

Please email your responses to: GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoogroups.com

In the subject line, please include "BART Board" and your district number.

If it is not possible for you to email, please mail your responses to:

BART Board Questionnaire
c/o Green Party of Alameda County,
2022A Blake Street * Berkeley, CA 94704

Please respond by Saturday, August 27, 2016.

Name: Lateefah Simon*

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*This questionnaire has been completed on behalf of Lateefah Simon by campaign staff Madeline Franklin. Please email questions for Lateefah to info@lateefahforbart.com.

1. Please give a summary of your background and qualifications for the office of BART Board.

As a legally blind, working mother, I depend on BART everyday to get to work and pick up my two daughters. I'm running because I need BART to work better for my own family, and because I believe that I can be a leader in creating better transportation for the Bay Area, that serves first the people who need it the most. The time for change is now, as displacement has disrupted our communities. As folks get pushed farther out, families are increasingly dependent on public transportation, not only for work but also to stay connected to the center of their cultural and familial centers.

I have two decades of leadership and policy experience in the Bay Area. At 19, I was appointed Executive Director of Center for Young Women's Development. My work earned me the distinction as the youngest woman to receive a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship. I then led the creation of San Francisco's first reentry services division under District Attorney Kamala Harris, including the creation of the Back on Track program, which was called a national model by Attorney General Eric Holder and has been replicated in major cities across the country. I served as Executive Director of the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights, despite not having a JD. Under my leadership, the organization revamped and streamlined its 40-year-old infrastructure and implemented successful community based initiatives, including the Second Chance Legal Services Clinic. I most recently was Program Director at the Rosenberg

Foundation, where we made strategic investments to support This year, Governor Jerry Brown appointed me to the California State University Board of Trustees, where I supported the successful negotiation of the California Faculty Association labor contract. In August 2016, I will take over as President of the Akonadi Foundation.

The Alameda County Green Party should support my candidacy because I believe deeply in protecting our environment and I am committed to improving BART as a transit-dependent rider. As a working single mother, a woman of color, and a longtime activist for social justice, I bring a perspective that is underrepresented in transportation leadership. I believe I have the ability to mobilize groups that are not traditionally active in transportation and environmental issues, but stand to benefit greatly from policies that improve transit infrastructure and reduce emissions. Already my campaign has disrupted transportation politics and we are just getting started bringing these issues to the people. In the coming weeks, with the support of my policy committee which includes a diverse group transportation professionals, I will release a platform centered around affordability, accessibility, accountability, and air quality at [HYPERLINK "http://www.lateefahforbart.com"](http://www.lateefahforbart.com) \hwww.lateefahforbart.com.

2. (For incumbents) How would you assess your own job performance? Please give some specific examples of accomplishments and setbacks?

N/A

3. How would you go about leading change that would result in better coordination between BART and other transit providers, especially AC Transit? What could BART do to improve it's coordination? Can you share some ideas about what you would do differently?

BART Directors must be leaders in working with other regional transit partners, developing strong relationships with decision-makers at other transit agencies and facilitating open communication and sharing of ideas. BART Directors must also have strong relationships with city governments, working together to achieve city transportation goals which require the commitment of multiple transit partners.

I support the BART/MUNI fare agreement, and would work towards a similar agreement between BART, AC Transit, and other regional transit providers.

4. Where do you stand on the proposed extension of BART service to Livermore? Further into Contra Costa County (for example Brentwood)? How would you ensure that the Board proceeds responsibly in whatever direction it goes, on these proposed expansions? How do your priorities compare with the BART Board's historic planning and priorities for expansion? Which do you prioritize, expanding the system or increasing capacity within the core? What is the logic behind your prioritization?

I support BART extensions that are already funded and in progress, but system reinvestment must necessarily be prioritized over new, unfunded extensions – this is a simple matter of safety and capacity for riders.

The lack of awareness on Title VI responsibilities on the BART Board was evident this year when the

BART Board voted to provide funding to study a BART extension from El Cerrito Del Norte that would cut service to Richmond in half – a decision which would imperil the future of Richmond and which I deeply oppose. This is particularly disturbing given BART's history of completely ignoring Title VI in building the Oakland Airport Connector.

5. How would you work to minimize the financial impact of the San Jose extension on the core system?

I support the San Jose extension, because it provides access to good jobs and education for the folks in my district who don't live in the Silicon Valley. I will work with Santa Clara County to ensure that this extension is financially sound for BART.

6. What would you do to ensure that a boondoggle project (like the Oakland Airport Connector) would not happen again?

I will insist on a thorough Title VI analysis. As a transit-dependent rider and a long-time social justice advocate, I can be counted on to fight for priorities at BART that put riders and community first.

7. Does BART still need a systems expansion department? Why or why not?

Yes. Systems expansions take decades to come into fruition. We need to plan for the growth of the Bay Area and be ready for opportunities to expand, while still prioritizing getting to a state of good repair.

8. Are you satisfied with employee safety? If not, have you any proposals to increase employee safety? Please include your thoughts and proposals regarding employee safety, including Train Operators' workplace injuries, and assaults on Station Agents.

I recognize that the BART Board needs someone who is willing to consistently bring up how hard the workers work and how important their safety is. I will be that person, which is why I have received the endorsements of all BART labor unions and all three labor councils in the BART District.

9. BART has identified \$17 billion needed to keep facilities in a state of good repair. How do you plan to generate funds to maintain BART in a state of good repair?

As BART Director, I would work with our elected leaders in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. (relationships I already have established) to bring more state and federal transportation dollars to the Bay Area. I also would be in favor of local transportation funding measures, and believe that these funds can be most effectively allocated among transit operators when there is a clear and well-communicated regional plan, implemented by operators working together.

10. What kind of cost savings do you suggest for BART?

Ending the culture of expansion over reinvestment. Managing public funds openly and responsibly and

fighting for good contracts on taxpayer dollars.

11. What is your opinion of the MTC and its funding priorities for transit?

There are 27 transportation agencies in the Bay Area, which receive funding from multiple sources – there is no doubt that this system is imperfect. There must be better communication and collaboration among these agencies, so that funding can be shared in a way that provides maximum benefit to the region. As the backbone of the Bay Area's transportation network, BART must be a leader in bringing these agencies together to best serve all the communities in the Bay Area. Some of the greatest inequities arise when communities that lack strong transit use, and lack the willingness to develop in a way that will support strong transit use, then demand heavy rail infrastructure such as BART. Often such investments are not made for transit purposes, but rather to support land interests or because certain residents feel they are owed BART, or certain communities don't perceive themselves as bus users. Our region has too many pressing needs to make transit investments based on land interests and perceptions of transit status.

12. What will you do to ensure that housing development on BART-owned properties provides below market rate (i.e. "affordable") housing, allowing low-income folks (who are the most transit dependent) the ability to live within walking distance to BART?

See question #24.

13. Would you support a regional plan for back up in the event of a BART interruption of service? What would that be?

Absolutely. As a transit-dependent rider, I need a back-up in the event of a BART interruption of service, because I have no car keys. Our regional bus providers should be prepared in this event.

14. What will you do to expand "owl service" or to run BART 24hrs per day, the way NYC can run their trains 24 hrs per day?

I support beginning to plan for a Second Transbay Tube now so that BART can be 24 hrs. However, in the meantime, I think BART can do better to communicate to the public how great AC Transit service can be for those late night trips.

15. What do you think about the pilot plan for bikes on BART at all hours?

I support the pilot plan. Ultimately, taking a bicycle on BART is not that easy. I believe that if we provide secure, well-located, convenient bicycle parking at all stations, and better options for getting from BART stations to final destinations, many current bicyclists will choose to leave their bicycle at the station. I also strongly support the expansion of Bay Area Bikeshare and will advocate for bikeshare stations at every BART station possible. This will further reduce cyclists need to take their bikes on BART.

16. Do you believe that public sector unions should have the right to strike? Please explain your answer. As an elected Director, what is your role in regards to contract negotiations? If elected, what will you do to ensure good faith bargaining efforts on the part of District Staff? What role do you believe the media should play during negotiations? BART engaged in negative campaigning against its employees in the 2013 negotiations. Do you support such messaging, and if not, what would you do to reverse that? What will you do to improve relations with workers at BART? What would you do to ensure the voice of workers is heard, as well as that of management?

I support the innate right of workers to organize, to develop their own community within the infrastructure, and to protect their own interests. Management of both public and private institutions have never stood by the interests of workers (innate of capitalism). I believe that it is a human right to stand up to the leadership of your organization without fear of systemic intimidation nor smearing in the media.

My top priority will be to ensure open communication and respect among all my constituents, BART employees, and the Board. In the past, I've had a lot of success bringing together people across spaces (like in the criminal justice system). The most important thing for me is to be in constant contact with workers and riders so that I can be their voice to the staff and management of BART. That is an extension of negotiations. For too long, members of the BART board have had a difficult time being a voice for their workers and constituents in negotiations. And I believe that this is among the most important things we do.

17. Regarding the 2013 strike (including the hiring of Thomas Hock of Veolia Transportation) -- do you think the Board should have handled it any differently? Please explain.

I would never support the hiring of a "union buster" to lead negotiations for management.

18. Please give an example (if applicable) of when you took a position different than management's position. Please describe how you, as a Director, will be independent from management.

When I was appointed to the CSU Board of Trustees this year in the midst of tense labor negotiations, I was told by management to not get involved. Instead, I reached out to the president of the California Faculty Association and initiated a relationship. Fortunately, the CFA and CSU soon came to an agreement and averted the largest high education strike in U.S. history.

19. How can you help strike a better balance between community service police and BART police, in terms of safety and funding?

I will bring proposals to the Board to increase resources for community service police over BART police.

20. Discuss the reforms for BART police since Oscar Grant. Do you feel these changes are adequate?

As BART Director, I will hold BPD accountable to their own philosophy of community-oriented policing

and policies around racial profiling and use of force. I support the Citizens Review Board in their work on individual rider complaints about BPD. I will also listen to, and echo to the board, BART riders' ongoing concerns about BART police in the context of unprecedented national attention to police violence against black and brown people, especially queer and trans people of color. I will fight to repeal the one-rider one-seat policy that disproportionately criminalizes the homeless and people color, and that diverts critical law enforcement resources away from activities that keep riders safe.

21. What are your thoughts on having an armed BART police force?

I understand that a major transit system like BART faces a variety of serious threats, particularly terrorism. However, I don't believe that these threats validate arming every BART police cop who is apprehending fare evaders and other low-level offenders. As BART Director, I plan to work closely with BPD to ensure that their policies are effectively protecting the community they serve, given that BPD has failed to protect people like Oscar Grant and Sgt. Tommy Smith.

22. Other ideas you have to provide better service? (To reduce noise?)

We need to manage public funds openly and responsibly to invest in system improvements that BART riders can hear and see. We also need to secure funding to for more new BART cars, which will help with the noise issue.

23. Will you oppose two-tier systems in pay or benefits at BART?

Yes.

24. Please describe your viewpoint on Transit Oriented Development.

BART has an opportunity to be a leader in affordable and mixed use transit-oriented development. Currently, the minimum affordable unit requirement is just 20%. BART Directors have the opportunity to increase the system-wide minimum immediately after the election. I will push the Board to accept no less than 35%, as supported by progressive transit and housing organizations like Transform.

We need more than just housing at transit stations – we need job centers. I will fight for mixed-use developments that spread out jobs across the Bay Area to relieve traffic flows and build up communities.

It is important to me to remain accountable to the public first and foremost, which is why I refuse to accept contributions from contractors and developers who bid on BART projects. If I am BART Director, I will be casting an independent vote for capital projects that serve the people of the Bay Area, not a handful of special interests.

25. Please describe the sources of the financial contributions your campaign has received. Please identify any sources from which or from whom you would not accept donations.

My campaign fundraising has been uniquely grassroots for a BART Board race, with over 1000

Elected Officials

Gavin Newsom, *CA Lieutenant Governor*
Kamala Harris, *CA Attorney General*
John Burton, *CA Democratic Party - Chairman*
George Miller, *U.S. Congressman (Ret.)*
Fiona Ma, *CA State Board of Equalization*
Betty Yee, *CA State Controller*
Mark Leno, *CA State Senate*
Holly Mitchell, *CA State Senate*
Rob Bonta, *CA State Assembly*
Tony Thurmond, *CA State Assembly*
David Chiu, *CA State Assembly*
Tom Ammiano, *former CA State Assembly*
Nancy Skinner, *former CA State Assembly*
Ed Lee, *Mayor of San Francisco*
Libby Schaaf, *Mayor of Oakland*
Greg Lyman, *Mayor of El Cerrito*
Dianne Martinez, *Mayor of Emeryville*
London Breed, *SF Board of Supervisors - President*
John Avalos, *SF Board of Supervisors*
David Campos, *SF Board of Supervisors*
Malia Cohen, *SF Board of Supervisors*
Jane Kim, *SF Board of Supervisors*
Eric Mar, *SF Board of Supervisors*
Aaron Peskin, *SF Board of Supervisors*
Scott Wiener, *SF Board of Supervisors*
Norman Yee, *SF Board of Supervisors*
Janet Abelson, *El Cerrito Mayor Pro Tem*
Eduardo Martinez, *Richmond Vice Mayor*
Jovanka Beckles, *Richmond City Councilmember*
Gayle McLaughlin, *Richmond City Councilmember*
Jael Myrick, *Richmond City Councilmember*
Lynette Gibson McElhaney, *Oakland City Council – President*
Annie Campbell Washington, *Oakland City Councilmember*
Abel Guillen, *Oakland City Councilmember*
Dan Kalb, *Oakland City Councilmember*
Jesse Arreguín, *Berkeley City Councilmember*
Lori Droste, *Berkeley City Councilmember*
Ruth Atkin, *Emeryville City Councilmember*
Nick Pilch, *Albany City Councilmember*
Rebecca Saltzman, *BART Board Director*
Nicholas Josefowitz, *BART Board Director*
Andy Katz, *EBMUD Director*
Marguerite Young, *EBMUD Director*
Mark Williams, *AC Transit Director*
Jeff Adachi, *Public Defender of San Francisco*
Hilary Crosby, *California Democratic Party - Controller*

Labor Unions

Alameda Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Building & Construction Trades of Alameda County
Contra Costa Labor Council, AFL-CIO
San Francisco Labor Council, AFL-CIO
AFSCME Council 57
AFSCME Local 3993
ATU Local 1555
IBEW Local 595
National Union of Healthcare Workers
SEIU Local 1021

Organizations

Alice B. Toklas LGBT Democratic Club
Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE) – Contra Costa
Democracy for America
East Bay Young Democrats
East Bay Women's Political Caucus
Harvey Milk LGBT Democratic Club
San Francisco League of Pissed Off Voters
San Francisco Young Democrats
Team Richmond 2016
Transport Oakland
Wellstone Democratic Club

Community Members

See and join Lateefah's growing list of endorsers at
HYPERLINK "http://tinyurl.com/endorselateefah"
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National Union of Healthcare Workers
SEIU Local 1021

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