

Central Valley Progressive Political Action Committee
Endorsement Questionnaire for Fresno County Clerk Candidates

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Candidate's Signature S. Adrian Rivera Date 4/10/2018

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

- 1) What measures would you take to increase voter turnout?

As County Clerk I would increase voter turnout by focusing on the basics. First would be the number of and reliability of polling places. I can speak from personal experience, when I lived in well off parts of the county there is no shortage of polling locations. Even though every family had a car the polling place would be in walking distance, with each precinct having its own location. When I lived off of Kings Canyon in the City of Fresno it once took two FAX buses to get me to my polling location where three precincts were all sharing the same location, and it wasn't even the same place as the last election. There is no reason for this inequity. If it is a shortage of volunteerism and participation in certain parts of the county it only speaks to the lack of outreach and inclusion to be addressed. I would promote early voting and vote by mail as great alternatives for those who have hectic schedules or unreliable transportation. I would also be proactive and responsive to the needs of the voters of Fresno County, instead of waiting for the State to write new rules. 2018 is the first time there will be ballot options in several new languages in Fresno County including Hmong. Every single neighborhood I have lived in Fresno County has had enough Hmong families for me to have assumed it has been a ballot option since the day I was born. I can't imagine the discouragement felt from this community by this single fact alone. I would not wait for the Secretary Of State to tell me to meet the needs of the community here in Fresno County.

- 1) Will you conduct an early vote program in the southern parts of the city and in rural areas?

Yes, Early voting is a great way to get those who don't always have access on election day to turn out and vote. I would increase awareness of early voting, currently there is no mention of early voting on the Clerk's site even when you select voting options. Early voting should be promoted as a good alternative to election day voting for those with unpredictable work schedules or unreliable transportation. I would open satellite early voting locations to make it more accessible to rural and under-served communities in addition to the current location of Downtown Fresno.

- 1) Will you set up on site voting at the Fresno County Jail?

I believe the County Clerk's job isn't to serve as gatekeeper deciding who can and cannot vote. The County Clerk's job is to ensure and promote ALL eligible voters' ability to vote. This includes those often forgotten sitting in jail because they cannot afford to post bail awaiting trial. I would do everything I can to work with local law enforcement and insist those whom are eligible to vote have access whether it be an onsite location or distributing and retrieving ballots onsite for deposit at the elections office.

1) What measures will you take in increasing voter registration?

2)

I believe what is most lacking is a presence of normalcy of registering and voting. I would strive to have the process of registering and voting be a normal part of life for those historically left out of our voting process. There is no reason registration and voter education cannot be present in events in the community throughout the year. I will not leave it up to the political parties to decide whom they want to target to participate. The people deserve an elections department that promotes voting, citizens should feel welcomed and a part of their government, the community should feel their input is wanted. The presence of the Clerk's office promoting voter registration and participation at cultural, city, and county celebrations and events where there is likely to be high numbers of unregistered eligible voters will be ordinary and not an exception. I would make sure we are at an array of events such as citizen swear ins, high school graduations, college registrations, food bank distributions, art hop, and even anime conventions, anywhere there is a need.

1) Will you set up a program to register high school and college students about voting?

2)

Registering and voting should be part of the rite of passage to becoming an adult. I know this sounds like a lot to ask but this is something we can accomplish on the local level. I will make it routine to have a presence at high school graduation and college registration events. It will become known to students overtime, at these type of events they can register and update their registrations. Now with the ability to preregister to vote at age 16 we should work with local school districts to make the opportunity to actually register to vote part of civic education.

1) What other programs would your institute to register young people to vote?

In my years of public service, specifically helping members of the public interact with government and bureaucracy they don't necessarily understand or even want to, I have learned the most important thing you can do is change your language so your audience understands. I don't mean to make empty nods like using slang or coming off as relate-able but to simply understand everyone has a different background and very few have had the same experiences as you and understand things the way you do. It will be my job to make simple, step by step guides, and outreach everyone can understand. It should be easy for everyone to register and vote. This along with my previously mentioned plans for voting to be a more regular part of young peoples lives should really help and encourage the youth of Fresno County to become more engaged and not only register but also vote.

1) How would you use the social media to increase voter registration and turnout?

As a millennial I am native to Social Media and would initiate "Get Out The Vote" social media accounts separate from the official County Clerk pages that would promote information like where and how to register to vote as well as reminders on dates of elections, registration deadlines, and links

to polling locations and voter registration status checks. It would serve as a home base to the peripheral events I spoke of before where I would ensure there would be a non-partisan presence for voter registration and voter education. It would be a great mistake to ignore this free resource to reach those normally not plugged in to the process.

- 1) What measures would you take to insure the integrity of the election?

The largest threat to the integrity of elections is the accurate count and ability of each vote to be manually verified. It is important, as we move toward a more digital society, we have a way to verify our vote. I would set into motion the process of acquiring voting machines that leave a printed ballot to count, eliminate the issues of incorrectly marking ballots, and ensure disabled voters access. Not only are the capabilities of the machine important but also the source, any new machines should be publicly sourced. In the end, problems with voting machines should not be elevated to a for profit company. This is not just some dream I hold in my mind, but a reality in several California Counties and there is no reason we can't do it here in Fresno County.

- 1) What measures would you take to insure that potential voters are treated fairly and honestly at the polling sites?

- 2)

There are three important issues here to be addressed. The first is to ensure staff and volunteers are trained to know their mission is to help and assist every eligible voter cast their vote. They need to know what to do next if there is a problem instead of accidentally turning away eligible voters. Second, it is important to recruit a diverse group of volunteers so those available to assist at polling locations can better understand the challenges different kinds of voters have during election day. Third is possibly the most important. I will be responsive to the real time requests during elections. For example, I have heard stories of voter intimidation here in Fresno County, not necessarily on purpose, where a volunteer was a community member some voters were afraid to face to check-in. The voters reported the issue to Clerks Office and no solution was presented. In this example I believe a simple switching of the volunteer's location would allow the volunteer to serve and the voters to vote, It is important to find solutions and not put the burden on voters to "figure it out".

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.