

# Wendy Carrillo

## Candidate Statement

Thank you for considering my candidacy. I'm proud to share ACLU's progressive values, and would be honored to have your support.

Growing up, my mother taught me to be persistent and strong. Through my father, I learned to always give 100%. As the oldest of five sisters, I learned about responsibility and what it means to be a role model.

I began my career as a journalist, hosting a community based radio program where we discussed civic engagement and issues affecting our communities. As a formerly undocumented immigrant who came to the US as a child, I understand the value of a good education, access to quality healthcare and the opportunity for a high-wage job.

We need all kids, especially girls and children of color, to be part of science, technology, engineering and math programs in our schools, preparing them for the careers of the future. I've mentored young girls and women, empowering them to succeed. In the Assembly, I'll be a leader in the fight for gender pay equity, reproductive health care and choice.

I'll defend the Affordable Care Act while fighting for universal healthcare and will fight for immigration reform, restorative justice and racial equality. I'll fight for educational opportunity, expanding affordable housing and addressing homelessness in our communities.

I've fought for fair wages for caregivers who provide seniors and people with disabilities the dignity to stay in their homes. I'll never stop fighting against income inequality and for everyone to have a voice in our political system.

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1. Californians face looming cuts and in some cases the current elimination of federal funds to California social safety nets, such as after-school programs, teen pregnancy prevention programs, and HIV/AIDS education. How will you ensure that adequate state funding for sexual and reproductive health is secured and maintained for this district?

**I believe our state needs to continue its ongoing commitment to providing our youth with the tools they need to stay safe. From preventing teenage pregnancy to ensuring our youth have extra-curricular programs that keep them off the streets and out of trouble, California needs to continue making our youth's health and safety a top priority. If elected, I will be a strong supporter of increased state funding for sexual and reproductive health and education through the state budget process.**

2. In a multicultural state, the conversations about race, white supremacy and bias are real. There have been recent attacks on communities that make up the fabric and strength of Los Angeles-

Muslims, immigrants, refugees, communities of color, and transgender people.

- a) What is a concrete policy or campaign that you will commit to championing that affirms the humanity of transgender people? (e.g. SB 396 and Transform CA)

**SB 396 is an important bill to help prevent employment discrimination that still exists today. I support the work of Transform CA and believe we must continue our efforts to ensure that transgender and gender non-conforming people can live in a society free from discrimination.**

- b) What is a concrete policy or campaign that you would support that dismantles white supremacy, empowers communities of color, and addresses safety in our communities?

**There is no place for racial prejudice, bigotry or violence in a democratic society, and I support California's recently announced efforts to root out white supremacist and domestic terrorist groups in our state, and support strengthening our hate crime laws. I support SB54 (California Values Act) and I'm pleased that Senator De Leon and the Governor has reached an agreement to move the bill forward.**

3. 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 in police shootings, and other serious uses of force, so long as releasing the information does not interfere with an ongoing investigation? Should California allow public access to records of findings and discipline imposed in any case where a department has, after an appeal, found an officer engaged in misconduct involving a civilian, such as racial profiling, excessive force, unlawful search, or falsifying evidence?

**Yes. I support increased transparency with respect to records related to police shootings and officer misconduct.**

4. 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. Only one officer in Southern California has been criminally charged in a shooting since 2000, and no officer has been convicted.

Should California require de-escalation training for police officers at all departments? In deciding whether an officer's use of force was legal, should California require that departments and courts consider whether the officer used de-escalation techniques and exhausted alternatives to force? 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 reasonably necessary?

**Yes. De-escalation policies have been effective in other jurisdictions, and can improve safety for both civilians and law enforcement. I support increased transparency with respect to determining how an officer came to use deadly force.**

5. 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.
  - a) The Healthy California Act, SB 562 (Lara & Atkins), would guarantee healthcare for all California residents through a single-payer model. SB 562 would provide medical, dental, vision, mental health, chiropractic and many other services while eliminating premiums, co-pays and deductibles. Will you publicly support and if elected co-author SB 562?

**Yes I have publicly stated that I support SB 562 and believe we need healthcare for all in California. I would like to serve on the health committee and the special oversight committee that Speaker Anthony Rendon is putting together. I'd like to be a part of the convening table where various groups come together to create a solution that works and can be a model for the rest of the country.**

- b) Do you believe California – as a state and its municipalities – should change laws that target and criminalize people experiencing homelessness and will you support changing these laws and championing legislation that invests in a well-funded statewide housing trust fund and permanent supportive services?

**Yes. With Los Angeles being one of the most expensive cities in which to live, I understand the stress people are under to find affordable/low income housing and keep up with rising home prices in addition to our homelessness crisis. I support efforts to provide a permanent source of funding to build affordable housing as well as a statewide housing bond. I understand that we need to continue our efforts to provide affordable, workforce and**

**homelessness housing. In Los Angeles, voters approved a \$1.2 billion housing bond and a quarter percent sales tax to build housing for the homeless with supportive services.**

6. It has been widely acknowledged that California's court system is underfunded. In recent years, defendants in criminal court and traffic court have been charged higher fines and fees in order to fund the courts. 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.

Who should bear the costs of administering California's justice system? If you believe that criminal and traffic court defendants are partly responsible for funding this system, what measures would you take to address California's high fees and fines and their disproportionate impact on low-income communities and communities of color?

**To me, this is a fundamental issue of justice, with justice delayed being justice denied. I believe the state needs to make funding our courts a top priority in the state budget, and I will support increased funding to adequately support our courts and ensure justice is delivered in a timely manner. I do not believe the state should rely on fines from defendants as a primary source of funding for our courts. These fines typically impact low-income communities and communities of color in a disproportionate way, and I support making the current fine system more equitable by taking traffic court defendants' incomes into consideration in determining fine structures. I support eliminating the bail system as it disproportionately impacts defendants of color and low-income defendants.**

7. 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, I strongly support and have publicly stated changing this property tax loophole.**

8. 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. California keeps far more people in jail awaiting trial compared to the rest of the country, but has lower court appearance rates than other states. Further, bail amounts are assigned with

staggering racial bias. [Research](#) shows that Black people are assigned higher bail amounts than white people accused of similar offenses. Bail bond amounts for Black men are 35% higher than for white men; for Latino men, they're 19% higher than for white men. As a result of not having the money to pay bail amounts, people often pay nonrefundable fees to bail bond agents and never see that money again even if their case is dismissed, they make every court date, or they are found innocent. People who can't raise money for a bail bond (1) more readily decide to accept plea bargains as a means of getting out of jail quicker because even just a few days in jail can cost people their cars, jobs, housing, or child custody, and (2) are much more likely to be sentenced & to receive longer sentences. SB 10 (The California Money Bail Reform Act) aims to restructure the current bail system and significantly reduce and constrain the use of money bail and prioritize services to help people make their court appearances while their cases move forward. Last Friday the Governor and the Chief Justice publicly announced their support for bail reform and their commitment to work together with the legislature through the fall to pass SB 10. Would you support SB 10?

**Yes, I support eliminating the bail system and would support SB 10.**

9. 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?

**I believe our state needs to invest in reducing recidivism and focusing resources away from incarceration and towards investments that help people with education, job training, mental health, housing and finding meaningful employment. Additionally, I supported and worked on Prop.47 which reduced non-violent, non-serious crimes to misdemeanors and allowed resentencing for those currently incarcerated. This allowed approx. 10k inmates to be resentenced and ensured a pathway for folks to return home to their families.**

10. 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 primary reason school administrators suspended students, accounting for 129,835 suspensions statewide. 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%). Would you support a bill that prohibits California schools from suspending students on the basis of "willful defiance" and "disruption of school activities" in grades kindergarten to 12? If so, what alternatives to such suspensions would you recommend?

**I support Senator Nancy Skinner's SB 607 which would eliminate "willful defiance" as grounds for suspension. Research has shown that out-of-school suspensions don't work and often exacerbate the problem. There are big disparities in race, gender and disability status with use of these suspensions.**

11. 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 prohibiting law enforcement officers from being permanently stationed on school campuses? If not, what limits would you place on law enforcement officers being present at school sites? What practices would you recommend as alternatives to arresting or citing students for misbehavior?

**This is a challenging issue that goes back to my core belief that we should focus resources on supporting our youth rather than on strictly punitive measures. School safety has to be a top priority but we need to take a hard look at the policies where school boards have put police on high school campuses. Assemblymember Shirley Weber has started the discussion with AB 163 that would require school boards to adopt and review policies regarding the scope of police officer interactions with students and consider how to reduce police officer presence on campuses. I think it is a good place to start.**

12. Under U.S. and California law, all students, regardless of their nationality or immigration status have a right to public education. Across California parents and guardians have reported being afraid of sending their children to school for fear that students or their family members would be arrested by immigration enforcement. Indeed, in one prominent case, a parent was detained by immigration enforcement while dropping his student off at school. Would you support litigation that (1) bars immigration authorities from school campuses and (2) prohibits school districts from sharing immigration-related information with immigration authorities? How would you protect California immigrant students and families and ensure that they feel safe to attend school?

**As a formerly undocumented immigrant, I understand the challenges our undocumented youth and their families face each and every day. Our schools should be a safe place for both students and their families, and I strongly support barring immigration authorities from school campuses. I also support making California a sanctuary state for undocumented immigrants and support Senate Bill 54, the California Values Act.**

13. Since 1980, California has built 22 prisons and only three (3) new universities. Decades of disinvestment have resulted in making college less affordable and less attainable for all California students, especially low income students of color. In 2016, SB 1050 (de Leon) was enacted through the state budget, allocating \$240 million to level the playing field and “expand the pie” of educational opportunity for low income and underrepresented students. Would you support continuing SB 1050’s pipeline approach with future budget funding to increase college readiness and eligibility, expand University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) enrollment slots, and support retention and college graduation for low income and underrepresented students of color? What would you do to increase college access and success for low income students and underrepresented students of color?

**Yes, I strongly support SB 1050. I am both a formerly undocumented student and a first generation American, therefore a first generation college graduate. I am the eldest of five sisters whom are now all in college and know the value of being a role model. I attended Cal State Los Angeles and I know firsthand how important it is to continue investing in low-income students and students of color. I mentor young girls and women encouraging them to succeed and am fully committed to making college access for low income and underrepresented students of color a top priority through ongoing funding, resources and support for these students.**

14. The Trump Administration has promoted anti-immigrant rhetoric and aggressive immigration enforcement tactics that threaten millions of immigrants, and their families, in California. As part of its stepped-up enforcement campaign, the Administration is seeking to broaden collaboration and cooperation with local law enforcement agencies. This collaboration undermines immigrant community members’ trust in the police and public safety for all Californians. Do you support policies that prohibit local law enforcement agencies from

engaging in any cooperation with federal immigration authorities, including by detaining individuals for, or providing release notifications to, immigration agents?

**Yes, I fully support these policies.**

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

**Yes, support. I believe funding in this regard should be adequate, predictable and sustainable.**