

Name: Katherine Welch

Website: www.welch4senate.com

Line of work: Public Education Advocate

1) Why are you running for State Senate? What are your qualifications? What have you accomplished in any offices that you now hold or have recently held?

I am running for State Senate to be a voice for children, and to advocate for public education so that children have the opportunity to realize their full potential. Children do not vote and have no wealthy special interest group representing them and so when the time comes to balance the budget, it is always balanced on the backs of children and our most vulnerable populations (see attached document). If you are wondering what I am speaking of when I speak of disinvestment, I hope you will take a look at this: http://www.welch4senate.com/news_and_information

For the last four years I have tirelessly advocated for children and public education in Sacramento and across the state. In my efforts as board chair (effectively the Executive Director) for the all-volunteer organization Educate Our State (EducateOurState.org) I have tried to qualify a ballot measure (www.Yes4Ed.org), opposed a ballot measure (www.2bad4kids.org) and worked hard for the passage of Prop 30 with thousands of parents across the state. I know the players in Sacramento, and I am committed to working with them to improve our community.

In addition, I have a Public Policy degree from Duke University, and understand how to craft and analyze policy, and I have an MBA from Harvard which helps me understand the numbers. I am a single mother by choice of two teenagers (13 and 15) – so what could better prepare me for negotiating in the halls of the capitol?

2) Where are you getting the money to run your campaign? Are there any sources of financial contributions for your campaign that you refuse to accept? Do you feel it is important to get corporate money out of politics?

I am raising money from friends and networks that I am building during the campaign. In fact, many of my contributors – from \$5 to \$4200 – have never donated to a political campaign before. EVER. They just know that something is wrong and they do not feel heard and they are saddened by the lack of support our very wealthy state gives to the

most vulnerable in our community. I do believe, more than ever, that campaign finance reform is critical and will commit to working on it.

3) Are you interested in the contributions and the opinions of individual constituents in your district? What must a constituent do in order to meet with you?

I am MOST interested in the contributions and the opinions of individual constituents in my district – and I seek them out. In fact, some of my frustration stems from the challenge of being able to get anything done unless you are a wealthy special interest group, or maybe a well known figure. My constituents and their opinions will ALWAYS be my priority – not just the loudest ones, but those too busy to speak up. That to me is truly being a public servant.

4) Please give us your position on the following issues. Indicate your sponsorship and/or votes on any previous relevant legislation, and plans for future legislation:

-- Budget deficits: I don't like them, but I don't like the fiscal irresponsibility of Sacramento even more. The seventh largest economy in the world has what looks like a third world economy in too many areas, in my opinion. We need to better allocate our resources.

-- Controlling the corrupting influence of profit-driven prescription drug and vaccine manufacturers – I am very concerned with rising drug prices and also that alternative medicines, which may have fewer side effects and be more helpful to some patients, are often not reimbursed.

-- Fracking, and other environmental regulations – I am very concerned about fracking and also very disturbed by the delay in addressing the leak at Porter Ranch this year. Disturbing.

-- Income, wealth, and tax inequality – I believe it is our increasing inequality, job insecurity, etc that is contributing to many of our problems. As a friend of mine wrote of the 'boomer legacy', and I concur:

They took away the jobs. They called it right sizing.

They took away the pension plans. They called it 'participant driven' savings.

They took away health access. They called it choice.

They took away affordable college. They said 'but we have loans'.
They took away manufacturing jobs. They called it outsourcing.
They took away political access. They called it redistricting.
They took away secure jobs. They called it the gig economy.
They imprisoned 2.5 million people. They called it 'tough on crime'.
They put 45m people on food stamps. They called it benefit reform.
They increased the Gini by 20%. They called it 'trickle down'.
They screamed at each other on TV. They called it a debate.
And now they wonder why we have Trump.

-- Minority rights – I'm not sure what you mean by this. I am very aware of white privilege, and how racism impacts every layer and corner of society. I support all efforts to help minority communities receive what they need to succeed.

-- Police and prison reform – much needs to be done. Indeed, we are releasing prisoners with no social safety net – increasing the likelihood that they will not succeed in the community. We continue to redirect resources that should be used to serve our community to build prisons.

-- Proportional representation/ Ranked choice voting – I am not a fan of ranked choice voting, as it encourages people to 'game' the system and is often confusing for voters.

-- Rent control – We have a serious housing crisis in this district. We need innovative and timely solutions to meet the needs of our growing population, We need to build MORE housing, and make sure that there is a significant portion available to those who are unable to afford market rents, and provide incentives for developers to build that housing, and fees for developers to subsidize affordable housing. In addition, easing restrictions on housing and working with the community to develop solutions.

-- Single payer healthcare – I know there are test cases underway now, and I would support it.

-- Tuition-free higher education – My friend's daughter just got into UCSD and a few other UC's. Tuition, room and board come to \$36,000. That is inexcusable and so far from affordable for a public higher education system in an economy such as ours. I will do everything I can to understand how we got here, and to work hard to make all of our

higher education options affordable. Having a young adult graduate burdened with significant debt that will take years to repay is no way to prepare our graduates for the future.

5) An unanticipated consequence of the passage of 2010's Prop. 14 is that candidates from small political parties now need to gather vastly more signatures-in-lieu of the filing fee -- for example, 10,000 valid signatures for statewide candidates instead of the previous 150. Will you help us lower this number? Of course, the system is rigged against non-incumbents and those without wealth.

Now that I am a candidate, I believe campaign finance reform is CRITICAL to improving the system. If someone is not a politician, and does not want to be beholden to special interests, it is virtually impossible to run for public office unless you have personal means. This is something I will work to change.

6) Will you introduce and sponsor, or co-sponsor if already introduced, legislation creating a public Bank of California, similar to the state-owned Bank of North Dakota? Such an entity would hold the State's money instead of depositing it in Wall Street banks, and make infrastructure loans, loans in partnership with community banks, and other loans based on the best interests of the people of California, not banker profits. A bill which would have accomplished this, AB 2500, was introduced to the California legislature in 2012. How did you/ would you vote on it? Here is the text:

http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/11-12/bill/asm/ab_2451-2500/ab_2500_bill_20120224_introduced.html

Bank of North Dakota website and article: <https://bnd.nd.gov> ,
<http://www.motherjones.com/mojo/2009/03/how-nation%E2%80%99s-only-state-owned-bank-became-envy-wall-street>

Support or nah? It certainly seems worthy of discussion. I would need to study the pros and cons for our state, and North Dakota's model has certainly worked for them. One of my major concerns is the fiscal irresponsibility I see in Sacramento.

7) Are there any other important challenges facing California? What will you do to address them? Anything else you would like us to know about the goals of your candidacy?

Yes – I am committed to creating a budget that will strengthen families and vulnerable communities instead of cripple them. There is much to do and we must work together.

8) What endorsements have you received?

Roberta Achtenberg,
Marian Chatfield-Taylor, founder, Public Engagement for Public Schools
Delaine Eastin, former State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Jean Follmer, District Governing Board Clerk, Lafayette School District
Darcie Green, President, Santa Clara County Board of Education
William Gundacker, President, Kings County Office of Education
Nancy Kohn Hsieh, Trustee, San Mateo-Foster City School Board
Janet Lawson, Trustee, Redwood City School Board
Kristina Lawson, former Mayor, Walnut Creek
Suzy Pak, Board Member, Lafayette School District
Joe Ross, Trustee, San Mateo County Office of Education
Kalimah Salahuddin, Trustee, Jefferson Union High School District School Board
Chris Thomsen, Trustee, Sequoia Union High School District
Roseann Torres, Director, Oakland Unified School District

And others. But I am most honored by some of the comments from my community, attached.

Thank you for your consideration,
Katherine Welch
www.welch4senate.com