



SEIU CALIFORNIA STATE COUNCIL 2008 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STATE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY CANDIDATES

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking time to fill out this questionnaire. In order to better inform our membership about where the candidates we support stand on the issues, the SEIU California State Council Executive Board has voted to require all candidates seeking our endorsement for the State Senate and Assembly to respond to this questionnaire.

SEIU is California's largest and most diverse union. With over 600,000 members, we are the largest union in state and local government, home care, health care, social services, courts, building services and the horse racing industry. We also represent classified school employees, law enforcement, corrections, probation, and a variety of small industry employees.

Unions like SEIU are the economic backbone of California's middle class. Our mission is to empower workers to provide economic security and economic opportunity for themselves and their families. SEIU fights for jobs with decent wages, health care, pensions and working conditions, and with opportunity for advancement. We also work in coalition with the consumers of the services our members provide to enhance economic opportunity and the quality of life in our state by advocating for and improving those services.

CAMPAIGN PROFILE

Candidate Name: **Kriss Worthington**
Campaign Address: **2808 Hillegass Ave #1**
Berkeley, CA 94705
Campaign Phone: **(510) 548-8796**
fax: **(510) 841-7809**
e-mail: **kriss@dsp.com**
FPPC #: **1301557**
Party Affiliation: **Democrat**

Occupation: **City Councilmember** Employer: **The people of Berkeley (City of Berkeley)**

Proposed Ballot Designation: _____

Elected offices currently/previously held: **Berkeley City Councilmember – Elected four times (in 1996, 1998, 2002, and 2006)**

Other campaigns for elected office: **Twice elected President of Wilmington College Student Government Association**

Appointed offices currently/previously held:

- **Alameda County Congestion Management Agency (CMA) – Plans and Programs Committee, Administration and Legislation Committee, Planning Area Committee,**
- **AC Transit: Berkeley-Oakland-San Leandro Major Investment Study Policy Committee**
- **Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) – City of Berkeley Alternate**
- **League of California Cities – City of Berkeley Delegate**
- **San Pablo Avenue Policy Steering Committee – Member**
- **Alameda County Transportation Authority/Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTA/ACTIA) – Alameda County Alternate**
- **Alameda County Waste Management Authority (StopWaste) – Member**
- **City of Berkeley – Vice Mayor, Telegraph Committee (Chair), Downtown Committee (Vice-Chair), Parks Committee, Eco-Pass Committee (Chair), Rules Committee (Chair), Joint City/Library Board Selection Committee (Chair), Housing Authority, Redevelopment Agency, Civic Improvement Corporation, and Holocaust Remembrance Day Planning Committee (Chair)**

Current/Prior union membership: **Worked with UAW to organize factory in Pennsylvania where I worked as a youth, but we did not win recognition and we were fired.**

Other organizations you belong to: **AARP, ACLU, Asian Pacific American Democratic Caucus of Alameda County, BCA, BWOPA, California Democratic Party Disabilities Caucus, CalPirg, Center for Reproductive Rights, Common Cause, Contemporary Jewish Museum, Democrats with Disabilities, East Bay for Democracy, East Bay LGBT Dems, El Cerrito Democratic Club, Environment California, Equality California, Gray Panthers, HRC, John George Democratic Club, Lamorinda Democratic Club, Latino Democratic Club, League of Conservation Voters, Magnes Museum,**

MGO, NAACP, NARAL, NOW, NWPC, Planned Parenthood, Progressive Democrats of the East Bay, Save the Bay, Sierra Club, Wellstone Democratic Club, WILPF

	NAME	PHONE / FAX
Labor Consultant		
Campaign Consultant:	Doug Linney, The Next Generation	(510) 444-4710
Media Consultant*:		
Mail Consultant*:		
Fundraising Consultant*:	Leslie Katz (Fmr. SF Supervisor)	
Field Consultant*:		
Pollster:		
Campaign Manager:	Mike Sheen	(510) 604-2776
Scheduler:	Kriss Worthington	(510) 548-8796
Other Campaign Staff:	Barbara Taylor, Events Coordinator	
Anticipated Budget:	\$ 475,000.00	
Funds Raised to Date:	\$ 83,000 (\$ 60,000 on 12/31/2007 filing – please see attached report)	

Please attach your biography, a list of current endorsements and any campaign literature you have printed as of yet.

Brief Biography:

Childhood: Lived in foster homes until adopted at age 11. Volunteered for Multiple Sclerosis Society, and Cystic Fibrosis Society. Met a guidance counselor who educated me that in order to help people you need political change as well as social service. Reading and hearing about Martin Luther King Jr and the Civil Rights movement and the peace movement inspired me to volunteer for the Gene McCarthy and Hubert Humphrey for President campaigns. Ran away at age 15 to stop being beaten, was homeless, and learned to live independently. Volunteered with the UFW boycott, earned \$5.00 per week while living in boycott house in Jersey City N.J., Later did summer internship with UFW at LaPaz. Set a goal of traveling to every state and every country in the world. Visited 49 states and 57 countries before settling happily into the Bay Area.

College: Volunteered for dozens of liberal activist groups, twice elected Student Government President.

Work: Served as a day care teacher, and as manager or Executive Director of non-profit groups including home for mentally retarded adults, shelter for homeless women, youth hostel, housing co-ops, food co-op, neighborhood development association, and U.C. student housing co-op.

Community Service: Sierra Club Northern Alameda Chair, Bay Chapter Ex-Comm; NAACP Board; NOW Board; Telegraph Area Assoc E.D. and Public Safety Chair; Safe Neighborhood Committee; Neighborhood Watch Captain; League of Women Voters Action Committee. First man ever to be recognized by the Commission on the Status of Women for outstanding service to the women of Berkeley.

Elected: Four times to City Council, won millions of dollars for community services and fair contracts for City employees, appointed and hired many Asians, Latinos and African Americans and lobbied others to be more inclusive of all our diversity.

**CANDIDATE PLEDGE –
SUPPORTING THE RIGHT OF WORKERS TO CHOOSE A UNION**

Section 923 of California's Labor Code states it is the public policy of this state that "It is necessary that the individual workman have full freedom of association, self-organization, and designation of representatives of his own choosing, to negotiate the terms and conditions of his employment, and that he shall be free from the interference, restraint, or coercion of employers of labor, or their agents, in the designation of such representatives...."

Employers have the power to fire, promote, change work assignments and other wise reward and punish their workers. There are many responsible employers who respect the rights of their workers and obey the law. Unfortunately, many employers abuse their power in the workplace to deny their workers the right to freely choose a voice on the job by joining a union and bargaining contracts determining the terms and conditions of their employment.

Each year workers seeking to organize a union in their workplace are fired although the law says this is illegal. After years of litigation, employers are required to rehire these workers and pay back wages minus any income the worker earned after being fired. Employers pay no other penalty. Workers receive no compensation for the harm done to their lives and careers. And unions receive no compensation for the impact of such illegal activities on their organizing drives.

Even after workers overcome employer interference and vote for a union many employers then refuse to bargain a contract in good faith.

SEIU asks you as a candidate and elected official to exert moral leadership and to actively support public policies that protect the right of workers to freely choose a voice on the job by participating in a union and to bargaining with their employers.

As a candidate and elected official I hereby pledge:

1. To publicly support and actively encourage workers who are organizing a union with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). **YES, YES, YES!**
2. To publicly support and actively encourage the position that workers should be able to freely choose for themselves whether they want to gain a voice on the job by unionizing without the intimidating effects of any employer interference. This includes publicly supporting and encouraging employers to remain neutral on the question of unionization. **YES, YES, YES!**
3. To publicly support and actively encourage the position that no taxpayer money should be spent interfering with the right of workers to freely choose a union. **YES, YES, YES!**
4. To publicly support and actively encourage a fair and fast process for determining worker support for unionization including secret ballot election or card check recognition. **YES, YES, YES!**
5. To publicly support and actively encourage employers to negotiate an agreement with the union within 90 days after the majority of workers express their choice in favor of forming a union. **YES, YES, YES!**
6. To publicly support and actively encourage employers to negotiate good faith collective bargaining agreements with their workers and to abide by the terms of those agreements. **YES, YES, YES!**

Signature: _____

Date: January 23, 2008

Print Name: Kriss Worthington

WORKING WITH SEIU MEMBERS

1. If elected, will you commit to the following actions to support workers engaged in union activity such as bargaining and organizing:
 - A. Walk picket lines? **YES, I have walked hundreds of picket lines with dozens of unions, including the Berkeley Honda boycott, Hotel Claremont, Radisson and Woodfin boycotts, Teamsters lockout, resisting decertification elections, supporting union organizing drives, and contract negotiation efforts.**
 - B. Mediate with employers? **YES, I have participated in delegations, both announced and unannounced, I have practiced divide and conquer by talking to various management staff to pressure them and/or to get information, and I have tried to keep an open mind and mediate, even though it is generally obvious that the union is right and management needs to work better with their employees!**
 - C. Write letters of support? **YES, I have written numerous letters of support, as well as sponsored resolutions of official City support, and persuaded other elected officials and community leaders to sign letters of support and/or make phone calls.**
 - D. Fight for proper enforcement of current labor law? **YES, I have supported workers standing up for their rights when there are unfair labor practices because having a good law is a hollow victory if we don't help people use the law to protect themselves. And I have helped to create new laws when they are needed and possible.**
 - E. Hold a press conference? **YES, I have attended press conferences with numerous unions, including SEIU.**
 - F. Speak at rallies? **YES, I have attended hundreds of rallies with dozens of unions, including SEIU Locals 1877, 250, 616, 595, 790, and 1021, Justice for Janitors, and 24/7 Stand for Security. I have been happy to speak whenever that was requested.**

2. If elected, will you commit to:
 - A. Call for and welcome SEIU input on policy matters that affect the industries in which our members work? **YES, I will treasure and invite your input and insight, and try to do so early in the process. And I will use my relationships to get you attention from the committee members and staff so you can help shape the debate from the start.**
 - B. Attend SEIU leadership and worksite meetings? **YES, wherever you want me to be, I will make a serious effort to attend, just as I have found the time when SEIU asked me to help individual employees or with budget or policy issues.**
 - C. Work with SEIU to develop legislative proposals? **YES, I have worked closely with labor representatives to strategize how to win votes, and how to draft proposals with a good chance to win. This includes pressuring elected officials and management alike. Sometimes I do this publicly, and sometimes anonymously depending on protocol, but certainly I will help in any way that I can.**
 - D. Ensure direct access to you and your staff? **YES, I have repeatedly modified my schedule to prioritize labor issues and I will continue to do so. And I have taken my staff to many labor events to help them see how important this is.**

E. Work to appoint qualified union members to appropriate Boards and Commissions? **YES, I will not only appoint union members myself but I will directly and indirectly lobby the Governor, and legislative leaders who control appointments. In the City of Berkeley, I worked vigorously to ensure that other Councilmembers were appointing Board and Commission members that were representative of our City's diversity.**

3. Briefly explain what actions you have taken as a public official or private citizen that demonstrate your commitment to helping workers achieve a voice on the job and in the political process.

I have worked with and supported workers in many ways:

- **Sponsored the Living Wage Ordinance in Berkeley**
- **Actively supported boycotts of the Claremont, Radisson, and Woodfin Hotels**
- **Sponsored resolutions and legislation in support of Machinists Local 1546 at Doten Honda, workers at Berkeley Bowl, and striking workers at Sutter Health**
- **Helped secure \$50,000 in the City of Berkeley budget to implement a sweatshop-free ordinance**
- **Campaigned actively against Arnold Schwarzenegger's anti-union propositions during the 2005 Special Election**
- **Attended numerous rallies with UPTE, CUE, AFSCME, and the UC Union Coalition**
- **Lobbied aggressively for the Employee Free Choice Act and a national policy to ensure card check elections**
- **Supported UFW's efforts and sponsored a resolution supporting a worker-led boycott of Gallo of Sonoma**
- **Shepherded the Equal Benefits Ordinance through a lengthy process to enactment**

See attached labor flyer for a few dozen other examples.

QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES

Public Service Revenues

Tax policy, set both legislatively and through the initiative process, continues to have a major negative impact on public services in the state. A series of initiatives, beginning with Proposition 13 in 1978 and including Proposition 4 (1979), Proposition 62 (1986) and Proposition 218 (1996) have severely restricted the ability of state and local government to raise revenues to improve and expand public services.

Throughout the 1990's and into the middle of this decade, state legislators passed and Governors signed billions of dollars worth of tax breaks and loopholes for business, further restricting public revenues.

1. California continues to face a multi-billion dollar structural deficit that future legislators will be forced to confront. Some people believe that California has a spending problem, and the best way to resolve the budget crisis is to cut spending, reduce regulation, and put severe caps on future growth in government spending, such as 2005's Proposition 76. Other people believe that California needs to invest in quality schools, expanded access to health care, infrastructure, public safety and other essential services and must raise additional revenues to do so in bad economic times. Which of these two views is closest to your own?

My views are closest to the latter. Investing in our children's education and other important State needs is the smart thing to do. Simplistic caps and cuts are counterproductive.

2. In 2005, voters rejected Prop. 76, which would have imposed restrictions on state spending. Did you support or oppose Prop. 76?

I strongly and actively opposed Prop 76 and all the governor's reactionary initiatives.

3. The Governor is proposing a new spending cap. Would you support or oppose this new proposal?

Oppose. The spending cap was dumb then, it's dumb now, and it will still be dumb no matter how often it is proposed. We need to consider our values and priorities in looking at the budget, instead of a one-size-fits-all approach.

4. Commercial property tax rates under Proposition 13 have lagged significantly behind those for private homeowners. Do you support or oppose a change to Proposition 13 to tax commercial property by reassessing on a regular basis rather than the current change of ownership standard?

I support changing this unfair advantage of the corporations that control corporate real estate. All of the owners of a company can change, and still a reassessment may not kick in, as long as they space out the change over time. This is unfair to homeowners who are paying a higher share of the burden. As more and more residential property changed hands during the housing boom, the inequity became bigger. Soon, enough people will be so obviously harmed that change may be possible.

5. What concrete proposals do you have to fix the structural state budget deficit by either cutting state spending or increasing revenues?

- **Increase taxes on incomes over \$200,000. In the absence of a 2/3s majority in the Legislature, we can tie income-specific fees to specific services and priorities.**
- **Cancel or postpone billions of dollars in approved prison expansion, (which will cost many billions more in operating costs if not postponed).**
- **Reduce corporate welfare.**
- **Begin dialogue on split roll tax reform**

6. Would you support legislation to lower the current legislative vote threshold of 2/3 needed to pass a state budget or increase taxes? If so, what threshold would be appropriate?
YES, giving veto power to 1/3 of the legislature and 1/3 of the voters is thoroughly undemocratic. Intellectually, I think it should be a majority vote, but since that seems unlikely, I have before and would again support reducing the threshold to 55% or 60% or whatever number we think is attainable that moves us in the right direction.
7. Please describe briefly any actions you have taken as a public official or private citizen that demonstrate your support for your positions on public service revenues.
I have supported dozens of bonds and tax measures to fund important public services such as schools, affordable housing, and parks. I opposed offshoring of California jobs (which reduces state revenue). I have advocated for using the limited local power that allows a City to increase the rates paid on commercial real estate within the limited range currently allowed. I actively worked for Proposition 217 to stop tax cuts for the rich. I actively worked against Proposition 218, which created further impediments to public funds.

NEW ORGANIZING, CONTRACTING OUT AND JOB SECURITY

1. Will you support legislation to achieve recognition and representational rights for Family Child Care Providers?
YES, I already supported SB 697 that was sadly another victim of "Governor Veto". I also worked with SEIU Local 616 to support their Head Start organizing drive, and I would be delighted to work together on organizing Family Child Care providers too.
2. The State of California requires that specific standards be met before contracting out state work, including a showing of actual savings, and requiring a private contractor providing public services to offer its employees wages and benefits comparable to public sector workers. In 2002 the state standards were applied to school district contracting out. Would you support or oppose legislation requiring that these same standards be applied as a minimum for cities, counties and special districts?
I have opposed contracting out parking, security, and janitorial jobs in Berkeley. I support any tools to help us stop this trend. In any case that a public agency must contract their services out, I strongly support legislation and regulation that requires them to treat contracted workers the same way they would treat their own workers, at a minimum.
3. Public pensions and Retiree Health Care have come under attack in California. A recent report by the Governor's Commission on Post Employment Benefits indicated that public employee pension funds are not funded adequately to support the benefits they are intended to pay out. Do you support continuation of the current Defined Benefit system? Would you support or oppose an initiative to roll back benefits for public employees?
I support the Defined Benefit System for those who have it. If workers choose to negotiate a new structure that's up to them, but to take away from people what they have been promised and therefore been expecting is not okay. I oppose roll backs of any benefits for public employees. Instead, I think what we need is to get all public employees parity to the benefits of public safety employees.
4. Contingent and involuntary part-time workers are increasingly used in the public sector in lieu of filling permanent positions. These workers are typically denied access to health care and other benefits. Public services suffer due to the high turnover of workers. Would you support or oppose legislation to restrain state and local government from using contingent workers in lieu of filling permanent positions?

Support. I support SEIU's efforts to pass AB 1496 (Swanson) and I will continue to work with and support SEIU's efforts to ensure that public agencies are not using this shortcut. Part time temporary workers seem to frequently get extended beyond the brief temporary time they were originally intended to be hired, and they do not have the benefits or job security they deserve. Furthermore, as a state and as local governments, we should be working to ensure that our workers are invested in the services they provide to the public.

5. Please briefly describe any actions you have taken as a public official or private citizen that demonstrate your support for quality public services.

I have assisted public sector workers get the contracts they deserve and ensured that the public receives the services that they deserve as well. As an elected official, I have:

- **Sponsored the Living Wage Ordinance**
- **Supported and strategized with members of UPTE, CUE, and AFSCME to help ensure they receive fair contracts and wages**
- **Worked with the Berkeley Fire Fighters Association to end rotating closures of fire stations**
- **Lobbied School board for a fair contract for BFT and attended teacher support rallies.**

STATE EMPLOYEES

Contracting out state work, failing to adequately retain experienced professionals, and restricting additional positions generates false savings in the state budget. For example, the inability to recruit and retain auditors and collections agents decreases revenue generated by experienced professionals. In addition, the California Performance Review reported that the state was missing an opportunity to increase revenue by millions of dollars by failing to hire additional auditors and collectors at the Employment Development Department, the Franchise Tax Board, and the Board of Equalization.

The Department of Health Services often contracts with nurse registries for hiring nurses on a temporary basis. Nurses hired through a service are paid nearly 2-3 times more than state employed nurses. SEIU Local 1000 has documented that contractors hired to perform the work of information technology employees are also paid 2-3 times the amount that state workers are compensated. This estimate includes the cost of state benefits.

1. Are there any circumstances in which you would consider supporting the contracting out of civil service work? If yes, please specify.
It is hard to think of any justified example. Even if you save a little money in the short term, you risk long-term negative effects on the individuals and the social and economic fabric of our society.
2. In order to generate revenue, cut costs, and provide efficient public services, which actions would you suggest the legislature support? Please prioritize and explain your selections.
- A. State hiring freeze – all departments **NO! An across-the-board freeze does not consider the individual needs of each department, nor does it solve the real problem we are trying to fix.**
 - B. Encourage forecasting that includes attrition **YES! Budget forecasts seldom consider or estimate losses, instead focusing on spending alone. Cutting spending is not a bad thing, as long as we are doing it in the appropriate places and not harming the State's ability to provide crucial public services.**
 - C. Hire revenue-generating positions **YES, YES, YES! The budget process also rarely considers the benefits of revenue-generation, which means new innovative ideas are often stopped before they get a chance to start!**
 - D. Compare the costs of using state workers to contracted workers and then reduce or eliminate the practice of privatizing state services **YES! A government that pledges to ensure equality must do its part to ensure that reality.**

- E. Automate services to reduce workload for existing workforce and shorten wait-times for the public **Yes, maybe. It is important to do what we can to make information and services more accessible to the public, and it is equally critical that we streamline bureaucratic processes. But we cannot do this at the expense of the workforce.**
- F. Automate services to reduce the workforce **NO, NO, NO!**
- G. Increase fees for services **YES! Increased fees should be directly tied to supporting the services provided and the people who provide them.**

Some of the above tools are acceptable and some are not. But the priority should go to taxing the rich, postponing prison expansion, and cutting corporate welfare.

3. Healthcare premiums are increasing by nearly 20-25% every year. Not unlike most large employers, many governmental bodies have tried to put a cap on the contribution made by them so that all future increases will be shifted to the employee. Do you support or oppose the ability of the State to take away health care benefits negotiated in previous contracts?
I strongly oppose takeaways. Broken promises are not acceptable and add insult to injury. I aggressively opposed a proposed cap on the local level, and I would oppose this at the state level as well.

4. Do you support or oppose the ability of the Union to have unrestricted access to state employees in the worksite, as long as that access does not interfere with the work of state employees?
Yes, I strongly support union access to worksites. I also support union employees being able to use work emails for important official union work activities. We must actively work to change the one vote decision by the NLRB to tie the hands of union workers in using the most logical and efficient tool (work emails) to represent their employees.

5. Do you think it is necessary to subject Union staff to extra security background checks above and beyond what vendors and contractors are required to undergo in gaining access to worksites?
NO, this indignity appears to be just one more obstacle being thrown in the path of workers having a chance to gain information from existing unions, and become active in joining new union organizing efforts

6. If SEIU Local 1000 representatives were denied access to a particular state building, would you be willing to call upon the Governor and state department heads to ask for unrestricted and immediate access for the Union?
YES, I would follow the lead of the union in approaching the Governor and staff privately first, or if they determined that a public voice was needed, I would not hesitate to speak up when and where Local 1000 wanted me to.

7. Would you be willing to join state workers and Union representatives in demonstrations against an administration that restricts the Union's access to worksites?
YES, I believe that we have been able to defeat the Governor's outrageous proposals OR force him to compromise more in our direction when we have used strong tactics to show the public that the path he is following is anything but moderate or postpartisan. If the Union decided a demonstration was appropriate I would follow that lead and participate in whatever ways they need or want.

EDUCATION

1. Do you support or oppose school vouchers?

I oppose school vouchers, which divert money from public schools to private schools. On multiple occasions, I have opposed ballot measures as well as legislation, which would be financially damaging to public schools as well as raise issues of separation of church and state. I am a strong advocate for equal access to quality public education, and I oppose attempts to privatize education at the expense of our public schools.

2. After-school care programs have become an important resource for California's working families. After-school care is funded through a combination of federal and state funds. While there has been a great deal of interest in expanding access to after-school care, growth in funding has been extremely limited.

- A. Do you support or oppose efforts to increase state funding for after-school care programs?

Support. I supported city funds to help the schools increase after-school programs in Berkeley, and I believe if we package it the right way, we might get more support for this good educational policy by helping people see it as a crime deterrent program by giving young people something positive to do after school.

- B. Do you support increasing after-school programs that employ classified school workers at public schools or would you look to the private sector to fill the gap?

I support classified school employees doing the work at public schools. I would only vote for private sector gap-fillers if told to do so by the union.

3. A college educated workforce is increasingly important to the state's economic future, but funding cuts and fee increases at community colleges, CSU, and the UC system put a college education out of reach for more and more Californians. Would you support or oppose making public higher education a priority for state funding without increasing fees, and if so, how would you propose to pay for it?

Like health care, higher education should be a right and not a privilege. Ideally, public higher education in California should be free. I have fought alongside students and working families to make community colleges, UC and CSU affordable for everyone, by attending and speaking at rallies, speaking to the Regents, and lobbying legislators. I will continue to support the prioritization for state funding without increasing fees. We can begin to do this by prioritizing education over incarceration and the criminalization of youth.

Students and young families need assurance that they will not be priced out of school. I will support policies that limit, freeze, or cap student fees. I will also work to ensure that if increases do happen, they are predictable and change only with standard economic indicators (CPI, AMI, inflation, etc.) instead of the drastic 10-15% annual increases being proposed. In the long term, I want to work with stakeholders to formulate a plan that actually *decreases* student fees to an acceptable, affordable, and accessible level for working families and students.

4. Please briefly describe any actions you have taken as a public official or private citizen that demonstrate your support for schools, community colleges and state universities.

I sponsored Berkeley's efforts to provide stipends, training and the creation of the child care task force. In the past, I have very actively supported ballot measures at the local and state level for

renovation and construction of K-12 schools as well as colleges and universities. I have also supported measures for reduced class size. Examples include Measure A (1996), Measure C, BSEP(1998), Proposition 1A (1998) and Proposition 47 (2002). At the local level, I have lobbied School Board members and attended rallies for better contracts with the Berkeley Federation of Teachers.

Furthermore, as a City Councilmember, I have worked closely with UC students in Berkeley and across the state in their efforts to freeze student fee increases. I have spoken at numerous rallies and Regents' meetings, and I have helped to attain permits for campus union and student demonstrations in support of their efforts.

HUMAN SERVICES

1. County social workers are currently carrying caseloads that are double the state standard. Would you support or oppose legislation & funding to mandate adherence to caseload standards defined and recommended in reports mandated by previous legislation?
YES, the performance of social services often suffers because they are not adequately supported, both in resources and in personnel. I support legislation and funding to ensure that county workers are receiving appropriate caseloads and that we are providing the quality and level of service that the public deserves. This is also a place where a income-based tax/fee increase can provide the necessary support that social workers need.
2. State facilities for the developmentally disabled are being downsized with treatment moving to the community-based care model. While developmental disabilities services are publicly funded, wages and benefits for workers in private sector community care settings lag significantly behind those of public workers.

Would you support efforts to organize workers in for-profit & non-profit community-based settings, stabilizing the workforce through training and wage & benefit improvements and aiding the goal of independent living in California's community-based developmental services system?

Yes, I have worked for many years with the disabled community to advocate for better funding for such treatment. Before I was elected to the City Council, I participated in a sit-in in the Governors office with the disabled activist group Adapt. Workers in service work can and should be given the opportunity to join a union and gain better benefits, whether they work in a for profit or non-profit organization.

HEALTH CARE

Access to Health Care

1. California's health care system is in crisis. More than 7 million Californians have no health insurance coverage. Premiums for those with insurance are rising rapidly and many employers are attempting to pass those costs on to workers who cannot afford them. Do you support or oppose:
 - A. A comprehensive solution that includes mandatory employer contributions, expansions of public programs like Medi-Cal and Healthy Families, subsidies for middle income families, increased hospital reimbursement, increases in tobacco taxes, and a requirement for insurers to sell to everyone combined with an individual mandate that requires every Californian to have health insurance? **Generally yes, but I am concerned about the individual mandate being included unless there is a way to assure affordability. I think and hope the Senate will fix some of the parts that are weak in the Assembly approved bill and make it more possible for a united labor front on health care reform.**
 - B. "Pay or play" legislation, requiring all employers to either provide employees and their families with health insurance or pay into a purchasing pool to buy health coverage for their workers? **Yes**
 - C. A single payer system, which would shift funding for health care from an employer-based to a tax-based system financed by taxes on employers and individuals and which would cover all Californians? **YES, YES, YES! I have supported single payer for many years and was active in supporting SB840, since 1998.**
 - D. Providing coverage to all children regardless of immigration status? **Yes, children should not be victims of hate and prejudice against their parents especially in vital education or health services. Providing coverage and care at an early stage also reduces the costs to taxpayers who will be less likely to be burdened with emergency care costs later.**
2.
 - D. Providing coverage to all children regardless of immigration status? **Yes, children should not be victims of hate and prejudice against their parents especially in vital education or health services. Providing coverage and care at an early stage also reduces the costs to taxpayers who will be less likely to be burdened with emergency care costs later.**

What other solutions, if any, would you support to provide all Californians with universal access to health care?

Work to elect a good Governor! Continue to organize and educate folks on the benefits of Single payer so that when we get a supportive Governor the voters will be ready to uphold it when it is passed and signed, in case the giant moneyed interest referend it.

3. Health care premiums are increasing every year but no one knows where the premium dollars go. Would you support legislation to regulate health insurance rates?
Yes

4. Would you support or oppose legislation that provides cost and quality data on doctors, hospitals, nursing homes and insurance companies?
Sounds reasonable but I would seek union advice before deciding.

5. Would you support or oppose legislation to allow bulk purchasing of prescription drugs by the State of California to benefit state programs and employers that provide coverage?
Yes, I supported AB2911 to provide discounts for Medi Cal prescription drug purchases, which I think the Governor signed and has been deemed successful. Bulk purchasing is a logical idea.

6. Would you support or oppose the creation of a public insurer to compete with private HMOs?
Yes

7. Non-profit hospitals are granted tax exemptions in return for service to the community but there

are no standards and little review of what hospitals do in return for the hundreds of millions of dollars in tax benefits. Would you support or oppose legislation to strengthen standards for non-profit hospitals to maintain their non-profit tax status?

Support. Some non-profits increasingly pay high executive salaries and resist fair benefits and wages for most employees just like many for profit employers. I helped create a local ballot measure G in 1998, which collected revenue from large non-profit organizations to cover some of the cost of their impacts.

8. County hospitals provide trauma and emergency care as well as graduate medical education. They provide the majority of the inpatient and outpatient care for the uninsured. What is your position on reducing the funding for county hospitals or diverting it to other purposes?

Oppose. Given the lack of universal health care, county hospitals provide the necessary safety net for this state's most vulnerable citizens. When we reduce funding to hospitals without providing the support to people who end up there, the state is just being irresponsible.

9. Please briefly describe any actions you have taken as a public official or private citizen that demonstrate your support for expanded access to health care services.

I have participated in numerous events, educational forums and lobbying campaigns over the years, including some great organizing work by Vote Health and by BOCA, and I have seen quite a few SEIU folks at some of those events.

Acute Care

1. Patients are protected by nurse to patient ratios in hospitals. But there are no requirements for adequate staffing of other professional and technical classifications such as radiology or respiratory therapy. Would you support legislation to require hospitals to create plans for adequate staffing and to comply with their own plans?

Yes, I rallied with nurses to support the creation of nurse patient ratios. It would be prudent to do this for other parts of hospital staffing such as those you mention.

2. Would you support or oppose legislation to delay hospital seismic safety deadlines, with some exceptions for extreme financial need or clear public benefit?

Support in cases where the unions and the hospitals both support it.

3. Would you support increasing revenues to fund bonds to pay for hospital seismic retrofit for hospitals that serve the uninsured and those on Medi-Cal, and for hospitals that cannot afford to pay the entire cost of seismic retrofit?

Yes, I already supported a state ballot measure to partially fund this. And I could support bonds of the County or government entity helping facilitate the process is compensated for their costs.

4. Do you support or oppose increased funding of education and training programs to ensure the state has an adequate pool of healthcare workers, from RNs to respiratory techs to other classifications?

Support. I am supportive of funding and integrating career technical education into the curricula and into the partnership programs of local schools, so that students have the opportunity to transition into careers that they are both interested in and meet important social needs.

NURSING HOMES

In 2004, the Medi-Cal reimbursement rate for nursing homes changed from flat daily rate to a facility-specific rate, dramatically increasing funds available for worker wages and direct patient care. However, these reimbursements are capped at a rate below the current health care inflation rate.

1. Will you support or oppose legislation that removes the global caps for nursing home reimbursement rates?

Support.

2. Would you support or oppose legislation that continues the facility-specific rate reimbursement statute beyond its 2010 sunset and support other changes that improve the program?

Support, (based on the description in number 1 above), Support other changes that improve the program.

HEMOCARE (In Home Supportive Services - IHSS)

1. The Homecare (IHSS) program allows hundreds of thousands of seniors and people with disabilities to live independently and with dignity in their own homes rather than being forced into more expensive nursing homes. Existing law only provides for the state to share in the cost of wages and individual health benefits. Would you support or oppose a change to require the state to share in the costs of other benefits, such as: occupational training, vacation, pension, sick time, life insurance, dependent health coverage, vision insurance?

Support. IHSS workers should get ALL the benefits of any union employees. Given the budget crunch, I would hope to see a gradual expansion of benefits. It is exciting that we have a new office here in Oakland for SEIU 6434, the United Long-Term Care workers union. President Tyrone Freeman gave the best speech of the night at the recent labor awards banquet. He represents a new generation of young labor leaders inspiring and leading us to do more organizing.

2. As the California population ages, the services provided in the long term care industry must grow responsibly and address the diverse needs of seniors. Would you support or oppose legislation that would allow non-Medi-Cal recipients to purchase IHSS services?

Support. Non Medi-Cal recipients are already privately purchasing services similar to IHSS. I think allowing them to buy in would strengthen IHSS, but I would look to SEIU Long-Term Care local for specific advice on this.

3. Would you support or oppose legislation to more effectively deliver long term health & social services (integration) while preserving the current public delivery of homecare services?

Sounds good on the surface, but I don't know what this means. I would seek union advice on this and any new issues that I am not familiar with.

4. If elected, would you be willing to actively & publicly support efforts to convince county Boards of Supervisors to match state funds in order to raise the wages of homecare providers?

Yes, I already worked on the local level with the disabled community and SEIU to lobby for better pay in Alameda County a few years ago

PROPERTY SERVICES

1. Would you be willing to be a leader in encouraging, if not forcing through public pressure and/or legislation, commercial property owners (who control the building services economy) to provide liveable wages and family health care benefits to the janitors and security officers who work in their facilities?

Yes, I have already participated repeatedly in Local 24/7 efforts with Stand for Security, and I will continue to support the workers' efforts to pressure both the commercial property owners and security companies to take responsibility for their employees.

2. Would you support or oppose legislation that gives state agencies authority to cancel state contracts of janitorial and private security companies that repeatedly violate labor laws?
Support. Furthermore, we should consider whether businesses that repeatedly violate labor laws should be ineligible for state and local contracts, tax abatements, and public subsidies.

3. Would you support or oppose legislation that gives the Department of Consumer Affairs authority to revoke the license of private security companies who repeatedly violate labor laws?
Support

4. Would you support legislation that corrects tax loopholes and inequalities in the State tax system by reducing State personal income tax on the middle class and poor and shifting those exact tax responsibilities onto retail, industrial and commercial property?
Yes, but I would place a higher priority on making commercial real estate owners and millionaires pay a fairer share of the tax burden and thereby increasing state revenue urgently needed for just contracts and essential services.

OTHER ISSUES

1. Will you accept and / or do you intend to seek an endorsement and / or funding from JOBSPAC or other business-funded PACs for your current campaign?
I believe in attending and dialoguing with the Chamber of Commerce and business groups, but given my progressive politics, they display no interest in funding or endorsing my campaigns. I do have support from many minority businesses and green businesses, and I have a strong track record of working to ensure that good labor practices and successful economic development must coexist.

2. Many legislators join legislative caucuses in Sacramento, such as the Black, Latino, Moderate, Rural, etc. If you are elected which, if any, caucuses do you intend to join?
I am passionately involved in fighting for diversity, and against racism, sexism, ageism, anti-Semitism and all forms of prejudice and discrimination. In some Asian American, Latino, African American, or women's groups, I have served as an associate member. I am happy to participate in whatever ways are considered helpful to the groups. Thus, I would respect the wishes of the caucus leaders and join or support any caucuses working to support racial and gender fairness.
Additionally, I expect to be involved in the Progressive Caucus, the Bay Area Caucus, the LGBT Caucus, and the Environmental Caucus.

3. Did you support or oppose Prop. 75, and what specific actions did you take to support your position?
I strongly and actively opposed Proposition 75 and all the governor's reactionary initiatives. Until we are able to get clean money elections, limiting the ability for unions to impact political activity without doing the same to large corporations is ludicrous.

4. Do you support or oppose the general legalization of immigrants currently living in this country?
Support. I have marched with immigrant rights activists on multiple occasions. I sponsored City support for driver's licenses and I strongly supported the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride. I have also sponsored/supported legislation making the City of Berkeley a sanctuary city. Undocumented immigrants contribute significantly to this state's and this nation's economy.

Because these immigrants are most often at risk at the workplace and in their daily lives, legalization is one big step we can take to ensure that they are afforded the same rights and protections of citizens and residents of this country.

5. To what extent do you believe that employment discrimination continues to deny equal opportunity to minorities and women?

A LOT. While I have personally had the honor to hire and appoint numerous Asian Americans, Latinos, African Americans and women in my capacity as a Council member, the statistics are generally disappointing. Equal opportunity is the law, but not the reality. During my tenure as a City Councilmember, I have been an outspoken advocate for pressuring other Councilmembers and the City to appoint and hire a diverse workforce. In Alameda County, I have worked with CMA, ACTA, and ACTIA to improve the ability to increase women- and minority-owned business contracts. In the reality of today's society, diversity is not a policy we can simply legislate. I will work proactively to find ways to keep pressure on agencies and public officials to recruit and hire real diversity. It is a little known fact that women are not even close to holding half the jobs in many cities throughout the state. We must work as hard as we can within the constraints of Proposition 209 and we must commit ourselves to eliminating or changing it.

6. Reliable, accessible, environmentally friendly transportation is a key issue for working families. What will you do to improve California's transportation systems?

I successfully sponsored a council item to create a free Eco-Pass for City of Berkeley employees, despite resistance from management that the employees should give something back in exchange for it. This is a great example of a good coalition of labor and environmentalists working together. I have worked with UC unions to advocate creating such a free pass for all UC employees. Additionally, I testified at an Assembly Committee hearing against the Governor's cuts to public transit and organized others to do so as well. Over the past 11 years, I have served on numerous transportation committees including CMA – Plans and Programs Committee, Administration and Legislation Committee, Planning Area Committee; ACTA/ACTIA, Berkeley-Oakland-San Leandro Major Investment Study Policy Committee; and the San Pablo Avenue Policy Steering Committee. I have strongly advocated for Transit-Oriented Development, transportation land use incentives and I strongly support increased funding for the Port of Oakland to improve area goods mobility movement. (Naturally I also support the labor-environment-neighbor coalition for safe trucks and safe jobs for the truck drivers.) I will continue to work on similar advocacy in Sacramento.

7. There is a housing crisis in many areas of the state. Many working families spend more than half of their income on housing. What role do you believe the state should play in providing affordable housing?

I believe the State should take a more active role in the development of affordable housing and workforce housing. In the City of Berkeley, I have repeatedly been able to secure \$1,000,000 of the General Fund annually for our Housing Trust Fund. I have also worked to support efforts to create a National Housing Trust Fund. Similarly, we should be working to make sure that the State maximizes its funds for affordable housing development. Proposition 1C most recently created a number of pots of funding for affordable housing development. But the regulations passed by the Legislature may allow for the use of some of this money to essentially subsidize market-rate housing at the expense of affordable units. We need to create incentives for developers to maximize the use of different funding sources in providing the affordable housing this state desperately needs.

Additionally, in my multiple roles on regional transportation Committees I have been a passionate advocate for Transit Oriented Development and supporting TALC's advocacy for funding linkages between Transportation and Land Use. I support legislation that requires all

local jurisdictions, rural and urban, to provide their fair share of affordable housing so that the job-housing balance is met. The state should be incentivizing good development practices and rewarding projects and agencies that provide housing for working families in the area.

CANDIDATE INTERESTS

1. Briefly describe your top priorities and the policy areas that will be of most interest to you as a state legislator.

One of my top priorities will be to understand where the MONEY is. Many of my successes in city government, including better contracts for City employees and millions of dollars in funding for affordable housing and social services, have been the result of knowing where the money was. In my first two years, a high priority will be to work with the community to create pressure on the Governor and/or to expose the devastating role he has played in vetoing hundreds of bills passed by the Legislature. Once we get a better governor, a high priority will be to work with him or her to expedite the backlog of good bills stalled by the current occupant. One of my personal goals will be to have a 100% rating on Committee votes and a 100% rating on floor votes and a 100% rating on Lifetime votes on the Labor Legislative Scorecard. Policy areas important to me will continue to include education, labor, racial and gender justice, youth, senior, disabled, and veterans issues, the environment, health care, affordable housing, workforce housing, and peace and social justice. People used to tell me I should just focus on a few priorities, but I believe I have demonstrated in eleven years in office that I can take an active role in hundreds of projects and generally be successful at most of them.

2. Is there anything else you believe is important for the members of SEIU to know about you and your campaign as they evaluate candidates for this office?

I have already actively worked on virtually all of the issues identified in this thoughtful questionnaire. My hard work and attention to detail are matched by my passionate commitment to progressive policy and helping people as much as possible. I have actively worked with many locals of SEIU and numerous other unions as well. Just as I have found millions of dollars in the city budget for better contracts and social services, I believe I too can help win billions of dollars for state employees and social services.

In my most recent re-election, my campaign was outspent by a 2½ to 1 margin but we still won, which is one reason why I think we can win this with “only” \$475,000 even if an opponent spends much more. In my first election, I was an underdog. Hundreds of grassroots volunteers helped me win for City Council when I had the support of almost no elected officials. Many of the same volunteers, and quite a few new ones have already volunteered for this new campaign. My campaign consultant, Doug Linney, has recently won a crowded Assembly race, and our outstanding fundraising consultant Leslie Katz has just come on board. We also just hired Mike Sheen, who did an excellent job as Campaign manager supervising the many volunteers of our previous campaign. If you want an Assemblymember who will do more than just vote the right way, but who will be actively involved in supporting SEIU and all the issues we care so much about, I will continue to be A DEMOCRAT WITH A BACKBONE, and an all-around activist fighting for you.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please sign below and return the questionnaire as indicated in the cover letter.

Signed _____ AD/SD AD 14 Date: January 23, 2008