

Central Valley Progressive PAC
Endorsement Questionnaire for Mayor of Fresno

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Campaign manager: **None at this time; Greg Leifer is consulting**
Treasurer: **Myself; accounting services by DirectFile**

Five largest contributors (through June 30, 2019, excluding myself):

- **\$4,250 total from my parents:**
 - **Julie Linxwiler**
 - **Daryl Balch**
- **\$1,000 each from:**
 - **Sarah Sharpe**
 - **Drew Wilson**
 - **Kaye Bonner Cummings**
 - **The Rios Company**
 - **Brad Hardie**
 - **Sandra Thompson**

Yes/No Questions:

Climate change is an environmental crisis that must be addressed by decreasing our dependence on fossil fuels and increasing solar, wind and other alternative energy sources.

YES

I support President Trump's immigration policies and believe his proposed wall at our southern border is needed.

NO

I believe in a woman's right to reproductive freedom and will do what is in my power to keep abortion affordable and legal.

YES

The city of Fresno is expected to have a population of more than 600K people from the 2020 census. Are you in favor of expanding the Fresno City Council to nine (9) seats to equitably represent the recent growth in the city?

YES

Open-Ended Questions

- Affordable Housing and Interior Inspections

Preserving affordable housing, protecting residents, and producing more housing are each essential for Fresno.

We must provide an adequate supply of housing for a growing population. In the past we have created housing by growing outward — reinforcing income segregation, consuming farmland, and causing air pollution. The root problem is low wages that result in low rents, which fail to cover the cost of new construction. So, we need to provide more jobs that pay better. But we also need better infrastructure, stronger planning, and innovative financing to get infill housing built. As Mayor I will be creative, inspire confidence in the market, and attract new resources to assist.

Preserving existing housing as affordable is also important and difficult. Continuing rental inspections is essential; residents at greatest risk must be prioritized. When work is required to meet health and safety standards, it must be done. But we must also find ways to preserve affordability after these investments are made.

Part of the solution must be to empower more homeowners, including low-income homeowners, to create second units on their properties. This can directly address poverty, neighborhood walkability, housing supply, and housing affordability all at once.

- Homelessness

We saw a substantial reduction in the homeless population when the City maintained a focus on the issue, with a dedicated staff lead, and when all partners shared urgency in addressing the most serious challenges first. Parochialism in divvying up available funding has frayed relationships, leading to a less strategic approach and a stall in our progress.

As Mayor I will designate a team lead once again, and work collaboratively to appropriately prioritize all available dollars to address homelessness. I will engage the County of Fresno in growing mental health resources to address issues upstream, averting symptoms that emerge later such as substance use, homelessness or police calls.

“Housing First” is right, and requires some hard decisions in the allocation of resources. However, we will also be compassionate and find ways to help everyone live the healthiest life possible at the stage they are in, given the resources we have.

We cannot enforce a no-camping ordinance until there is adequate shelter available to serve people in need. Today, not only do we not have enough permanent supportive housing for transitions from homelessness, but we have the tightest rental housing market of any large city in the country.

- Police Accountability

The power of the badge brings special burdens and requires a special level of accountability to the people of Fresno.

When all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail. We have failed our officers and our community by:

- (a) avoiding root causes and letting mental health systems decay to the point where too many issues become policing issues,
- (b) not providing better support and training to officers who experience trauma from the resulting encounters, and
- (c) not implementing a measurable management philosophy of community-based policing that sets officers up to succeed in partnership with neighborhood residents.

The Office of Independent Review is an important transparency measure, but the City General Plan also calls for a strategic plan for the Police Department. This document is important as a way for the department to grow into community-based policing as a system, with accountability measures. As Mayor I will oversee the development of this plan by the Police Department, and its adoption by the City Council, working with residents.

If the police chief is not ready to be a champion of this process and community-based policing, then as a first step we will find a new chief who is.

- Immigrants

The fact is that our economy depends integrally on the work of immigrants, including undocumented immigrants. Fresno is enriched by the contributions of cultures from near and far around the globe.

I have worked with young professionals who were deported before DACA. Beyond the injustice, the ingenuity they have applied to their situation in their new home leaves you to wonder how much they could have continued to contribute to our community here. We shoot ourselves in the foot by not enlisting everyone in creating a more prosperous, safe, healthy community.

My most important job as Mayor will be to set an inclusive tone that reinforces our unity as a community. Without question our police must continue to focus on crime and keeping our community safe, rather than immigration status. The City’s job is to serve all residents.

As Mayor I will create systems to recognize and continuously improve our response to the needs of the most vulnerable in our community. Deportation concerns are one example. The issues can be very community-specific, and asset-based solutions must be designed specifically as well. Our guide will be the social determinants of health.

- Parks and Green Space

I was enthusiastic in joining community leaders through Fresno for Parks, and in helping oversee 2018’s Yes on P campaign. A strong, diverse coalition came together, collected over 35,000 signatures, and won a majority vote despite well-funded opposition from established political figures.

Measure P embodied multiple approaches to related challenges. It would have funded not only new and improved parks, but the buildout of a robust trail system, cleanup of our freeways with matching state funds, youth and veteran job opportunities, the arts, and after-school programs. It would

have prioritized parks funding for neighborhoods of greatest need. And, it would have established an accountability mechanism that would bring additional scrutiny to keep the City’s parks funding commitment from faltering.

This year residents have been stepping up to develop projects themselves that will improve the park system. As Mayor I will set the tone of empowering community members to help City Hall solve big problems.

I have been on-point for Fresno for Parks in discussions with the City about a future ballot measure. As a candidate I am stepping back from this role. Another measure will come, and must pass. We must insist that it bring transformative outcomes, like Measure P.

- Unionization

The right of workers to organize must be protected.

Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) for public works projects and redevelopment projects go a level deeper, ensuring broader benefits including guarantees for local hiring and the cultivation of the local apprenticeship/talent pipeline, in addition to wage guarantees and protections for the workers hired. With recent wins in the adoption of PLAs, I support extending this to a citywide policy and will work with the City Council to make this happen.

Whether it’s housing or infrastructure, we have a lot of skilled building to do as a city. Within that great challenge, we have a great opportunity to invest in our youth and people with barriers to entry through both “soft skill” and “hard skill” training programs that contribute to a productive, middle-class workforce. As Mayor, I will not let my community miss our moment to do so.