

Joel Young - Assembly District 18

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, education, and generating revenue.

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

If yes, what would you cut?

Like just about everyone in the state, I'd like to cut the budget for the D.O.C. I'm cautiously optimistic about the prospects of realignment for reducing recidivism among non-violent offenders. I also believe that every dollar we invest in early childhood education will save us money down the road. I had a conversation with a lieutenant at Santa Rita jail who told me that they use 3rd grade reading levels to predict the future prison population. That's shocking and perverse. We need

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

I'm hopeful that we'll get a good ballot measure this fall that will increase general fund revenues. I know everyone's going to talk about VLF, oil severance, Prop. 13, etc. and I support those issues as well. We have to be honest with ourselves and realize that the 2/3 rule will hold us hostage for some time.

I think we should focus on increasing local control over revenue. I've seen positive polling for reducing the threshold from 2/3 to 55% for local revenue measures and I'll focus my efforts on making that happen.

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

Unions are under unprecedented attack at the national, state and local levels. I believe that the recent decline of the middle class in the US is directly tied to the decline in union membership. I was raised in a union family. Union membership was a gateway to a better life for my family and I am a strong supporter of collective bargaining and worker's rights.

The labor movement has been more successful than many advocacy movements because it is so deeply involved in electoral politics. Protecting the right of unions to engage in political action is of huge importance to our future. Allowing union members to opt out of political contributions is just as threatening as "right-to-work" laws. If taxes were optional, no one would pay them. That's the whole point of having a democracy, of making decisions collectively.

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

My main priority as a legislator will be creating quality job growth. I will seek improvement to the landmark SB 375 law to ensure that employers locate close to transit hubs. Studies have shown that shortening the distance between a transit hub and place of employment

is more important than shortening the distance between a transit hub and home in encouraging riders-of-choice to use public transit.

I will change the way state agencies evaluate bids to give California firms a greater opportunity to contract with the state.

I will work to create early childhood education and support services for parents.

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

I think our sales tax is too high, I think it's regressive. I support a 5% tax on services.

6. Do you support any changes to Prop 13? Yes X No

If yes, what changes?

I'd throw the whole thing out if I could. Prop 13 remains popular with voters and that's not going to happen. A split-roll tax for commercial and industrial properties is something we should work to build long-term support for. In the short term, I think we need to focus on reducing the threshold from 2/3 to 55% for local measures and on growing our property tax base by promoting dense, transit-friendly housing. Business leaders cite the high cost of housing as the biggest hurdle to starting and running a business here, especially a small business. Increasing our housing stock will grow our economy and improve generational equity.

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)?

It's astonishing that the health care industry uses up so much of our nation's wealth and yet health care quality is inconsistent and much

poorer overall than in countries which spend much less. As an AC Transit Director, I learned first hand that spiraling health care costs are crippling public finances. I fully support SB 810 (Leno) and I believe that single payer health care is the only way to resolve the health care dilemma. In the short term I support legislation to require that rate changes be approved by the insurance commissioner, to increase competition among HMOs, and to create insurance employer insurance pools for small employers.

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

If yes, what would you cut?

See above.

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

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

Why or why not?

Yes, we need elected officials to represent the real needs of all citizens. To do that effectively fair access to funds and information is essential. This is why I support the DISCLOSE ACT that would clearly identify the major ballot initiative funders. This is also why I supported Loni Hancock as a fulltime volunteer and supported Prop 89 (2008), a pilot program for public campaign finance.

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

No, this is why I've earned the endorsement of former Senator Liz Figueroa (Planned Parenthood). I will vigorously oppose any attempts to undermine reproductive rights.

If yes, what limitations do you support?

11. What are your environmental priorities?

My top three environmental priorities are:

- 1) Reducing traffic congestion and vehicle miles traveled, improving air quality, and preventing further global warming.
- 2) Creating green jobs of the future, especially in high tech manufacturing.
- 3) Reducing exposure to toxics, especially for children and socioeconomically disadvantaged residents.

I view the issue of toxics as a matter of social justice. It is always socioeconomically disadvantaged workers and consumers who have the fewest choices and face the highest level of risk. I support legislation to require chemical companies to demonstrate the safety of compounds before introducing them into the food stream.

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

Not sure which ballot you mean. This November? I'd be happy to follow up on this in person.

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 continue to lobby on it and I would be happy to support any efforts in person when possible, or with a supportive comment.

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

I'm going to highlight jobs, our economy, and state procurement policies. As an AC Transit Director, I supported a Buy America policy that will generate tens of millions of dollars for California companies. I also ran workshops for local businesses to explain how to contract with

the agency. I will highlight those aspects of my experience and my goal of implementing similar policies at the state level.

YOUR CAMPAIGN:

15. Who are your principal opponents?

Rob Bonta, Abel Guillen, and Kathy Neal.

16. What is your campaign budget?

\$300,000 for the primary. \$450,000 for the general election.

17. How much have you raised to date?

\$187,000 reported at the end of the last filing. I expect to be over \$250,000 for the March filing.

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

ATU Local 192 - 7800

Wayne Jordon - 7800

19. How are you building a winning coalition?

I've been the first to contact many labor organizations, advocacy organizations, and elected officials, and I expect my strong list of endorsements to continue to grow.

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

I've outlined some of my efforts at AC Transit. I've been a vocal advocate on many of these issues, publishing an editorial on health care reform in the SF Chronicle for instance, and speaking at events and rallies. I've been very involved in political campaigns for our Bay area

leaders, including Loni Hancock and Joan Buchanan. I've helped to raise funds for many Bay area organizations.

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

My strong record of support for labor, for health care reform, my advocacy for closing the achievement gap and reducing the prison population, and my support for public financing of elections define me as a progressive.

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.