

**Question – Equal access to healthcare**

California is considered a national leader in protecting reproductive rights and the rights of transgender people, yet Californians are nevertheless denied access to reproductive healthcare and treatments for transgender people in health care facilities. Do you support measures to ensure that hospitals and other health care entities that receive public funding and hold themselves out as serving the general public cannot prevent doctors from providing health care to their patients that meets the standard of care?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Yes. I strongly support it.

**Question – Sex education in charter schools**

Sex education helps young people have the information and skills they need to make healthy, informed decisions about relationships and behaviors. Current California law mandates comprehensive, accurate, and inclusive sex education be provided in public middle and high schools. Do you believe that charter schools should be required to provide students with the same comprehensive, accurate, and inclusive sex education that public school students must receive?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Yes. They should be held to same standards of comprehensive, accurate and inclusive sex education as public schools.

**Question – Transgender rights in jails and prisons**

Transgender people are at enormous risk of sexual assault, physical abuse, and harassment behind bars. These gender segregated facilities can be a place where transgender people are frequently and consistently misgendered. The vast majority of transgender people who are incarcerated in California are placed in gender segregated housing based not on their gender identity but their sex assigned at birth, which means, for example, that most transgender women are housed in men's facilities. Do you think that incarcerated transgender people in California should be housed based on their gender identity unless they prefer a different type of placement?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Yes. While we've made some progress, there's still a long way to go to achieve equal rights for the transgender community in California. I believe housing incarcerated transgender people based on their gender identity is a basic right that the government should support. While on the Board of Trustees at LACCD, I authored a resolution that directs our district to develop transgender sensitivity in the workplace curriculum.

**Question – Extending statute of limitations on harassment and discrimination**

California employers must create workplaces that allow people to do their job without harassment or discrimination. People who experience workplace harassment and discrimination have a very short window in which to file administrative complaints to address their situation, leaving many people without legal recourse if they miss the window. Do you support policy proposals that would extend the statute of limitations from one year to three years for filing an administrative complaint about workplace harassment and discrimination with the Department of Fair Employment and Housing?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Yes. While on the Board of Trustees, I established a Title IX Task Force on Sexual Harassment and Misconduct so that we review and strengthen our own policies. I would carry this commitment with me to the Legislature.

**Question – Police transparency**

California is among the most secretive states in the nation when it comes to information about police shootings and officer misconduct. California law gives police officers secrecy around their records far beyond that given to any other public employee: all information about discipline and investigations into misconduct is confidential, even that related to shootings and instances where the officer’s own department has found they engaged in misconduct.

Should California allow public access to records of investigations, findings, and discipline related to police shootings and other serious uses of force, and to proven serious misconduct, such as sexual assault, filing false reports and fabricating evidence?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Yes. We need to reform our criminal justice system and increase accountability and transparency in law enforcement.

**Question – Police de-escalation and use of force**

Over the past several years, public concern has grown over the high number of police shootings of civilians, especially in light of disproportionate number of African Americans and individuals who suffer from mental illness. Last year, California saw more police killings than any other state, and the Los Angeles Police Department fatally shot more people than any other police department — including the Chicago PD and NYPD, which are significantly larger. Nothing in state law requires police to engage in best practices to reduce fatal shootings and other excessive force, such as employing de-escalation techniques, requiring officers to intervene when other officers are using excessive force, and requiring prompt provision of medical aid to civilians they injure. Since 2000, only one officer in Southern California has been criminally charged in a shooting and none have been convicted.

Should California law require officers to use de-escalation techniques and exhaust alternatives before using force against a civilian?

YES       NO       OTHER

Should California change state law regarding officers’ use of deadly force — from authorizing officers to use any “reasonable” force, to authorizing police to use deadly force only when necessary?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Yes. The government’s role, which the law enforcement is a part of, is to protect our citizens, not kill them. Deadly force should only be used when necessary. For California to be truly a progressive state, we need a comprehensive criminal justice reform and a culture change in the law enforcement, one that focuses on proactive measures in serving our constituents with safety and security.

**Question – Single-payer healthcare**

We believe true freedom and equality includes the right to healthcare, housing and access to all basic human needs services so our communities can thrive. That's why we advocate in support of single-payer healthcare, ending the criminalization of poverty (i.e. laws that target people experiencing homelessness) and expanding access to affordable housing and supportive services.

The Healthy California Act, SB 562 (Lara & Atkins), would guarantee healthcare for all California residents through a single-payer model. SB 562 would save \$37 billion per year off our current healthcare spending, contain costs going forward, and guarantee healthcare for ALL California residents. Benefits include medical, dental, vision, chiropractic, acupuncture, and services covered under Medicare, Medi-Cal and the ACA, without insurance premiums, co-pays and deductibles, funded by progressive taxes. Do you support the single-payer model in SB 562?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Yes. While it's an ambitious goal, I think with determination, California can achieve a universal healthcare system in five years. I fully support a single payer health care system. I am extremely proud to be endorsed by both of the co-authors of SB 562, State Senators Ricardo Lara and Toni Atkins.

As we work toward a single payer healthcare system, it is critical to also advocate for Medi-Cal expansion and effective implementation of the Affordable Care Act. I do not see improving the ACA and advocating for single-payer as being mutually exclusive goals.

**Question – Decriminalizing poverty**

Do you believe California – as a state and its municipalities – should eliminate laws that criminalize poverty (e.g., laws that make it a crime to sleep in public when people experiencing homelessness literally have nowhere else to go)?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Yes. And that will be one of my top priorities if elected. I will fight for decriminalizing poverty but also sponsor anti-poverty bills – which include affordable healthcare, housing, and education – to help Californians get out of poverty, especially minorities who are disproportionately below the poverty line.

**Question – Affordable housing fund**

Will you support championing legislation that invests in a well-funded statewide housing trust fund for affordable housing and supportive services?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Yes. There is a serious shortage of affordable housing in California which is impossible to address without dramatically increasing supply. I supported Governor Brown’s \$4-billion bond to help subsidize affordable housing, It’s a big step in the right direction, but California will need double the amount to fully meet the demand of affordable housing and provide housing services for the homeless. As an Assemblymember, I will encourage bigger and bolder funding sources to increase affordable housing in my district and throughout California.

**Question – Repeal court fines and fees**

In recent years, defendants in criminal court and traffic court have been charged higher fines and fees in order to fund the court system. This has led to a cycle of debt and incarceration for some of the poorest and most vulnerable Californians. The ACLU of Southern California believes that administering a court system is a core function of government and that the costs of administering courts should not be shifted to defendants, the vast majority of whom are low-income. Do you support repealing fees and surcharges charged to criminal defendants and providing low-income defendants with affordable means to pay off their court debts?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

This is an issue that needs to be addressed as part of the comprehensive criminal justice reform. NPR did a year-long investigations a few years back that revealed just how much our criminal justice system depends on low-income defendants to cover fees, the burden is disproportionately fallen on their shoulders and that needs to change.

**Question – Reform Proposition 13**

Proposition 13 was passed by voters to provide important protections for homeowners and renters, but it also included a property tax loophole for many corporations and wealthy commercial property owners. This loophole allows some big corporations and wealthy investors to avoid paying their fair share in property taxes. We can no longer afford to keep giving billions of dollars in tax breaks to millionaires, billionaires and big corporations. Closing California’s commercial property tax loopholes restores \$9 Billion for schools, community colleges and other vital community services, including health clinics, emergency rooms, affordable housing, parks, libraries and public safety. Do you support closing the commercial property tax loophole in Proposition 13 by taxing commercial and industrial property at its fair market value while preserving the important protections for homeowners and renters so we can invest in strengthening our schools and important local priorities?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Yes. Proposition 13 needs to be reformed. We need to lose loopholes in it to make commercial properties pay their fair share.

**Question – Bail reform**

California’s bail system needs to change. On any given day, roughly 60% of people in California jails are being detained before trial or sentencing simply because they cannot afford to post bail. SB 10 (The California Money Bail Reform Act) aims to restructure the current bail system and significantly reduce the use of money bail and prioritize services to help people make their court appearances while their cases move forward. Would you support SB 10?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Yes. I do not support the bail bond industry which preys on poor offenders who get jailed based on ability to pay.

**Question – Criminal sentence reductions**

Current sentences are racially disproportionate and ineffective from a public safety standpoint. The incarceration rate for Black and Latinx people is now more than 6 times higher than for whites; 60% of those incarcerated are Black or Latinx. Eight percent of Black men of working age are now behind bars, and 21% of those between the ages of 25 and 44 have served a sentence at some point in their lives. To serve overly long sentences, people serve time in jails and prisons with horrifying conditions and rampant inmate abuse, where they're separated from their communities and support systems, and where people with mental health and substance use conditions leave with worse prognoses. People are then released on probation or parole to face years-long waiting lists for reentry services. They're overly surveilled, face numerous of obstacles to reentry, and receive little to no support to ease their transitions. Nearly two thirds of the reentry population technically violate probation or parole in some way and become incarcerated again. Experts say (1) that we are not going to have a sustainable reduction in our prison population if we continue to limit the discussion to those who are sentenced for non-serious or non-violent crimes and (2) that jurisdictions that divert resources away from incarceration and towards investments in communities are safer and healthier. Would you support reducing sentences, including for people convicted of serious/violent crimes?

YES       NO       OTHER

Yes, I support it reducing sentences, including for serious crimes. I also advocate strengthening and expanding Proposition 57 to ensure that people are not being incarcerated for non-violent crimes and the money the state saves as a result is spent on re-entry and rehabilitation programs.

**Question – End willful defiance and disruption suspensions**

The California Department of Education (CDE) reported that 243,603 students were suspended once or more in the 2014-15 academic year. The vague and all-encompassing terms "willful defiance" and "disruption of school activities" were by far the most common reason school administrators suspended students, accounting for 129,835 suspensions statewide. Such suspensions have disproportionately impacted students of color, students with disabilities, and other student populations. For example, in California, African American students make up 6% of total statewide enrollment, but made up 18-20% of the total number of suspensions for willful defiance-related offenses in both 2013-14 and 2014-15. With respect to the age of students suspended or expelled for willful defiance offenses in 2014-15, the majority were high school students in grades nine through twelve (52%), followed by middle school students in grades six through eight (35%), and elementary school students in Kindergarten through fifth grade (13%). Do you support SB 607, a bill that prohibits California schools from expelling or suspending students on the basis of "willful defiance" and "disruption of school activities" in grades kindergarten to 12?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

As a person of color, I know first-hand the discrimination African American and other students of color experience in schools. I support measures to eliminate loopholes in the education system that disproportionately impact students of color. As the President of the Los Angeles Community College Board, I have fought for fairness and equality in school and if elected, I will continue that fight in my legislative capacity.

**Question – Police in schools**

In 2013-14, 24% of elementary schools and 42% of all high schools in the U.S. had a full-time assigned police officer. In 2015-16, 19 school districts throughout California operated their own police departments. The U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights' 2013-14 statistics show that, in California, the average arrest rate in schools where more than 80% of students are low-income is seven times higher than the average arrest rate in schools where fewer than 20% of students are low-income. Department of Education statistics also show that although students with disabilities made up only 12% of student enrollment nationwide, they comprised 23% of police referrals, 23% of arrests, and 67% of students placed in physical restraint, seclusion, and confinement. Further, school officials are more likely to refer incidents involving students of color to the police than those involving white students: Native American students are 3.4 times more likely, Black students are 2.7 times more likely, and Hawaiians/Pacific Islander students are 1.4 times more likely to be referred to police. Do you support policies prohibiting law enforcement officers from being permanently stationed on school campuses?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Yes. We should be using our state resources educating and not criminalizing or arresting our children. I support safety measures and presence of peace officers when needed but we need to dramatically lower arrest rates in schools and end racial disparity in those arrests.

**Question – Police cooperation with ICE**

The Trump Administration’s aggressive immigration enforcement tactics threaten millions of immigrants, and their families, in California. These tactics rely on collaboration and cooperation with local law enforcement agencies, as well as mining state and local databases and technologies for information about where immigrants live, work, and play to allow them to find and arrest people. Do you support policies that prohibit local law enforcement agencies from cooperating with federal immigration authorities?

YES       NO       OTHER

Do you support state and local policies that seek to protect from disclosure to ICE information about immigrants that is used only to locate people for civil immigration enforcement purposes?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Absolutely. We need to protect immigrants in California from the cruel and regressive policies of the Trump Administration, which has given a green light to ICE to criminalize all immigrants.

**Question – Lawyers for immigrants**

Because there is no right to appointed counsel in removal proceedings, most noncitizens are forced to fight their deportation cases without the assistance of a lawyer. Do you support state funding for counsel for indigent California residents in removal proceedings?

YES       NO       OTHER

Do you believe that funding for this critical due process protection should be available without any exceptions or carve-outs?

YES       NO       OTHER

Explain (200 words maximum):

Yes. Due process is a critical component in the criminal justice system, it provides many safeguards for innocent people and we need to make sure there is funding for it without any exceptions.

### **Candidate Statement**

Please provide a statement (not to exceed 250 words) to explain to ACLU members and activists why, if you are elected, they can count on you to be a champion on ACLU issues.

As a lifelong public servant, I have always been supportive and aligned with ACLU platform and goals. If elected, I will bring my progressive voice to Sacramento and fight to make this state more equitable, innovative, and true to its name as the golden state. My extensive work in our community has prepared me to represent my constituents in the state Capitol.

I am the only candidate in this race with the experience that allows me to hit the ground running once elected. As a policy maker and as a district director, I have the experience. I know how the state works. I have working relationships with other decision makers, stakeholders and community advocates. Many of the policies that I have championed are now in effect throughout the state. And

*ACLU SoCal Assembly District 54 Special Election Candidate Survey – Sydney Kamlager*

I look forward to working with ACLU to overcome many of the obstacles still in place and make California a stronger, more progressive state.