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Line of work: Former Member California State Assembly

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 served three successful terms as a Member of the California State Assembly. I was the Chair of the Assembly Labor & Employment Committee and was a vocal advocate for growing the middle class with sustainable jobs. I also served on the Assembly Budget Committee, Sub-committee on Education Finance; Assembly Committee on Utilities and Commerce and was the Speaker's Appointee to the State Workforce Investment Board.**

**I am passionate about the plight of troubled and at-risk youth. As Chair of the Assembly Select Committee on the Status of Boys and Men of Color, our committee's work is widely used by the State today in its strategies for assisting all young people. As a result of this work, in 2014 I was invited to the White House by President Barack Obama and was requested to participate in the President's "My Brothers Keepers" initiatives.**

**During my tenure in the Assembly, I passed landmark legislation dealing with the atrocities of human trafficking—which I call "modern day slavery." My legislative work assisted with the development of programs for job training, housing and counseling for the victims of human trafficking—some as young as 12 years old. Several of my laws are prominently referenced on the California Attorney General's web site. District Attorney offices are using these laws across our State to successfully prosecute human trafficking criminals in California today.**

**Before my election to the California State Assembly, I served five years as Chief of Staff for Congresswoman Barbara Lee. Before that, I worked for 25 years as the District Director and Senior Policy Advisor for Congressman Ronald V. Dellums. I also served as Chair of the Alameda County Employee's Retirement Association, Chair of the Oakland Civil Service Commission, Chair of the Oakland Re-Use and Redevelopment Authority and Vice Chair of the Alameda Re-Use and Redevelopment Authority.**

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 strongly favor public financing of campaigns. I receive campaign contributions from a broad coalition of contributors that include individuals, Labor Unions and businesses.**

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?

**Yes, I have always been interested in the contributions and opinions of individuals in my district. In order to get a meeting with me people need to just call and ask for a meeting.**

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 a Member of the Assembly Budget Committee I worked to ensure that our state budget was not balanced on the backs of the most vulnerable and voiceless in our society. I lost my Chairmanship of the Labor Committee for voting my conscience and refusing to support a spending cap “rainy day fund” during our recession. I believe that children, the disabled and seniors should always be a priority even when facing budget deficits. See Attached Article: “Oakland Assemblyman Loses Chairmanship Over Vote” (Oakland Tribune March 4, 2009)**

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

**I have not sponsored legislation dealing this issue.**

-- Fracking, and other environmental regulations

**I am against fracking and troubled by the risk of cancer to the public and potential contamination of the water supply and negative green house gas impact. I have answered this question in greater detail in my answer to Question 7 below.**

-- Income, wealth, and tax inequality

**I have proudly authored a number of laws that help working families and address income inequality. In addition to my advocacy as a Member of the Assembly**

**Budget Committee on behalf of workers here are a partial list of bills that I authored that are now law:**

**AB 469 of 2011 – Civil Penalties for Wage Theft Landmark underground economy and wage theft legislation. Employers that operate outside the law put good employers at a serious disadvantage. AB 469 established new misdemeanor penalties for employers who steal worker wages. The bill also requires employers to provide workers, at the time of hire, with a written disclosure of basic terms of employment, such as rate and date of pay. Recent studies show that \$26.2 million per week is stolen from an estimated 650,000 low-wage workers in Los Angeles as a result of employment and labor law violations. AB 469 punishes employers who foster the underground economy.**

**AB 1396 of 2011 – Wage Protection: Requires commission sales plans to be in writing to protect wages.**

**AB 2772 of 2010 – Commissioner Appeals: Clarifies that an employer wishing to appeal a Labor Commissioner decision with the Superior Court must first post a bond in the amount of the judgment rendered for the worker in the administrative hearing.**

**AB 236 of 2009 – Protecting Wages: Extended registration and enforcement program for car washes to protect low-wage and exploited workers.**

**AJR 56 of 2008 – Urged Congress to expand unemployment benefit.**

**AB 2001 of 2008 – Whistleblower Hotlines, For Local Government Employees: It authorizes cities and counties to create and maintain whistleblower hotlines, giving employees a “confidential avenue” to report possible misuses of government resources.**

**ACR 99 – 2008 Pay Equity For School Nurses - Urges school districts to take the necessary steps to increase school nurse salaries to a level comparable to those received by nurses employed in hospitals and clinics. Such nurses make on average about \$20,000 more per year than their counterparts working in schools.**

**My priority as a Member of the Senate will be to continue efforts to protect and fight for retirement and pension security for working families and to keep our pensions out of the hands of Wall Street.**

**Also, I believe when the legislature voted for pension reform they violated a commitment to protect the principles of collective bargaining. This year’s attack on workers’ pension is a fight that started in the Legislature. I am the only**

**candidate in this race to honor a commitment to protecting collective bargaining by voting NO, speaking out publicly on this assault on the pension security of working families. I will continue my unwavering commitment to working families in the Senate. I was honored to author two Op-Ed's challenging this attack on collective bargaining. These articles were titled "Middle class is under attack" (Oakland Tribune 2011) and "True pension reform can only occur at the bargaining table" (Oakland Tribune 2011) by Sandré R Swanson - Attached**

-- Minority rights

**The 9<sup>th</sup> Senate district is one of the most diverse in our State. It is 63% people of color and 62% Democratic. In the State Senate, I plan to focus on the issues I have spent my life and career championing – creating career opportunities for youth, fair wages for working families, fighting income inequality, giving working families the tools to succeed, improving our public schools, expanding access to healthcare as a right, improving our State's infrastructure, fighting for affordable housing, and for a safe environment. I served in the legislature at a time when our state was in perpetual financial crisis. I am proud to have been a strong voice for our children, seniors, working poor, and the disabled and proud to have stood up and spoken out against fiscal policies that unfairly balanced the state budget on the backs of the most vulnerable in our society and – in effect – pushed more people into poverty.**

**I have spent my life championing civil rights issues, gender equality, empowering working families, protecting senior services and helping our youth live up to their full potential. In the State Senate I will do the same, just as I have done my entire life. Currently there are no African-Americans in the California Senate from northern California, I would be the first in over two decades if elected to the Senate this year.**

-- Police and prison reform

**On New Year's Day 2009 a BART police officer shot and killed young Oscar Grant III. In an effort to rebuild community confidence in BART and its officers after this tragic killing, I sponsored Assembly Bill 1586 the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Public Safety and Accountability Act. I led the effort with other community leaders to pass our bill to establish a 'Citizens Review Board' and an "Office of Independent Police Auditor" to investigate complaints of misconduct filed by members of the public against BART police officers. The Act is a result of months of negotiations with community leaders and the BART board to authorize in law the first citizens review and police accountability system for a major transit district in California.**

**I have also led the debate in the Assembly on prison reform and the need for us to hold the State to its responsibility to rehabilitate our prison population lower**

**our recidivism rate and invest in that effort. The filling of this mandated mission of our prison system with real program support, would be more than paid for by the dollars saved from the effort itself.**

-- Proportional representation/ Ranked choice voting

**One of the other major issues where I challenged Assembly leadership was when they proposed a change to our State voter primary system. I activity opposed this effort and refused to support the “open primary” (SCA 4 and SB 6 of 2009). I stood with the Green Party and others and I voted No on the open primary and feel that it is antithetical to our democracy. The Green Party deserves to have its own primary, it’s a right that the legislature was wrong to challenge.**

-- Rent control

**Each of the major cities in this Senate district is facing a housing crisis of affordability and is now looking seriously a rent control. I am the only candidate in this race for Senate that voted to keep California’s Redevelopment Agencies to assist citizens in our district with the growing housing affordability crisis. Redevelopment in this district is responsible for senior, low and moderate income housing. I believe that the Legislature has a responsibility to provide solutions for a problem that they helped to create. I will go to the Senate and continue our fight for affordable housing and rent stabilization.**

-- Single payer healthcare

**Yes, I support Single-Payer healthcare. Our work is not done; we need a National Health Service making health care a right for everyone. I am the only candidate for this Senate Seat to Vote NO and stand with my community to protect the “Health Families Program” serving 740,000 poor children in California. I also sponsored the following bills:**

**AB 1136 of 2011 – Health Worker and Patient Safety - Requires "lift teams" for health care workers & nurses. Requires general acute care hospitals to maintain trained lift teams to handle patient lifts, repositioning, and transfers. The bill protects workers from disciplinary action if they choose not to lift a patient because of safety concerns.**

**AB 2774 of 2010 – OSHA “Serious” Citations - Labor Landmark legislation represents a comprehensive overhaul of how Cal/OSHA investigates and cites “serious” violations of the law. This bill serves as landmark legislation to improve workplace health and safety and the operation of the Cal/OSHA process in general.**

-- Tuition-free higher education

**Yes, we need to work for tuition-free higher education and we should start with making all Community Colleges tuition-free. We must allow our current students to restructure current student loans and we should create a way for students to reduce student loan obligations with community service.**

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 I will work with you to lower this number and restore fairness to this system of signatures-in-lieu.**

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 reviewed the Bank of North Dakota proposal and would be open to a discussion to such a serious opportunity for the state of California.**

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 would like to share with you my record of public service on the environment. I have always felt that the environment is more than protecting the air, water, land and animals. It must always include the quality of life for people. My goals are to create career opportunities for youth, fight for fair wages for working families, protect the right to organize, fight against income inequality, give working families the tools to succeed, improve our public schools, expand access**

to healthcare, improve our State's infrastructure, fight for affordable housing and a safe environment, and ensure that our state budget is not balanced on the backs of the most vulnerable and voiceless in our society. This is all part of my record on our environment because the safety, health and welfare of our children and families are all part of same mission.

Having said that here are a few more specifics:

As Vice Chair of the Alameda Reuse and Redevelopment Commission I was very active in advocating for a Wildlife Reserve on the former air base in Alameda. The base, Alameda Point, is home to the endangered California Least Tern's nesting colonies. Each spring about 800 California Least Terns make their annual migration from Mexico and Central America to the refuge site at the former Alameda Naval Air Station. Also nearby as many as 3,000 endangered California Brown Pelicans have roosted on the island breakwater which is also used by resting harbor seals. My responsibility was to work on a reuse plan that addressed the development needs of the community and preserving the vital habitat to a great diversity of species. That was the plan that we approved and worked towards.

I also served as Chair of the Oakland Reuse and Redevelopment Commission and as we were planning the Oakland Army Base reuse I also had to deal with the widening of the Oakland port channel for the new generation ships. This involved very complicated talks between environment organizations, the Port and the general community of which I was a part. We reached the agreement that as the Port continued its dredging project for the new ships some of the clean dredged materials would be used for habitat restorative of wetlands and park development.

More than two decades later my work on the Alameda and Oakland bases has continued to support our environment in ways all of us can be proud.

As Chair of the Assembly Labor and Employment Committee, I conducted hearings at the Oakland and Los Angeles Ports on truck emissions and their impact on the surrounding community. Specially, we considered the impact on children and seniors in nearby communities.

As Member of the Assembly, I led our effort on Stop the Spraying of pesticides near schools during our State's huge problem with the invading light brown apple moth. I pushed for legislative support, lawsuits and community hearings to stop the spraying near our children and seniors.

Finally, the following are my bills as a Member of the Assembly that are now law that impact our environment:

**Assembly Concurrent Resolution- 77 Implementing The California Global Warning Solution Act of 2006 (Swanson) Signed by Governor Schwarzenegger on September 23, 2009. This legislation instructed the Air Resources Board to meet the statutory requirements of the California Global Warning Solutions Act 2006 by ensuring that its analysis of specified emission reduction measures include prescribed components and an analysis of the projected employment impacts of the by sector in each of the years leading up to 2020 and in particular the tracking and activity to implement as we developed green collar jobs to be located in California and outside of California.**

**Assembly Bill - 184 Swanson, Seismic Safety Financing Act, Signed by Governor Brown - on June 18, 2011. Seismic Safety is a serious ongoing concern in California. Studies show that 26,000 of the 163,000 housing units in Oakland would be left uninhabitable after the next large earthquake if seismic safety upgrades were not installed. AB 184 provides a financing option to homeowners who wish to make seismic improvement to their homes, removing much of the upfront expense while protecting their families.**

**Assembly Bill 801 Illegal Dumping Enforcement. Signed by Governor Brown on September 13, 2012. AB 801 amends current law to give Code enforcement officers more legal authorities to enforce the No dumping laws in our community and all over California.**

8) What endorsements have you received?

**Senator Loni Hancock has endorsed my campaign and currently represents the 9th Senate district. We have two Assemblymember nested in the 9th Senate district, Assemblymember Rob Bonta and Assemblymember Tony Thurmond. Congresswoman Barbara Lee's Congressional district is also nested in this Senate district. All of these legislators have endorsed my campaign for the Senate. The Congresswoman and our two Assemblymember have active campaigns and are campaigning with me as part of a broad community coalition. This coalition of active support also includes exclusively and active campaign support, the California Teacher Association (CTA), the California Nurses Association (CNA), the Teamsters, California School Employees Association and local Firefighters. Below is a list of our endorsements:**

**Congresswoman Barbara Lee**

**Senator Kevin de León, President Pro Tem California Senate**

**Senator Loni Hancock**

**Senator Tony Mendoza**

**Former Senator Darrell Steinberg, President Pro Tem California Senate (2008-2014)**

**Assemblymember Rob Bonta**

**Assemblymember Tony Thurmond**

**Assemblymember Sally Lieber (2002-2008)**

**Assemblymember Joe Coto (2004-2010)**

**Assemblymember Mariko Yamada (2008-2014)**

**Assemblymember Mike Eng (2006-2012)**

**Honorable Fiona Ma, Chair, California Board of Equalization**

**Honorable Jerome Horton, Member, California Board of Equalization**

**Honorable Donald White, Treasurer –Tax Collector - Alameda County**

**Honorable Sheila Jordan, Former Alameda County Superintendent of Schools**

**Honorable Beverly Johnson, Former Mayor of Alameda**

**Honorable Keith Carson, Alameda County Board of Supervisors**

**Honorable Jean Quan, Former Mayor of Oakland**

**Honorable Jane Brunner, Former Councilmember City of Oakland**

**Honorable Desley Brooks, Councilmember City of Oakland**

**Honorable Frank Matarrese, Vice Mayor City of Alameda**

**Honorable Jim Oddie, Councilmember City of Alameda**

**Honorable Maxwell Anderson, Councilmember City of Berkeley**

**Honorable Jesse Arreguin, Councilmember City of Berkeley**

**Honorable Kriss Worthington, Councilmember City of Berkeley**

**Honorable Nathaniel Bates, Councilmember City of Richmond**

**Honorable Courtland “Corky” Booze, Former Councilmember City of Richmond**

**Honorable Surlene Grant, Former Vice Mayor City of San Leandro**

**Honorable Nina Senn, Oakland Unified School District Board of Education**

**Honorable Meredith Brown, President, Peralta College Board**

**Honorable Linda Handy, Peralta College Trustee**

**Honorable Dr. William S. Riley, Vice President Peralta College Board**

**Honorable William Patterson, Vice President EBMUD Board, Director 6**

**AFSCME California State Council**

**AFSCME District Council 57**

**SEIU California State Council**

**California Teacher Association**

**California Legislative Black Caucus**

**Union of American Physicians and Dentists**

**California Nurses Association (C.N.A.)**

**California School Employees Association (CSEA)**

**Teamsters Joint Council 7**

**Alameda Firefighters IAFF Local 689**

**Oakland & Alameda County Firefighters IAFF Local 55**

**BWOPA (Black Woman Organized For Political Action)**

**Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club**