

**SO YOU WANT THE ENDORSEMENT OF THE  
WELLSTONE CLUB**

**CANDIDATES FOR CALIFORNIA OFFICE**

America is experiencing a deep and prolonged recession in which as many as 25 million people are unemployed or underemployed -- unable to provide for ourselves and our families. Wholesale cut-backs in the social safety net, the schools, and basic infrastructure are taking place. The country is embroiled in three costly and misguided military conflicts. Our nation is deeply divided on issues of race, class, and gender. We suffer from a profound loss of direction. We need vision and leadership from elected officials.

The WDRC only endorses registered Democrats who campaign on issues substantially in accord with our Club values. Based on the demands of the present situation, and referencing our Club's stated values (see our website <http://www.wellstoneclub.org/platform.htm>), please address the following questions, and try to keep each answer to 100 words or less.

**ISSUES:**

1. What are the three most significant issues in your race?

Jobs and Education, State Budget, and Health Care,

2. Do you support cuts in the next state budget? Yes \_\_\_ No X

If yes, what would you cut?

If no, how would you meet all the state's fiscal demands?

I think there should be a third option – a combination of revenue enhancements and cuts where we can achieve greater efficiencies. For example, I support closing down prisons, and youth correctional institutions in particular. This could save upwards of \$1 billion in funding that can be redirected to other priorities. We need to close tax loopholes for corporations and not shortchange our schools, hospitals and parks.

California is the wealthiest state in the country. We need to set our priorities straight and invest in the future. For example, if we were to take tax rates on the richest one percent of the population back from 9.3% to 10 for people who make over \$300,000 and increase and increase rates to 11% for individuals that make over \$600,000 a year, we would be able to raise at least \$1.5 billion in revenue to fund our shared infrastructure including public

hospitals, health clinics and schools. As vice president of a school finance firm, I have helped to raise over \$2.2 billion to build and modernize public schools for California students.

3. What will you do to protect workers rights', union rights', including public unions, to engage in collective bargaining and political action?

I blew the whistle at Peralta Community Colleges when an unscrupulous contractor decided to steal wages from mostly immigrant Chinese workers, and made sure the District didn't pay their bills if they were exploiting workers. The contractor, Monica Ung, was subsequently arrested and charged with 48 felony counts of wage theft, perjury and insurance fraud. She pleaded guilty and no contest to two felonies in exchange for a suspended four-year prison sentence and restitution of \$1.2 million.

As Assemblymember, I will continue standing up for unions and workers' rights, as I have been doing in my recent solidarity with workers at the American Licorice Co. (Union City), where I walked the picket line with them and personally asked to meet with the company management. I will work together with union leaders to find and implement new strategies to bolster their rights to organize, and I will ensure current laws are being enforced. I have also started speaking out against measures like Prop 75 and other similar attempts by Grover Norvquist and right-wing interest groups to silence working people.

4. What are your legislative priorities – what is the most important legislation you will seek to introduce or work to pass?

My priorities will be focused in improving funding for and access to quality education; reforming our state budget to get rid of the two-thirds requirement for revenue; fighting for single payer; and rebuilding California's infrastructure.

5. Which California taxes, if any, would you raise? Which, if any, would you lower?

I support raising taxes on the richest 1% of our state. I also believe Prop 13 needs to be modernized to include a split commercial-residential roll tax. I am also in support of an oil severance tax – California is the only oil-producing state in the nation that lacks this revenue stream.

6. Do you support any changes to Prop 13? Yes X No \_\_\_  
If yes, what changes? I support a split tax roll to update Proposition 13.

If no, why not?

7. How would you address the crises in our health care system? What is your position on single payer (Medicare for All)?

I support single payer/Medicare for All. Our elected leaders, working with engaged community support, must minimize the insurance companies' control of the healthcare debate by creating a single-payer system that ensures quality healthcare access for all Californians. I will take a leadership role by actively supporting legislation similar to SB 810 (Leno) to create a system of universal, publicly administered healthcare. As Assemblymember, I will hold hearings on the issue in key districts and take a ballot initiative to the voters if we cannot get the necessary legislative votes for a referendum.

8. Do you support cuts to the state budget? Yes \_\_\_ No X

If yes, what would you cut?

If no, how would you meet all the state's financial obligations?

Again, I would hope there would be another category. I believe we must look at everything to take a balanced approach to solving the State budget. However, after so many years of deep cuts, it's time we start looking at revenue enhancements.

9. Do you support public financing of elections? Yes X No \_\_\_

Why or why not?

Public financing is essential to our democracy, especially under the Citizens United ruling. I also support efforts like AB 1448, which try to improve the disclosure of the sources of money in elections. Currently, only people who have money or access to money can run for office. Public financing would help level the playing field. It is no surprise that 94% of the Congressional candidates who raise the most money win. It's time to take the money out of politics, and public financing is one way of making this happen.

10. Do you support any limitations on a woman's reproductive rights? Yes \_\_\_ No X

If yes, what limitations do you support?

11. What are your environmental priorities?

I disagree with some who would like to pit jobs against the environment. I think we can be good stewards of the environment while simultaneously and synergistically creating good jobs based on a green economy. My environmental priorities are to invest in green jobs, protect and preserve "The Commons," and ensure that AB 32 is fully implemented. My goal is to secure a 100% voter approval rate from such environmental organizations as the California League of Conservation Voters.

12. Which initiatives on the California ballot do you support and why? Which do you oppose and why?

I don't believe there are now any initiatives on the June ballot; however, I do oppose Proposition 75 – we must defeat it by any means, given the Citizens United decision that allows unlimited amount of funding by corporations.

13. How do you propose to work with other legislators and grassroots groups to collectively strive to reduce the federal military budget and free up funds for use by the states for job creation, rebuilding the social safety net, energy development and the like?

I will contact and organize a series of meetings with our congressional representatives, my colleagues in the Legislature, local elected officials and advocates. We must think strategically of how to accomplish this.

14. Which of the issues detailed above will you highlight in your campaign?

Education, Budget and Health Care

#### **YOUR CAMPAIGN:**

15. Who are your principal opponents? Rob Bonta, Kathy Neal, Joel Young

16. What is your campaign budget? approximately \$300,000

17. How much have you raised to date? \$120,000

18. Who are your major donors? Please list them and state the amount of their donations to date.

I am proud that I have over 500 individual donors to date many of which are less than \$100. I have received donations of \$3,900 from Khushroo Gheyara and William Kadi as well as \$2,000 from Steve Philips.

19. How are you building a winning coalition?

I have developed support from a diverse range of individuals, groups, unions, small business owners, students and seniors – and will continue to build upon that foundation as we reach out to voters. I built a winning coalition when I first won my seat on the Peralta Board in 2006. I know how to do this, and will do so again.

20. What is your record of activity on the issues listed in this questionnaire and grassroots politics?

I have stood in solidarity with striking workers and intervened whenever possible on behalf of working people.

I have introduced and worked on policies as a trustee for the Peralta Colleges to support the Wellstone Club's positions, including spearheading a transit program for our students to increase AC Transit ridership while reducing student costs, voting for a resolution against Proposition 8 and in support of SB 810 (single payer) and blowing the whistle on unscrupulous contractors.

I have worked with grassroots organizations like Californians for Justice, the Ella Baker Center, Oakland Rising, students and other advocacy groups to organize around these and many other issues.

21. Which of your political activities define you as a progressive?

I feel I have been very active as an elected official, an active member of various local Democratic clubs, and a community activist. My record reflects that.

Recently, I worked with my colleagues on the Peralta Board of Trustees to persuade our Board to divest its financial interests from Wall Street Banks and put our community's tax dollars and students' fees into locally based financial institutions and credit unions.

22. Do you commit to designating yourself as a "Democrat" on the ballot? YES

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Following an established WDRC multi-step process, you will be notified whether you will be considered for an endorsement by the WDRC. This questionnaire will be retained in Club files.