

**SANTA CLARA COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY**

**PLATFORM**

***Chairperson's Message***

Dear Friends,

My name is Michael Vargas, and it has been my great privilege to serve as the Chair of the Platform Review Committee for this 2019 revision. Thank you for taking the time to get to know what we're all about.

The Democratic Party's greatest strength is that we are a broad coalition of people joining together to move our country forward, but the fact that we are such a diverse group of Americans creates a special challenge when trying to put together a platform that we can all support. Our goal in drafting this platform, therefore, was to include as much as we could, hoping that everyone will find something to like but knowing that most would also find something to dislike. In drafting this platform we talked to over 200 local Democratic activists, and dozens of local Democratic elected officials and progressive organizations to produce what we believe is the most comprehensive and progressive platform we've ever had.

It is also important to recognize that this is the platform of only one county in California. We studiously avoided national or federal issues, unless we thought it was an issue of such great importance that we ought to take a stand, or it was a policy for which our local elected officials could advocate. This platform is, therefore, focused on local issues, particularly city and county issues specific to Silicon Valley. That being said, we know that our members care deeply about a variety of national and international issues and have done incredible work for candidates all over the country, and we will continue to support those efforts whenever we can.

Finally, one of the most consistent pieces of feedback we received when we were out meeting with local Democrats was that our platform was too policy-heavy and lacked overarching values that could unite us as Democrats. In response, we have added a "Values" section (located on page 2). The committee believes that these three overarching values are at the core of what it means to be a Democrat, regardless of whether you identify as a moderate, liberal, progressive or anywhere in between. However, we also recognize that this is just the beginning of this conversation, and we hope that the Party will take up this conversation in the years to come and that future platform review committees will continue to hone and sharpen these values in their revisions.

Thank you again for taking the time to read this platform, and I hope that, in these pages, you will see something that makes you say "Yes, this is why I'm a Democrat!"

Yours in Solidarity,

**Michael J. Vargas, Esq.**  
Chair, 2019 Platform Review Committee

## VALUES

What makes the Democratic Party a robust and egalitarian institution is the fact that so many Americans from different backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs can come together animated by shared ideals and values. These values are the core of who we are as Democrats. They transcend momentary political and policy disagreements, uniting us as Democrats.

**Justice:** Central to everything we are as Democrats is a commitment to justice. We believe in the right of each person to be free, to have that freedom protected, and to demand justice when those freedoms are violated. We believe in the dignity and equality of every person, and the right of every person to be treated fairly by the institutions of our society and government. We condemn all forms of discrimination and bigotry, and, like our founding fathers and mothers, we are suspicious of inherited, wealth, or class-based privilege as a danger to our freedoms and the fair application of justice. We believe that migration is a basic human right. We believe that our nation is strongest when all persons can be confident that justice and the rule of law prevail.

**Equality:** Every person is born equal, and we, therefore, believe that there is nothing more noxious to a free and just society than the establishment and perpetuations of systems of inequality that privilege some and limit the opportunities of others. We reject all socially constructed inequalities based on ability, gender, gender identity and expression, national origin, race, ethnicity, color, religion, sexual orientation, or any other invidious characteristic. We believe that true equality can only be achieved when every person has affordable access to food, shelter, quality inclusive health care, a good education, and a fair criminal justice system. We believe that our economic system must be accessible, competitive, and treat all participants fairly, and we reject the *de facto* oligarchy of wealthy elites who seek to rig the system for their own personal gain. We believe that equality demands that we truthfully acknowledge and swiftly remedy past wrongs, including reparations for slavery and atrocities against Native Americans.

**Community:** The right and responsibility of community action is built into our system of government, for only by acting together does our democracy function properly. As Democrats, we believe in the right of all persons to select and petition the government, and we condemn efforts to limit that right through voter suppression, corruption, and gerrymandering. We believe that our strength comes from vibrant local communities and civic organizations. We believe in the right of people to associate with one another to achieve economic goals by starting a company or joining a union, and we believe in the right of every person to a decent job and a living wage. We believe that every community has a right to defend their safety, protect the health of their members from polluters, and shield their unique local economies from exploitation and displacement. And we demand immediate action to address the existential crisis of climate change.

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## **Economic Justice, Small Business, and Fair Business Practices**

A robust economy is essential to stimulate job creation and ensure a thriving and inclusive business climate. Strong job creation across industries is essential to the economic security of our local communities. At the same time, we must be careful to preserve economic opportunities for all workers and small business owners, prevent irresponsible and predatory lending, and implement a fair and progressive system of taxation. To achieve these goals, the Santa Clara County Democratic Party:

### ***Job Creation and Small Business***

- Recognizes that Silicon Valley, as the home of the American technology sector, has a unique responsibility to be a model for working **effectively** with the tech industry, including supporting the development of the high tech workforce, promoting diversity in the industry, and developing adequate policies to ensure that the rapid pace of change in the industry does not come at the expense of our rights to privacy and control over **our** personal information and data.
- Supports workforce development programs, such as coding bootcamps, particularly in low-income and minority communities, which will help to expand and diversify the technology sector workforce **and expand access to economic mobility**.
- Supports the creation of opportunities for minority-owned, women-owned, and LGBTQ-owned businesses to compete for government and private contracts on equal footing with other businesses, including outreach **programs** to those **underrepresented** communities.
- Supports policies designed to promote small and local business, including **streamlining the permit process** and providing clear guidance on rules and regulations that apply to small businesses.
- **Supports ensuring that women and minorities have equal access to venture capital as their white and male counterparts.**
- Supports the expansion of displacement services and support for small businesses affected by redevelopment and gentrification, and the implementation of displacement mitigation strategies prior to and during the development permitting process.
- Supports the creation of a public bank that would eliminate debt-servicing costs in the county general budget, provide infrastructure financing at very low interest rates, partner with local banks to strengthen their capital bases, and provide low interest loans for local small businesses.
- Promotes credit unions and local and community banks, which can expand access to affordable loans to local communities.
- Supports city and county policies designed to **regulate the purchase and sale of legal cannabis**, and opposes **bans or moratoriums on the sale of cannabis**.

### ***Taxation and Fees***

- Supports progressive fee and taxation scales for local businesses to ensure that small businesses are able to compete in the market and big business pays its fair share.

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- Supports the “split-roll” property tax reforms that would remove certain commercial and industrial property from the coverage of Proposition 13, while protecting tax relief for homeowners and small businesses.

***Economic Justice***

- Strongly supports eliminating predatory (payday) lending, providing financial literacy programs, including financial planning and financial aid workshops and training, and ensuring services are available to unbanked populations.
- Supports free credit repair services for all.
- Supports “Equity Programs” designed to expand participation in and access to the cannabis and other industries to low-income and communities of color.
- Supports mandatory gender and minority inclusion on corporate boards and corporate management, and employee representation in corporate management.
- Supports divestment from all private prison companies, payday lenders, and fossil fuel companies.
- Encourages companies to give workers flexibility in their place of work, such as the opportunity to work from home or work remotely, as a means of expanding access to quality jobs, reducing traffic congestion, and reducing the employee’s carbon footprint.

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## **Labor and Employment Rights**

A good, well-paying, and secure job is the dream of every American. The Santa Clara County Democrats recognizes that safe and secure employments is essential to human dignity, economic security, and access to the American Dream. Every American should have the opportunity to compete for a well-paying job in a fair marketplace, and to act collectively to protect their livelihood. The Santa Clara County Democratic Party recognizes that a strong economy depends on strong employment and labor rights that allow workers and labor unions to exert a countervailing collective power against the economic power of large corporation and wealthy capitalists. As such, the SCCDP:

### ***Unions and Labor Rights***

- Unconditionally supports the right of workers to unionize and bargain collectively in both public *and* private employment.
- Supports the right of workers to strike.
- Strongly opposes both efforts to block unionization, such as so-called “right to work” laws.
- Strongly opposes efforts to discourage union members from collective actions.
- Strongly opposes union-busting activities by public and private employers, **and retaliation against employees who pursue their right to unionize.**
- Supports Project Labor Agreements and other government policies designed to encourage public contracting with unionized firms.
- Supports apprenticeship and similar entry-level programs for blue collar jobs, and supports adequate public funding to facilitate these programs.
- Supports workers retention laws.
- Supports the vigorous enforcement of labor standards.
- Supports local hire policies on all public and private contracting, and strongly supports the application of local labor standards to all public and private contracting in the County.
- Supports the expansion of labor and employment rights to child care, elder-care, and home healthcare care workers, a population of exempt workers that is only going to grow in number and responsibility in years to come.
- Supports community benefits that include guarantees of good jobs, affordable housing, etc.

### ***Employment Rights***

- Believes that all workers should be free from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, color, creed, sex, gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and religion, and that it is the responsibility of government to enforce those rights without exception for religious or “conscience” objections.
- Opposes the **misclassification** of employees as “independent contractors” to avoid employment, minimum wage, and healthcare laws, unless the employee genuinely wishes to be an independent contractor, the work lends itself to and has historically been done by independent contractors, *and* the classification is consistent with California law.

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- Supports an end to sexual harassment in the workplace, and an end to the use of nondisclosure agreements and mandatory arbitration for sexual harassment and other discrimination claims.
- Supports policies designed to protect the right to earned benefits, including sick leave.
- Opposes binding arbitration, class action waivers, jury trial waivers, and other manipulative contract provisions designed to pressure public employees into signing away their rights in order to gain public employment.

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***Wages, Hours, and Leave***

- Strongly supports raising the minimum wage to no less than \$15 per hour, and a living wage in areas where the cost of living renders it impossible to afford the basic necessities of life on the minimum wage alone.
- Supports applying prevailing wage to large private projects, and eliminating the prevailing wage exemption on public projects.
- Supports the elimination of wage theft, punishing employers who steal wages and tips from their employees, and offering adequate tools for investigating wage discrimination.
- Strongly supports paid family and parental leave.
- Strongly supports universal free childcare.

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## Housing

The State of California is in the midst of an on-going housing crisis. By many metrics, Santa Clara County is being hit hardest. Median home prices in Santa Clara County are more than double that of California, and almost 6 times that of the United States as a whole, making the American dream of homeownership unattainable for all but the wealthiest few. Meanwhile, the average rent for a 2-bedroom apartment is almost \$3,000 per month, with more than 30% of residents identified as “highly cost-burdened,” defined as paying more than 50% of their income in rent. This situation is unfair to an entire generation being priced out of their communities, and is devastating to the hourly workers, teachers, and public servants a growing number of whom are being forced to live on the street or in their vehicles, or commute two hours or more each way to their jobs in our communities. This is unsustainable, and the Santa Clara County Democratic Party is determined to take a leadership role in remedying this crisis. Accordingly, the Santa Clara County Democratic Party:

- Recognizes that reactionary and exclusionary housing policies in one part of the county increase housing pressure in other parts of the county (particularly South County), which leads to increased reliance on cars (and related environmental problems) and unsustainable pressure on public transportation, elimination of open spaces and agricultural land, and unfair burden on rural communities being asked to house an ever-growing number of commuters.
- Supports state and federal legislative changes and funding to help address the housing crisis which extends beyond our county.
- Embraces people who work, sleep, or attend school in our communities as integral members of our community, regardless of their current housing status.

## Supply of Market Rate Housing

- Strongly supports measures designed to increase the supply of market rate housing (with priority for the lower to middle ranges of the market rather than luxury), including, but not limited to, reducing parking minimums, increasing unit and area maximums, streamlining approval processes, expediting CEQA review without lowering environmental standards, ensuring adequate staffing for planning departments, and ensuring that development fees are consistent with housing policy.
- Supports a moratorium on new single family home zoning until the housing crisis has been resolved.
- Supports the rezoning of current single family home areas into designations that can accommodate higher density development, particularly in areas adjacent to city centers, malls, and other commercial and retail hotspots that are pedestrian and bicycle friendly.
- Recognizes the economic importance of agricultural and industrial zones and the need to protect these areas from redevelopment, and believes that these areas should be rezoned for residential only after every effort is made to up-zone appropriate single family home zones.

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- Supports increased housing density around major transportation hubs (such as Caltrain, light rail, or BART stations) and along major transit corridors (such as El Camino Real), particularly where such transportation hubs and corridors are located in an area that is or could easily become bicycle or pedestrian friendly.
- Strongly supports expanded access to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) permits throughout the county, especially in cities where high-density development (such as multistory apartment buildings) is impractical.
- Strongly opposes Exclusionary Zoning ordinances that are leading to or exacerbating the racial re-segregation of our cities.
- Strongly supports policies, such as vacancy taxes and fees, designed to discourage real estate investors (including foreign purchasers) from purchasing homes and leaving them vacant.
- Opposes downzoning.
- Opposes net-loss of homes when property is redeveloped.

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### ***Supply of Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing***

- Continues to support reasonable development impact fees designed to provide affordable housing and other services necessary to support new residences.
- Supports affordable housing mandates in new constructions to ensure that all new development includes opportunities for low- and middle-income families to remain in their communities.
- Supports the construction of low-cost, subsidized housing for teachers, educational administrators, law enforcement, and other public employees, particularly where such housing can be constructed on repurposed public land.
- Supports the construction of assisted living housing for seniors and people with disabilities.
- Supports measures to hold cities accountable for meeting [Regional Housing Needs Assessment \(RHNA\) goals](#).
- Opposes the destruction of existing affordable housing, unless the existing housing is replaced with greater numbers of homes, and current tenants are offered a just transition accommodations and right of return following redevelopment without rental rate increases.

### ***Renter Protections***

- Believes that reasonable rent stabilization ordinances tailored to the needs of the community are an effective means of protecting renters from unconscionably high rents in high-cost markets like Silicon Valley, and therefore, supports tailored rent stabilization ordinances, particularly where rental cost increases are likely to leave low- and moderate-income people or families homeless or displaced out of the County.
- Supports renter protection policies, such as “just cause” eviction requirements and renter relocation programs, to prevent landlords from taking advantage of renters in high demand areas, and to help renters transition to new homes when needed.

- Supports the right of tenants to organize and to collectively bargain and advocate for their rights with landlords, financial institutions, voters, and government.

***Homelessness & Vehicle Dwellers***

- Strongly opposes policies that criminalize people who are unhoused, including those who live in vehicles.
- Supports safe overnight parking programs (particularly on college campuses for homeless and vehicle dweller students), the designation of safe dumping sites, and other public services designed to facilitate the health and safety of vehicle dwellers.
- Supports the funding and construction of free and low-cost transitional housing for homeless people, with priority for homeless veterans and other vulnerable populations, such as LGBTQ teens and young adults.
- Supports permanent supportive housing for homeless people who require ongoing services to ensure they can remain housed and healthy.
- Strongly opposes hostile architecture designed to prevent the homeless from using public accommodations, and which disproportionately harms children, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

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**Education**

In order to ensure and maintain a competitive edge nationally and globally, all students in Santa Clara County must have access to a world-class public education. Further, a balanced curriculum that includes opportunities to study science, technology, engineering, math, music, and the arts is essential to developing a well-rounded, inquisitive, and civically-engaged workforce prepared for the challenges of an increasingly globally-interconnected world. Therefore, the Santa Clara County Democratic Party:

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**Administration & Teaching**

- Strongly supports democratically elected, representative school boards that serve to provide direct oversight of the educational institutions in our county.
- Supports the use of school district owned land to provide affordable teacher housing.

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**Curriculum**

- Supports increased funding for science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics programs (STEAM), vocational and trade schools, and assistance in degree completion programs.
- Supports the full implementation of the FAIR Act and the inclusion of LGBTQ issues, history, and people in curriculum.
- Supports inclusive ethnic studies courses and content in curriculum at all levels of education.
- Urges local school districts, the County, and the County Board of Education to require that all high schools within their jurisdiction offer a semester-long elective course on state and local government, and to encourage high schools within their jurisdiction to permit political student organizations and clubs, as well as voter pre-registration drives for 16-17 year olds on high school campuses.
- Supports the inclusion of an evidence-based mental health education program that emphasizes access to mental health care and helps redefine what mental illness is along with indicators of mental illness.

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**Access & Affordability**

- Demands action now to close the achievement gap between white and non-white students, and demands adequate funding for programs to achieve this goal.
- Supports expanded access to affordable preschool and transitional kindergarten for all students, and making early childhood education free to those of low or moderate means.
- Supports increased funding for special education and services for students with disabilities, migrant youth, English language learners, and foster youth, and programs for students who are parents.
- Believes that undocumented persons and their children should have access to the same quality educational opportunity as any other Californian, and strongly supports efforts to expand services and financial assistance to undocumented families.

**Student Health & Safety**

- Believes that the police do not belong on campus and recognizes that the over-policing of schools has resulted in the criminalization of discipline, which disproportionately punishes students of color and exacerbates the school-to-prison pipeline.
- Discourages suspension, expulsion, and other disciplinary policies that result in missed learning time and disproportionately affect students who need the most help and are at the greatest risk of dropping out.
- Supports programs to provide mental health services in elementary and secondary schools.

**Higher Education**

- Strongly supports a return to tuition-free public colleges and universities in California.
- Supports policies designed to make all higher education more affordable and accessible to all students regardless of their family's income, including efforts to control higher education costs and expansion of scholarship and grant programs.
- Supports the forgiveness of all outstanding college student debt.
- Strongly supports the First Amendment right of students and faculty to protest, and the right of the school administration to bar off-campus provocateurs who incite acts of violence on campus.

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## Health Care

Access to quality, affordable, and inclusive health care is crucial to the well-being of our community. Lack of access to affordable healthcare has damaging effects across the community, including economic instability, lost productivity, poor public health, lower educational outcomes for children, and even increased crime rates. Lack of access to any one group, such as the exclusion of undocumented immigrants, is racist, unacceptable, and harms the overall health of our communities. Furthermore, the positive community outcomes are achieved when access is inclusive of the needs of all members of our community, including the unique healthcare needs of children, women, and the transgender community. Therefore, we must advocate for policies that will expand access to quality, inclusive health care while ensuring that it is accessible for all in Santa Clara County. To further this goal, the Santa Clara County Democratic Party:

- Believes that healthcare is a human right, and supports efforts to offer universal access to comprehensive, affordable healthcare for all Americans.
- Support the expansion of County-funded health care programs, including the Santa Clara Family Health Plan, which provides care for all children, and the Valley Health Plan.
- Strongly supports community health providers and clinics as a means to deliver these vital services to all of Santa Clara County, and supports the protection and maintenance of local hospitals, particularly in rural communities (such as South County) where the closing of hospitals could leave residents without access to emergency services.
- Supports funding for nursing and mental health services in schools.
- Strongly supports increased funding and access for forensic sexual assault examinations by trained Sexual Assault Forensic Examination (SAFE) nurses in multiple locations across the county.
- Strongly supports access to safe, legal abortions without restrictions.
- Strongly supports increased funding and access to services for victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault.
- Supports expanded access to quality, affordable, doctor-driven health, dental, behavioral, rehabilitative, and vision care, with follow-up services, especially for vulnerable communities.
- Supports expanded health care options and coverage for seniors, including in-house healthcare services, assisted living communities, and dignified end-of-life care.
- Condemns the denial of necessary medical care for women because of the healthcare provider's religious objections, any attempts to manipulate women by denying access to accurate medical information and family planning services, and the violation of doctors' First Amendment rights by forcing them to provide women with inaccurate information or preventing them from providing competent medical advice.
- Recognizes that health care providers have a duty to provide competent care free from discrimination, and, therefore, strongly opposes allowing health care providers to deny any person access to needed medical care because of the provider's religious objections.

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- Recognizes the unique healthcare needs of the LGBTQ community and the need for healthcare providers to be competent in providing services to this community, and, therefore, supports training and support for healthcare providers on administering inclusive care, particularly for transgender patients.
- Promote better collaboration and an improved service continuum between federal, state, and county service providers.
- Promote outreach to communities that have not had access to information regarding health care services.
- Supports the elimination of unnecessary and dangerous exemptions to mandatory vaccine requirements, and the prosecution of doctors who violate their duties and endanger the public safety by abusing the exemption system.

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## Democracy, Governance, and Political Reform

In recent years, forces both foreign and domestic have undermined our democratic institutions. Foreign actors have attacked our election infrastructure, hacked Democratic Party servers, and flooded our elections with disinformation, propaganda, and untraceable money. At home, the Republican Party and its leaders have instituted a sustained campaign of voter suppression, and the GOP-controlled Senate has blocked legislation with wide bipartisan support and appointed activist judges who are hostile to the rule of law. Santa Clara County is not immune to anti-democratic forces that seek to suppress voter choice and representative government. We stand committed to repairing and rebuilding these democratic institutions at all levels of government. The Santa Clara County Democratic Party:

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### Restoring Democratic Values

- Believes that the right to vote, the most essential right in a democratic society, should be expanded to the greatest degree possible, including allowing 17-year-olds to vote in both primary and general elections, and restoring the voting rights of those who are incarcerated, on parole or probation, or who have been previously incarcerated.
- Strongly opposes any effort to disenfranchise voters at all levels of government.
- Supports the expansion of voter registration, education, and participation efforts, including automatic voter registration and expanding vote-by-mail programs, especially among the homeless and other vulnerable populations.
- Supports completing the implementation of instant run-off voting at the county level and implementing instant run-off voting in San Jose.
- Believes that elections should be scheduled, to the greatest degree possible, to maximize voter participation.
- Strongly opposes the practice of gerrymandering and other legislative efforts to manipulate the electorate.

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### Representative Governance

- Strongly supports an affirmative preference for women, people of color, and LGBTQ candidates in elected and appointed positions when they are not adequately represented in those offices.
- Advocates reform of the University of California Board of Regents and the California State University Board of Trustees to be more representative of the students, staff, faculty, and the public.
- Encourages implementation of the California Voting Rights Act in Santa Clara County jurisdictions, including the elimination of at-large city council elections.
- Supports the consideration of proportional representation and cumulative voting as an option, especially for political entities that are in violation of the California Voting Rights Act.
- Supports fair representation of North County cities on the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, and the Caltrain governing board.

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- Encourages the appointment of diverse and representative independent redistricting commissions

***Campaign & Elections***

- Demands appropriate and sufficient investment in election security measures to protect the integrity of our elections, which may include paper ballots.
- Strongly supports adequate campaign advertisement disclosures and increased transparency in campaign financing.
- Abhors any and all attempts to deliberately misinform voters, including the circulation of false or misleading information via postcards, mailers, newspapers, online media, or any other method of distribution.
- Supports public financing of election campaigns, city- and county-wide limits on campaign contributions, and the enforcement of campaign finance reporting.
- Strongly opposes all forms of bullying in campaigns, including cyberbullying.
- Encourages candidates to forgo corporate contributions, and strongly opposes candidates taking money from the oil, natural gas, coal, tobacco, fire arms, or other industries that are toxic to public health and safety.
- Strongly supports the right of all campaign workers and volunteers to a safe environment free of sexual harassment, any form of discrimination, and bullying.

***Effective & Transparent Governance***

- Recognizes that governmental agencies must be adequately funded, provide timely, efficient services to the public, be open and accountable to the public, and encourage civic participation.
- Encourages all municipal governments, the county, and special districts and school boards to make their budgets transparent, easily accessible, and understandable to their constituencies.
- Supports the regular evaluation of special districts to ensure they are transparent, accountable, and relevant.
- Encourages efforts to balance anti-discrimination policies and free speech in public places and government owned properties, and supports greater transparency of rules and policies impacting speech in such locations.
- Promotes eliminating the digital divide by providing broadband and wifi access through libraries and supports mobile library services in underserved neighborhoods.

***Adequate Public Services for Vulnerable Populations***

- Supports dramatically expanding and improving county services for veterans, especially mental health and job placement programs, and creating a One-Stop Center to reach out and provide information to veterans.
- Supports expanding services for seniors, including adequate public services, access to affordable health care and assisted living facilities, and accessibility services for those who

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- Strongly supports enhanced services for foster kids and promotes increased resources and outreach to foster youth.
- Supports enhanced enforcement of monitoring and reporting laws and promotes victim services and education.

### **Addressing the Climate Crisis**

Our planet is in crisis. While estimates vary as to the precise date when climate change will become a direct threat to the continuation of human life on this planet, it is clear that we have only a small window of opportunity to reverse it. And the same pollution and global warming that is creating climate change is also impacting our health and security. This is the existential threat of our time. It is, therefore, imperative that we employ policies designed to create environmentally sustainable communities, preserve natural resources, expand open spaces, improve and expand public transit, encourage bicycle infrastructure, incentivize pedestrian oriented developments, expand access to power from alternative energy sources such as solar and wind, and employ smart land-use planning strategies. To pursue these policy goals, the Santa Clara County Democratic Party:

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### ***Combating Climate Change***

- Believes that our county and state must be net carbon neutral by 2040.
- Supports the regular review and updating of the County's Climate Action Plan, which must include a plan for preventing and coping with sea level rise and its impact on our communities.
- Supports the incorporation of sustainable principles into land use, development, housing, and transportation policies.
- Encourages local government to require new development to meet rigorous LEED, reach codes, or green building standards.
- Believes government should be a leader in green technology and encourages publicly funded agencies to purchase low emission and energy efficient vehicles.

### ***Water, Energy, and Utilities***

- Recognizes the supreme importance of having a clean and safe water supply and encourages water conservation through municipal programs and grey water infrastructure development and enhancement, including in residential properties.
- Supports efforts by local governments to improve energy efficiency of residential and commercial buildings and to establish and operate municipal electric power systems or purchase power generated from renewable sources.
- Opposes utility monopoly efforts to change community choice laws that allow local governments to contract freely for electric power.
- Supports strategies, including providing subsidies, to increase the use of energy efficient technology (solar panels, insulation, dual-pane windows, etc.) by a broader segment of the market, especially low-income families.
- Supports efforts to develop and incorporate energy efficiency programs and water delivery programs that retrofit affordable housing so that tenants and landlords are not burdened by the rising cost of utilities.

- Supports efforts to modernize electrical and other utility lines as a means of preventing catastrophic fires throughout the state.
- Strongly supports the ban on new oil and gas exploration in Santa Clara County.
- Opposes the practice of hydraulic fracking.

***Open Space & Parks***

- Supports regional open space acquisition and preservation, urban parks, community gardens, and watershed protection.
- Believes that public parks and green spaces must be open to all.
- Supports prioritizing park upgrades in low-income and high poverty neighborhoods and predominantly apartment areas.
- Opposes the industrial development of Coyote Valley.

## LGBTQ Rights

Despite gains in recent years, LGBTQ Americans still face discrimination in employment, healthcare, and public accommodation. This discrimination is often disguised behind claims of religious freedom or conscience, but that does not change the toxic and socially destructive impact of this discrimination on our entire community. The Santa Clara County Democratic Party believes that we must work toward a future where being LGBTQ is not an “other,” but is included in the fabric of society at every level. In order to achieve this goal the Santa Clara Democratic Party:

- Supports the passage of the Equality Act, and other local, state, and federal legislation designed to eliminate discrimination against LGBTQ people in public and private life.
- Supports the full and equal rights of LGBTQ employees to be free from discrimination in their employment, with no exemption for the religious objections of employers.
- Supports the full and equal rights of LGBTQ consumers to be free from discrimination in public accommodations and services, with no exemption for the religious objections of business owners or service providers.
- Strongly opposes the awarding of public contracts, grants, or the awarding of public funds to companies with a history of anti-LGBTQ bias or discrimination.
- Opposes the use of any public funds for state-sponsored travel to states that discriminate against LGBTQ individuals.
- Supports inclusive, culturally competent youth services, the protection and support of safe spaces for LGBTQ youth, and training in LGBTQ supportive practices for youth service providers.
- Opposes blood donation policies that discriminate against LGBTQ donors.
- Strongly supports the “Getting to Zero” campaign and other efforts to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic through education and inclusive, adequately funded public health services.
- Supports transgender representation at all levels of government, including in elected and appointed office.
- Supports affirmative efforts to hire and include transgender people in government and private employment.

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## Women's Rights and Gender Equity

Women make up half the population and half the workforce in Santa Clara County. Yet, women represent only 31 percent of councilmembers in Santa Clara County's 15 cities. SCCDP recognizes the need for true equity for women in decision-making, leadership and elected office. The Santa Clara County Democratic Party:

- Supports the Equal Rights Amendment, and urges our local, state, and federal representatives to support efforts to achieve ratification, including working with legislators in other states to approve ratification in their jurisdictions and the elimination of the arbitrary timeline for ratification.
- Supports increasing funding for domestic violence programs and other services for vulnerable populations.
- Strongly supports pay equity, and believes that remedial measures are required to ensure that women, including women of color and trans women, receive equal pay for equal work.
- Supports access to safe, reliable, high quality, and affordable dependent care, especially for working single mothers, and supports subsidized or free dependent care for low-income families.
- Strongly supports free childcare services at all public meetings to provide parents an equal opportunity to serve their community in elected and appointed office or in public advocacy work.
- Demands adequate funding for childcare programs, and adequate, inclusive, and culturally competent training for childcare workers.
- Supports a minimum of 24 weeks paid parental and family leave for full and part time works as well as fair treatment for pregnant workers and their spouses.
- Unconditionally supports a woman's right to choose, and believes that it is essential to protect legitimate family planning service providers.
- Demands an end to "crisis pregnancy centers" and other deceptive organizations that exist to manipulate and misinform women about their reproductive choices.
- Supports meeting needs of women and girls in Santa Clara County, as identified by SCC's Office of Women's Policy's annual Status of Women and Girls Reports.
- Strongly opposes all gender-based discrimination, including misogyny, sexual harassment, and sexual violence.
- Believes that any person who perpetrates sexual harassment or sexual assault of any kind is unfit for elected and appointed office, and that public officials and entities have a duty to investigate accusations of sexual harassment or assault and take appropriate corrective or punitive action.
- Believes that gender parity in elected and appointed office must be more than an aspiration or slogan, and, therefore, we must take affirmative action to support qualified female candidates for elected and appointed office.
- Supports adopting an ordinance enacting CEDAW in every municipality in the county.

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### Racial, Ethnic, and Immigrant Communities

Discrimination against racial and ethnic minorities remains a serious problem in the United States. During the Presidency of Donald Trump, white supremacy has surged back into the open, white nationalists have sparked violence around the country, and hate crimes have spiked, with the largest increases occurring in cities where Trump holds rallies. Yet, even before Trump took office, racial and ethnic minority communities suffered from systemic discrimination in employment, housing, access to health care, and public services. The Santa Clara County Democratic Party recognizes that protecting and empowering vulnerable and underrepresented communities is crucial to ensuring a fair and just society for *all*. As such, the Santa Clara County Democratic Party:

- Condemns white nationalism, white supremacy, Nazism, and all other organized groups and philosophies that advocate the oppression of persons based on race, ethnicity, color, creed, or country of origin.
- Supports the rights of every person to be free from discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, creed, and country of origin in employment, housing, and public accommodations, without exception for the perpetrator's religious beliefs.
- Supports equal, fair, and timely access to inclusive, culturally competent public services for all persons, and condemns efforts to deny residents access to public services based on country of origin, ethnicity, or immigration status.
- Strongly supports providing adequate translation services at public and governmental agencies.
- Supports the right of law-abiding immigrants and their families to be free from harassment, discrimination, and abduction without due process of law, regardless of immigration status.
- Believes that indigenous communities have a right to protect their land and water from seizure by private companies, particularly when the company intends to use the seized land for the transportation of hazardous materials, and, therefore, opposes the construction of pipelines or other development on indigenous land without their informed consent.
- Supports the protection, preservation, or return of sacred land to indigenous people, and strongly opposes efforts to develop or destroy these sites.

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## Public Safety & Criminal Justice Reform

The cornerstone of a modern state is trusted law enforcement and a fair and equitable justice system. Without a fair and equitable system to enforce our laws and administer justice, all of our other rights are endangered. Unfortunately, our current system of justice in this country is broken and in desperate need of repair. The trust between the police and certain communities has been lost, often due to policy choices made without the consent of those communities. Our justice system is often unjust and influenced by money and power. In order to remedy these problems, the Santa Clara County Democratic Party:

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### Law Enforcement

- Supports adequate funding for police, fire, and other public safety departments.
- Believes that it is the duty of local governments to provide adequate funding for law enforcement, and opposes the illegal and unconstitutional seizure of personal property as a means of bolstering law enforcement budgets, including civil asset forfeiture policies.
- Supports competitive compensation for public safety employees and adequate funding for public safety programs, particularly those programs designed to build relationships with low-income communities, communities of color, and the LGBTQ community.
- Supports restrictions on the use of lethal force by the police, and increased training for the police in de-escalation techniques and non-violent conflict resolution.
- Supports the mandatory use of body-cameras for police officers, clear policies regarding the use of this technology, and limiting the circumstances in which the camera can be deactivated.
- Supports consideration for gender and gender identity when making incarceration decisions.
- Supports the testing of all rape kits and training for all law enforcement officers, attorneys involved in the criminal justice system, and judges in trauma-informed investigation and trial techniques.

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### Relationship with the Federal Authorities

- Opposes any effort by the federal government to commandeer local law enforcement officers to enforce federal immigration law.
- Supports sanctuary policies that protect law-abiding immigrants and refugees from unwarranted searches and abduction by federal agents, regardless of immigration status.
- Opposes the forced separation of immigrant families and the indefinite detention of immigrant children, and demands an end to these policies.
- Supports the Santa Clara County civil detainer policy and opposes local law enforcement notifications to or cooperation with ICE under any circumstances.
- Believes that the United States does not need an unaccountable, unconstitutional secret police force, and, therefore, supports the immediate abolition of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE), and a thorough investigation into the department's activities.
- Demands an end to the unlawful detention of undocumented immigrants and U.S. citizens in

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federal detention facilities, and an investigation into the human rights abuses perpetrated in these facilities.

### ***Criminal Justice Reform***

- Demands a permanent end to the death penalty in California (and nationwide).
- Demands an end to the privatization of prisons, police forces, and other law enforcement functions and the abolishment of all private prisons in California.
- Demands fair and equitable application of criminal justice laws, including an equitable bail system and a pre-trial assessment to avoid ‘too poor to pay bail’ cases.
- Supports adequate restorative justice for those who want it.
- Supporters increased funding for rehabilitation programs for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated persons.
- Supports increased services for victims of sex offenses and domestic violence.
- Demands an end to sex trafficking, and strongly supports county and city programs to prevent sex trafficking during high-risk events such as major sporting events and large industry conferences.
- Demands accountability for sex crimes perpetrators and those who enable them.
- Supports the automatic expungement of all conviction for marijuana possession and non-violent distribution.
- Supports the expanded availability of clear, explicit instructions to the public with regards to the forms and process needed to expunge one’s record on numerous platforms including websites, flyers, pamphlets, and other established and emerging mediums of communication.
- Urges Santa Clara County and local courts to revise and streamline the delivery of information regarding criminal record expungement at sentencing and create notification systems to alert former convicts at various checkpoints, including but not limited to: the end of probation, one year following release from custody, and periodically following release from custody.
- Urges the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors to fully fund the efforts of the Public Defender’s Office to handle discretionary record expungement cases.

### ***Ending Gun Violence***

- Supports the continued implementation and enforcement of gun control measures already in place, which are making California safer.
- Supports a nationwide ban on military-style assault weapons as well as high capacity magazines and clips that can hold more than 10 bullets at a time.
- Supports universal criminal background checks on all weapons purchases, regardless of where the purchase takes place, and a sufficient waiting period for law enforcement and public officials to complete such a background check.
- Supports ensuring the availability of mental health and substance abuse services to those who are most at risk of engaging in gun violence and those who are the victims of gun

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- | ● Supports mandatory liability insurance for gun owners and/or a tax on gun purchases to help offset the cost of gun violence, and a cash reward system for those who report unlawfully obtained weapons.
- | ● Supports the repeal of liability exemptions for gun manufacturers.

## Transportation

Transportation policy impacts all manner of American life, from economic inequality to racial justice, environmental protection to housing affordability. Quality, affordable public transportation **can** take millions of vehicles off the road each year, while also allowing low-income communities access to quality jobs in other areas of the city. Transportation hubs **can** become community centers, popular locations for retail and small businesses, and housing hot-spots. These community centers attract workers, recent graduates, couples looking for affordable starter homes, and families with young children. This diversity improves quality of life for all **residents**. The Santa Clara County Democratic party recognizes the necessity of high-quality public transportation, and:

- Supports transit oriented development: increased intensity/density along transit corridors and **near** stations, affordable housing in transit corridors, mixed-used development, subsidies to encourage transit use, unbundled parking, and complete streets.
- Recognizes that transportation is a regional, as well as **local** issue, and encourages the county, municipalities, and transportation districts and agencies to work together to make transit convenient and affordable by improving connections, and integrating payment systems.
- Recognizes the need for and supports expanded public transportation between San Jose and South County communities to alleviate traffic created by **increased** commuters.
- Supports the expansion of BART and LightRail lines to connect more city centers with residential communities, including the expansion of BART to Santa Clara Station.
- Supports rail modernization, including electrification, level boarding, platform compatibility, and grade separation, to make rail safer, faster, environmentally sustainable, and ADA-compliant. Stable Caltrain funding is essential to achieving these goals.
- Supports improving the performance of key bus routes, transitioning to an all electric bus fleet, making transit more competitive, revitalizing underused corridors, and maintaining Bus Rapid Transit.
- Supports the construction of high-speed rail to connect the Bay Area and Los Angeles.
- Supports pedestrian and bicyclist friendly development of city centers, designated bike lines, and other policies that reduce SOV (single occupancy vehicle) trips, **while ensuring that these developments are still accessible for persons with disabilities**.

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