

## **Green Party Questionnaire for State Senate**

### GREEN PARTY OF ALAMEDA COUNTY 2016 ENDORSEMENT DECISION

Please email your responses to: [GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoogroups.com](mailto:GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoogroups.com). In the subject line, please include "State Senate, District 9". We prefer that you simply reply in the body of the email.

You can attach a file instead, but PLEASE DO NOT SEND FILES IN .DOCX FORMAT. Thank you!

If it is not possible for you to email, please mail your responses so we receive them by 3/25, to:

State Senate, District 9  
c/o Green Party of Alameda County,  
2022A Blake Street \* Berkeley, CA 94704

**Name:** Nancy Skinner  
**Phone:** 510-717-6964  
**Email:** [casey@skinner4senate.com](mailto:casey@skinner4senate.com)  
**Website:** [www.skinner4senate.com](http://www.skinner4senate.com)

**Line of work:** Former Assemblymember 2008-2014 (District 15 – Oakland to Hercules), Currently serve as Senior Policy Fellow at UC Davis Transportation and Energy Institutes and lecturer at Goldman School of Public Policy, UC Berkeley

**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 continue to deliver on the progressive policies that were my hallmark as the Assemblymember for AD15. In the Assembly, I took on utilities authoring the successful bills that doubled net metering for rooftop solar, mandated energy storage and established the 33% RPS (principle co-author); I fought back against corporate tax loopholes and required Amazon to collect sales tax which is now bringing close to \$1 Billion a year to fund schools and vital services; I challenged the chemical industry's proliferation of flame retardant chemicals with a bill to remove those chemicals from building materials; and I took on the gun lobby passing two groundbreaking gun violence prevention measures. During my last term as Chair of the Assembly Budget Committee, I worked successfully to ensure that the 2014 budget contained the largest increase in funding for childcare and preschool in over a decade and a new Recidivism Prevention fund to support community based services for our formerly incarcerated.

I previously served on the Berkeley City Council (1984-92) where I introduced the nation's first ban on Styrofoam and served on the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District (2006-2008).

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 have over 1600 contributors ranging from individuals, solar and energy storage companies, energy efficiency consultants, small businesses, labor unions and more. My campaign finance reports can be viewed on the California Secretary of State website, Cal Access database. I do not accept contributions from tobacco companies or WalMart.

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?**

Absolutely, I have many, many residents of SD 9 who are donors to my campaign. When I was in the Assembly I regularly attended community meetings in every city in the District, hosted by large and small organizations on a wide range of issues. My office also organized town halls and held forums on issues like the State Budget, gun control and criminal justice. I also met individually with people who requested such appointments.

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*

As an Assemblymember during the height of the recession when the state's general fund fell by \$46 billion against a \$100 Billion budget I worked with my colleagues to eliminate corporate tax loopholes, increase income tax on the super rich and ensure that teachers were being paid, jobless were receiving their unemployment checks, state workers didn't lose their jobs and essential safety net services like childcare, services for seniors and the disabled, and the programs for our lowest income residents were retained and not eliminated. I am proud to have authored the bill that set the higher income tax rates on the super rich that were ultimately included in Prop 30 – increasing Prop 30's value by over \$2Billion; and the bill that forced Amazon and other Internet retailers to collect sales tax which is now bringing in close to \$1Billion a year for our schools and vital services. I also voted yes to an oil severance tax, corrections to Prop 13, and other revenue enhancements that unfortunately were unable to get the 2/3 vote necessary for passage.

*-- Controlling the corrupting influence of profit-driven prescription drug and vaccine manufacturers*

I oppose Big Pharma's monopoly on prescription drugs, and the high costs that impact all of us and cause healthcare in US to be more expensive than any other country.

*-- Fracking, and other environmental regulations*

In recognition of my environmental leadership I am honored to have the endorsement of the Sierra Club and the League of Conservation Voters. In addition to the many pieces of environmental legislation that I carried (see answer to question 1), to stop fracking I voted yes on the Environmental Working Group's 2011 bill, AB 591 and yes on Assemblymember Butler's 2012 bill AB 972 and Assemblymember Mitchell's 2013 bill AB 1323, and the Mitchell/Leno 2014 bill SB 1132, which died in Senate

*-- Income, wealth, and tax inequality*

I am honored to be endorsed by Former US Secretary of Labor Robert Reich for my work on, and my dedication to, addressing income inequality. I am currently a part time lecturer at UCB's

School of Public Policy, the subject of the seminar I teach is to examine State strategies to alleviate poverty and reduce income inequality.

As mentioned previously my bill AB 1130, the Reagan Wilson Share the Wealth Measure restored income tax rates on the super rich to the level they were under Republican Governor's Reagan and Wilson. These high income tax rates were included in Prop 30 and increased Prop 30's revenue generation by over \$2Billion. My other legislation in this area includes, for example, giving families with children in free and reduced school meal program access to CALFresh, requiring colleges to provide year round housing for foster youth, providing relatives who care for foster youth the same compensation as non-relatives received, eliminating the fees youth were required to pay to seal their criminal records.

-- *Minority rights*

Police discrimination is an ongoing issue for minority communities, I have been a strong advocate of independent Police Review and campaigned for Berkeley's initiative that established Police Review Commission back in the 1970s. I also supported Assemblymember Weber's bill to require reporting on racial profiling. Regarding education equity for low income and communities of color I supported the change in CA's State budget that established the Local Control Funding formula which gives additional funds to schools with high numbers of English language learners and participants in subsidized meal program. I am also a strong supporter of Affirmative Action and campaigned against Prop 209.

In the Assembly I worked closely with organizations like the Ella Baker Center, All of Us or None, Youth Alive and Californian's for Safety and Justice (sponsors of Prop 47) and carried legislation sponsored by each of these organizations.

-- *Police and prison reform*

I authored bills or ensured that language was included in the State budget that eliminated time adds (AB 999 in 2012) and required prison and jail facilities to provide State issued IDs before release and to enroll eligible inmates in Medi-Cal one month before release.

As a member of the Assembly Public Safety Committee, I also supported Assemblymember Ammiano's police review bill for BART rather than the watered down version which unfortunately passed (Click here to read SF Chronicle's summary <http://blog.sfgate.com/inoakland/2009/08/31/sandre-swanson-to-sponsor-watered-down-bart-police-bill/>). I strongly supported Assemblymember Ammiano's bill AB 2543 to provide more transparency in response to the Copley ruling. I was also one of the first elected officials to endorse Prop 47. I am proud to be endorsed by Scott Budnick, President of ARC, the Anti-Recidivism Coalition for my work in this area.

-- *Proportional representation/ Ranked choice voting*

Yes, support

-- *Rent control*

I have been active in support of the many initiatives (including serving on the drafting committee for at least 2) that established Berkeley's rent and eviction protections since 1979.

-- *Single payer healthcare*

I support single payer healthcare.

-- *Tuition-free higher education*

I am committed to reinvesting in CA's higher education system so that students can attend regardless of income status and can graduate free of strangling debt. In the Assembly I successfully fought for funding increases to Cal Grants and an expansion of eligibility so more students could access Cal Grants. I voted for the Middle Class scholarship to reduce tuition burden on middle income students that could not qualify for Cal Grants or other financial aid. As Chair of the Assembly Budget Committee I made sure that the budget bill that increased the funding allocation to both UC and CSU had language that would rescind the increases to UC and CSU if they increased tuition.

**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?**

Absolutely.

**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](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>

I support creating a state bank of California, unfortunately I did not have the opportunity to vote on AB 2500 as it was held in committee and not allowed to move forward. Had it moved forward I would have proudly supported it, and am willing to introduce comparable legislation as the Senator for SD9.

**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?**

Progressives must fight back against corporate influence in the state legislature. I am running for State Senate to do just that and to be a passionate and effective legislator for economic and social justice. Returning to state service would enable me to continue the successful and progressive leadership I am proud of having demonstrated in the Assembly and throughout my public service career.

My priorities are to ensure that California's economic growth benefits all residents and that we reinvest in education and safety net services.

To achieve this requires state revenues adequate to deliver quality education and quality services. With the expiration of Prop 30 taxes such revenue levels are now at risk. I am

committed to continuing income taxes on the super rich, correcting Prop 13 – especially the split roll which has allowed a gross under assessment of commercial property taxes, eliminating corporate tax loopholes that were sold as job creators but have had negligible to no results, enacting an oil severance fee, and increasing enforcement against corporate tax scofflaws.

I was an activist before I served in the Legislature and an activist in the Legislature. As a TA in the 1980s I started an academic union (GSI union now affiliated with UAW) which now represents graduate student instructors throughout the UC system. In the Assembly I worked to keep the so-called Mod Dems out of control.

I bring this commitment to social justice and equity in everything I do. Advancing the progressive agenda requires skilled legislators to craft legislation, forge coalitions and tenaciously push legislation through to the Governor's desk. It's easy to sit back and say "No." And sometimes you must. But in my 6 years in the Assembly, I fought to move the ball forwards. Among my achievements:

- Enacting the largest increase in pre-school and childcare funding in over a decade, as well as supporting the right of childcare workers to unionize.
- Reducing the number of juveniles sentenced to state prison.
- Securing budget increases for our CSU and UC system, as Budget Chair in 2014 secured a \$142.2 million increase for CSU
- Initiating the higher income tax rates on the super rich (my bill AB 1130 tax rates are now contained in Prop 30) and forcing big corporations to pay their fair share of taxes.
- Taking on Amazon and other internet retailers to make them pay sales tax, now bringing in close to \$1B in new revenue annually.

**8) What endorsements have you received?**

Click here to visit the list on my website <http://skinner4senate.com/endorsements/> or see the attached list.