence and policy. We must create a national and independent council to investigate police shootings when the use of deadly force is questionable.

- 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?

We have to divert federal funds from defense to Medicare-for-all. Running on a leaner military as Obama intended works just fine. We must also stop allowing local law enforcement to use weapons designed for the theater of war without proper training. How does it come about that a soldier in an active war zone has more strict rules on using deadly force than local law enforcement?

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

Transgender rights, voter suppression, equal pay/equity for women, and criminal justice reform. Transgender people must have their rights guaranteed under the law just as any other group of people. This includes fair representation in the criminal justice system, too. Voting should be made a national holiday and law enforcement should investigate voter suppression going on in the area. It is a travesty that women still make less than men for equal work. I'm glad California no longer allows salary offerings to take into account previous salaries. Lastly, we must get rid of for-profit prisons and address racial bias in law enforcement. How can Black Lives Matter protesters be considered thugs and met with military force when Philadelphia Eagles fans get a slap on the wrist for burning down their own town?

- 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.

Firstly, establish a living wage of \$15 per hour to start and tie it to inflation. Raise corporate tax rates while reducing middle-class tax rates. Enact Medicare-for-all to reduce the burden of healthcare on household budgets. Make college more affordable and relevant, including increased investment in trade schools. Lastly, close off-shore tax loopholes so that we can fund public works projects to improve communities and create more jobs.

- 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. Forgiving student loan debt will increase the purchasing power of many middle-class Americans. Future financial aid should be in the form of grants until we can fund free college for everyone. Education has been proven to be a leveling-factor when it comes to allowing our citizens to have a fair chance at making themselves prosperous.

- 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?

“Right to work” laws will completely destroy all unions in the country. The current administration, via proposed congressional bills or supreme court cases will make “Right to work” the law of the land. Plain and simple, we must pass a bill that gets rid of these destructive laws towards unions.

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

Expand the use of open-source voting machines, restore Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, and create a national holiday for voting.

*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.*