



California Voter Guide

Get informed in minutes with our Voter Guide for California's March 5 primary election. Unpack ballot measures and compare candidates in the most important races on Bay Area ballots and learn the easiest ways to cast your vote.

- [U.S. Senate primary](#) and [Proposition 1](#)
- [Bay Area races and measures](#)
- [Democratic](#) and [Republican](#) presidential primary
- [Voting tips](#)



IMPORTANT DATES

Feb. 5

Voting begins.

March 5

Election Day: Polls open at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m. Results will be available starting 8 p.m.

Feb. 20

[Online voter registration](#) deadline.

April 4

Last day for county elections officials to certify election results.

TOP ELECTION NEWS



Find Your Early Voting Site or Ballot Drop-Off Location for the 2024 California Primary Election



How Do I Vote in California's Presidential Primary Election as a 'No Party Preference' Voter?

[More Election News Coverage](#)

Shape California's Future

Important choices are in your hands this primary election. You can decide on a once-in-a-generation U.S. Senate race, and a proposition to overhaul California's mental health funding, along with contests for state Legislature, and a slew of regional and local races and measures.

Voting FAQ

Do I have to request a mail-in ballot?



No – every registered voter in California will automatically receive a ballot in the mail. You can use that ballot to cast your vote (see below for where to return it when you're done) or you can forget that ballot and request a fresh one at a voting location. The one that arrived in the mail will be canceled. [Read more about finding a voting location near you.](#)

I'm registered as a No Party Preference voter. Can I still vote in the March presidential primary?



Yes – but the No Party Preference ballot you'll automatically receive in early February will not include the presidential contest, [so you'll need to request a new one.](#) If you want to vote for a presidential candidate in the American Independent Party, the Democratic Party or the Libertarian Party, you can [request a cross-over ballot](#) from your county elections office, or in person when you vote. If you want to vote for a presidential candidate in the Green Party, the Peace and Freedom Party or the Republican Party, you will need to [re-register online](#) as a member of that party – and if you don't do this before Feb. 20, you can do it at your county elections office or when you vote in person. [Read more about voting in the presidential primary as a No Party Preference voter.](#)

How do I return my ballot?



Ballots can be returned through the Postal Service (the return postage is already paid) or dropped off at a voting location or in a ballot drop box. Keep in mind that the Postal Service must postmark your ballot envelope by the end of Election Day for your vote to count – and the last collection at many mailboxes is 5 p.m. If it's getting late in the day on March 5, you might consider using a county drop box instead of a USPS mailbox. [Read more about returning your ballot.](#)

What if I make a mistake on my ballot?



Some counties will provide written instructions on how to correct a mistake on your ballot, such as voting for a candidate you didn't intend to. But if you clearly mark your intended choice – say, by x-ing out your mistake – your vote can still be counted. [Read more about correcting a mistake on your ballot.](#)

What if I made a mistake with my ballot signature?



Your ballot will not be counted if the envelope is unsigned or if the signature doesn't match the signature in your voter registration file. Typically, the signature on file is the same as the signature pictured on the front of your driver's license or state ID. County election officials can reach out to you to correct a missing or mismatched signature in order to count your ballot, even after election day. [Read more about common signature mistakes.](#)

How do I track my ballot once I've returned it?

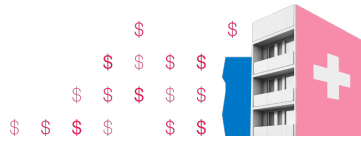


All registered voters in California can sign up for an online tool to track the status of their mail-in ballots for the November general election. "Where's My Ballot?" provides automated notifications via email, text or phone when your county elections offices have mailed out your ballot – and when your completed ballot has been received and processed. [Read more about tracking your ballot.](#)

Can I still vote in-person?



Yes. In Contra Costa, San Francisco and Solano counties, you will be assigned to a specific polling place for in-person voting, though some voting locations will be open to all voters. In Alameda, Marin, Napa, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Sonoma counties, you can cast your ballot at any vote center in the county. [Read more about where you can vote in person.](#)



Proposition 1

Should California issue bonds and change spending rules in order to build more housing for residents with behavioral health challenges?



Proposition 1 would issue \$6.38 billion in bonds to build supportive housing and residential treatment facilities. It would also amend the Mental Health Services Act (a 1% tax on personal income over \$1 million), allowing funds to also be used to help residents with substance abuse, not just those with mental illness. And it would set aside 30% of revenue generated from that tax to help house people — particularly veterans — with behavioral health conditions.

👍 Yes Argument

California should focus its resources on supporting residents who have severe mental health and substance abuse issues and keep them from living on the streets. Proposition 1 will provide a reliable funding source to build treatment facilities and it will dedicate over \$1 billion toward supportive housing for veterans with behavioral health challenges. The current rules of the Mental Health Services Act are too restrictive and should be changed to help people struggling with serious substance abuse issues.

👎 No Argument

Proposition 1 pulls revenue from the Mental Health Services Act in too many new directions. If you are increasing the amount of MHSA money going toward housing and residents with substance abuse issues, there will be less left for existing mental health services. Additionally, the bond money can be used to build locked facilities, which are a threat to civil liberties and will take California back to the era of involuntary treatment for severe mental illness.

Key Supporters ?

👍 In Support

- Gavin Newsom, governor, California
- California Hospital Association
- California Medical Association
- National Alliance on Mental Illness California

👎 In Opposition

- Disability Rights California
- Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association
- League of Women Voters of California
- Mental Health America of California

U.S. Senator



Why does this race matter?

A crowded field of candidates is running to fill the U.S. Senate seat held by the late Senator Dianne Feinstein for more than 30 years. It's a rare opportunity to represent the most populous state in the nation in the Senate. The March vote could decide a likely winner in November: If a Republican advances to the general election along with a Democrat, the Democrat would be favored to win the seat.

Why am I voting in this race twice?

When longtime California Sen. Dianne Feinstein died in September, Gov. Gavin Newsom appointed Laphonza Butler to serve the remainder of her term. Voters are now being asked to pick a senator to serve the short window from when the election is certified to when the term ends on Jan. 3, 2025, and also to pick a senator for the next full term, from January 2025 through January 2031.

Key Candidates ?



Steve Garvey
Former Professional
Baseball Player
Republican



Barbara Lee
U.S. Representative
Democrat



Katie Porter
U.S. Representative
Democrat



Adam Schiff
U.S. Representative
Democrat

Top Priorities

Steve Garvey:

- Tackling homelessness by addressing the mental health and substance abuse crises.
- Improving public schools.
- Holding criminals accountable and better fund police departments.

Barbara Lee:

- Providing health care for all through a single-payer system.
- Taking climate action, particularly in lower-income neighborhoods and communities of color.
- Protecting reproductive rights.

Katie Porter:

- Tackling corruption at corporations and in government, including by barring federal lobbyists from making campaign contributions.
- “Unrigging” the economy by investing in public services, climate action and health care and limiting corporate consolidation.
- Empowering workers through a higher minimum wage and making it easier to organize labor unions.

Adam Schiff:

- Expanding voting rights and eliminating the electoral college.
- Reforming campaign finance and ethics laws to make government more accountable.
- Reforming the Supreme Court by expanding it and imposing term limits.

Positions on Key Issues ?

Do you support a national abortion ban, national abortion limit or federal legislation codifying abortion access across the U.S.?



Garvey says he would not support a federal abortion ban or a federal law codifying abortion access, but wants to leave it up to the states as set out by the Supreme Court’s Dobbs decision. He says he’s personally opposed to abortion but wants to “honor” Californians’ overwhelming vote to maintain legal access to abortion.

Lee wants to end the filibuster in the Senate and codify Roe v. Wade’s protections into federal law. She speaks openly about risking her life to get a “back-alley abortion” when it was illegal and is co-chair of the Pro-Choice Caucus. She is coauthor of proposed federal legislation that would let people on government-sponsored health plans access abortion care, and wrote California’s Violence Against Women Act as a state Assembly member.

Porter supports federal legislation to guarantee abortion access in all states, including the Women’s Health Protection Act. She’s voted for legislation to strengthen protections for patients who travel across state lines to access abortion care and says she’s posed questions to companies like FedEx asking how they will ensure Americans can access medication abortion through the mail.

Schiff says he would “strongly and vigorously” oppose a national abortion ban or any other federal limitations and supports codifying Roe v. Wade’s protections into federal law. He says he will support the Women’s Health Protection Act, work to reform the Supreme Court in part by expanding its size and imposing term limits, and support a change in law so people on government-sponsored health plans access abortion care.

Do you support a cease-fire in the war between Israel and Hamas and do you want to see any conditions placed on U.S. aid to Israel? Do you support continuing financial and military aid to Ukraine?



Garvey says he does not support a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas and also opposes placing any conditions on aid to Israel, saying the U.S. should “unequivocally stand by Israel’s right to defend itself from terrorists.” He says the U.S. cannot fund the war in Ukraine forever and that future aid should be based on “some metric of success.”

Lee was the only member of Congress to vote against authorizing the wars in both Afghanistan and Iraq after 9/11. Lee supports an “unequivocal cease-fire,” and has since fall; she also believes that further assistance to Israel must be dependent on a “fundamental shift in its military strategy” and abide by U.S. and international law. She says the U.S. must continue to support Ukraine and its democracy against Russia.

Porter supports a “lasting bilateral cease-fire” contingent on “release of all hostages, durable security for Israel, and an end to Hamas’ control of Gaza.” She does not believe the U.S. should pledge unconditional military aid to Israel. She says any U.S. aid should be used to work toward a lasting two-state solution, and “must come with respect for U.S. and international law.” She supports continuing financial and military aid to Ukraine.

Schiff does not support a permanent cease-fire, saying it will perpetuate Hamas control over Gaza and that a two-state solution is not possible while Hamas controls the territory. He also opposes conditioning U.S. aid to Israel. He “strongly” supports additional financial and military support for Ukraine but opposes providing cluster munitions.

Would you use Community Project Funding requests (also known as earmarks) to steer funds toward California projects?



Garvey calls the current earmark system “flawed” and says it needs to be reformed to make sure projects are funded on their merits. He blames earmarks for inflation and the national debt, but says he would use it to deliver resources to California.

Lee supports earmarks as a “critical tool” to deliver results to constituents, particularly people of color and those who have low income. She touts millions of dollars in federal funding she has secured as a member of Congress for things like commercial revitalization, apprenticeship programs and mental health services.

Porter has long opposed earmarks and says she would continue to shun them as a Senator. She’s calling for reform to eliminate them entirely, saying they hurt people in low-income communities and communities of color. She believes federal spending should be decided by neutral policy experts and not be dependent on the connections of an individual politician.

Schiff supports earmarks and says elected leaders must fight for dollars to flow back to California, noting the state already sends more money to Washington, D.C., than it gets back. He says as a congressman he has brought back millions of dollars to combat homelessness and the housing crisis, strengthened wildfire prevention efforts and invested in mental health treatment for first responders.

Would you support changes to the asylum system or other immigration reform?



Garvey says the U.S.’s first priority should be strengthening the southern border but that he wants to “reward those who are seeking citizenship legally, including asylum seekers.” He is calling for an end to “chaos” at the border and for a streamlining of the immigration process.

Lee wants to abolish recent policies that have upended long-standing asylum protocols. She voted against the creation of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, and is calling for a 50% cut to Customs and Border Patrol funding. She supports a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants already in the U.S. as well as more investments in Central and South American countries from which many immigrants in the U.S. originate.

Porter says the U.S. needs to streamline its asylum process to make it easier for those fleeing political, economic and religious persecution to legally seek refuge in America. She calls our immigration system a “mess” and blames Republicans for blocking reform.

Schiff is calling for investing more resources into the immigration court system in order to address the backlog and speed up how long it takes to adjudicate asylum petitions. He wants to see comprehensive immigration reform and supports the U.S. Citizenship Act to create a pathway to citizenship for 11 million undocumented immigrants already in the U.S.

Key Supporters

For Garvey

- N/A

For Lee

- California Labor Federation
- Congressional Black Caucus PAC
- Reproductive Freedom for All (formerly NARAL Pro-Choice)

For Porter

- Elizabeth Warren, U.S. senator
- California Labor Federation
- California School Employees Association

For Schiff

- Nancy Pelosi, U.S. representative
- California Labor Federation
- United Farm Workers

Additional Candidates



Eric Early **Attorney**

Republican. Early has previously run for Congress and Attorney General. He told KQED that he would vote for a national 15-week limit on abortions and opposes continuing financial and military aid to Ukraine.

U.S. Senator FAQ

What does a U.S. senator do?

California's two U.S. senators represent the interests of the state in the upper chamber of Congress. They write and vote on bills, pursue funding for projects and programs in the state, and decide on nominations for U.S. Supreme Court justices, federal judges, cabinet members and other federal officials.

What are the qualifications to be a senator?

Senators must be at least 30 years old, and have been U.S. citizens for at least nine years. They must also be residents of the state they're running to represent at the time of the election.

How many years do we elect a U.S. senator for?

U.S. senators are elected for six-year terms.

Supervisor, District 2



Why does this race matter?

District 2 is located entirely within San José, so the winner of this board of supervisors seat will be the voice for the city’s downtown and East San José. Labor groups are hoping to elect another union-friendly candidate to succeed termed-out labor stalwart Cindy Chavez.

What does a county supervisor do?

Supervisors govern county programs and departments and approve the county budget. Their largest area of spending is traditionally health care and human services. Supervisors are also responsible for local jails and elections, and they make decisions on law enforcement and housing in unincorporated areas of the county. If a supervisor candidate receives over 50% of the vote in the primary, they take office for a four-year term. Otherwise, the top two candidates face off in the November general election.

Candidates



Jennifer Celaya
 Founder, New Beginnings Family Services



Betty Duong
 Chief of Staff, Supervisor Cindy Chavez



Corina Herrera-Loera
 Trustee, Alum Rock Union School District



Nelson McElmurry
 Attorney



Madison Nguyen
 Former City Council Member, San José

Key Supporters ?

For Celaya

- N/A

For Duong

- Zoe Lofgren, U.S. representative
- Dave Cortese, state senator
- Cindy Chavez, supervisor, Santa Clara County
- South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council
- County Employees Management Association

For Herrera-Loera

- Sergio Jimenez, City Council member, San José
- Raul Peralez, former City Council member, San José
- Andrea Flores Shelton, trustee, Alum Rock Union School district
- Blanca Alvarado, former supervisor, Santa Clara County
- Muwekma Ohlone Tribe

For McElmurry

- N/A

For Nguyen

- Arjun Batra, City Council member, San José
- Pam Foley, City Council member, San José
- Chuck Reed, former mayor, San José
- Ron Gonzales, former mayor, San José
- Ann Ravel, former commissioner, Federal Election Commission

Positions on Key Issues ?

Santa Clara County has committed most of the money from the \$950 million Measure A affordable housing bond voters approved in 2016. Do you support another bond? What is your plan for making housing more affordable and reducing homelessness?



Celaya believes, “There’s been too much money poured into Santa Clara County for this housing crisis to not have been resolved.” She wants housing to come with robust supportive services but is also calling for greater accountability for residents to transition off of Section 8 vouchers or exit temporary housing.

Herrera-Loera touts her work as an Alum Rock Union school board member in passing a bond to build teacher housing on school property. She supports the county’s construction of permanent affordable housing but says, “I haven’t heard enough [about] this kind of emergency shelters, this short-term [housing].”

Nguyen says, “I don’t want to see another bond moving forward unless we actually do an audit of what we have done,” with Measure A spending. She says as a former San José City Council member she approved affordable housing projects such as the Corde Terra apartments by the county fairgrounds.

Duong was the campaign manager for Measure A, which she calls “the boldest, most groundbreaking, affordable housing bond measure to date.” She vows to focus on preventing more residents from becoming unhoused “with the same vigor that we’ve approached building affordable housing.”

McElmurry says he would review the county’s Measure A affordable housing spending “before I say, ‘Hey, let’s move forward with additional housing in the same manner.’” He says the conversion of motels into homeless housing in San José “is causing a lot of challenges for the neighborhood.”

The state government has recently approved changes to make it easier to compel people with severe mental illness into treatment and housing. Do you support those changes? What will you do as a supervisor to help residents with severe mental illness?



Celaya says her experience running a family services nonprofit equips her to tackle reforms to mental health treatment. She's in the "middle of the road" on expanding conservatorship. "In my 27 years in the legal field, I have experienced a lot of people under conservatorship not being managed appropriately."

Herrera-Loera says mental health treatment is an "area of growth. We are still failing our community." She says she looks forward to implementing the state policies and connecting more residents who have mental health needs with case managers.

Nguyen is criticizing current supervisors for delaying the expansion of conservatorship in Santa Clara County. "I think that it's time that Santa Clara County stop making excuses and move forward, finding solutions, because we are talking about people who are most vulnerable and they are in crisis mode."

Duong says she supports the state's direction to "have a more proactive intervention" with people suffering with behavioral health challenges. But she says the state is creating an unfunded mandate by making it easier to place people in a conservatorship "without providing any additional resources" for the county.

McElmurry says the years he has spent getting mental health treatment has motivated him to support expanded access to treatment for county residents. He says the expansion of conservatorship should be judged on a case-by-case basis.

Hundreds of people have died from fentanyl overdoses in the county in recent years. What is your plan to fight this epidemic and prevent deaths, especially among the county's youngest residents?



Celaya says more oversight is needed for the county health system. "They're giving out opiates like candy. And I believe wholeheartedly that that is where the issue is stemming from." She also wants more drug treatment centers that can be accessed without referrals.

Herrera-Loera says she has experience dealing with substance use issues as a youth probation officer. She says the county has focused on making Narcan available "but we're not really putting the same focus on the prevention piece, which is, to me, more important."

Nguyen wants to partner with schools to bring drug education into the classroom, "even [among] elementary school students. That is so desperately needed right now," she says. "It will cost less to go out there and prevent a tragedy from happening rather than having to intervene when something does happen."

Duong touts her work as chief of staff for Supervisor Cindy Chavez, who created a fentanyl working group. "We were the first county to make Narcan available in all of our public libraries. We've made Narcan available on all the buses and light rail." She wants to make fentanyl education accessible in more languages, like Vietnamese.

McElmurry says his approach would be to fund drug education and mental health resources, particularly in schools. "You can't just simply approach this by saying we're going to go arrest all the fentanyl bad guys selling it out there, because many of them themselves are addicted users."

Supervisor, District 5



Why does this race matter?

This seat is open for the first time in 12 years, after incumbent Joe Simitian reached his limit of three terms. The winner will represent the suburban communities of Palo Alto, Mountain View, Cupertino, Saratoga and Los Gatos.

What does a county supervisor do?

Supervisors govern county programs and departments and approve the county budget. Their largest area of spending is traditionally health care and human services. Supervisors are also responsible for local jails and elections, and they make decisions on law enforcement and housing in unincorporated areas of the county. If a supervisor candidate receives over 50% of the vote in the primary, they take office for a four-year term. Otherwise, the top two candidates face off in the November general election.

Key Candidates ?



Margaret Abe-Koga
City Council Member,
Mountain View



Peter Fung
District Director, El
Camino Health



Sally Lieber
Member, California
State Board of
Equalization

Key Supporters ?

For Abe-Koga

- Anna Eshoo, U.S. representative
- Josh Becker, state senator
- South Bay Labor Council AFL-CIO
- County Employees Management Association

For Fung

- N/A

For Lieber

- N/A

Positions on Key Issues

The county is facing a budget deficit in future years — with a shortfall this year of as much as \$158 million. How would you balance the budget?

Abe-Koga touts her work in balancing Mountain View's budget as mayor during the Great Recession. She says the county can learn from Mountain View's practice of leasing land to companies like Google. "That rent and lease money has been really what has helped us stay afloat even during economic downturns."

Fung says he has streamlined the budget at El Camino Health, leading to a credit rating increase from Moody's. He says there is money to be saved in the county's health system. "If we can use this money efficiently, then we may have some to spare for other essential services."

Lieber points to her experience in the state Assembly during California's budget crisis. She says the county budget can be balanced by looking at cuts to executive pay, new revenue sources and "cutting some of the things that in better budget times might be a great thing to do."

Santa Clara County has committed most of the money from the Measure A affordable housing bond voters approved in 2016. Do you support another bond? What is your plan for making housing more affordable and reducing homelessness?

Abe-Koga supports a regional housing bond for the Bay Area. If that doesn't happen, she says the county should "look at another Measure A type of initiative." In Mountain View, she backed the conversion of motels to affordable housing and the creation of a sanctioned parking lot for RV dwellers.

Fung emphasizes the need to fund supportive services such as counseling and substance use treatment with affordable housing. Without that, he says, people "will continue their habits and the problem will not be solved."

Lieber wrote a state law requiring cities to plan for housing for lower-income households making less than 30% of area median income. She also wants more focus on middle-income housing. "There are a large number of people who just need workforce housing, they don't need all of the wraparound supportive services."

As supervisor you will oversee a large health care budget and network of hospitals and clinics. How would you improve the care residents receive from the Santa Clara County Health System?

Abe-Koga says her fight with breast cancer instilled in her the importance of patient-doctor relationships. She says she will focus on increasing staffing in the county health system in order to help medical professionals avoid burnout and mental health challenges that could affect their interactions with patients.

Fung touts his past leadership of El Camino Health's stroke center and the creation of the Chinese Health Initiative. He plans to focus on improving in-home health care "so we can reach the patient's home and they would be able to have the daily health care services."

Lieber says there should be more attention on helping county health system patients with chronic health issues "so that it doesn't get to a breaking point that's expensive for the person's health and financially expensive." In the Legislature, Lieber voted to create a single-payer health care system in California.

Additional Candidates



Barry Chang
Former City Council
Member, Cupertino

Chang is focused on the future of the recently-closed Lehigh Cement Plant near Cupertino.



Sandy Sans
Business Owner

Sans wants to decentralize decision-making in county government, which he says has become "too process-oriented, too top-down oriented."

U.S. House of Representatives, District 16



Why does this race matter?

When U.S. Rep. Anna Eshoo announced in November that she would not run for reelection after more than three decades in Congress, high-profile Democrats from across the South Bay jumped at the chance to represent reliably liberal communities from Pacifica to San José.

What does a U.S. representative do?

Representatives are your local community's voice in the U.S. House of Representatives. Members of congress write and vote on bills, including the federal budget. The top-two finishers in this primary election, regardless of party, will face off in the November election. The winner will serve a two-year term.

Key Candidates ?



Peter Dixon
Technology
Entrepreneur
Democrat



Rishi Kumar
Former City Council
Member, Saratoga
Democrat



Sam Liccardo
Former Mayor, San José
Democrat



Evan Low
State Assembly
Member
Democrat



Julie Lythcott-Haims
City Council Member,
Palo Alto
Democrat



Joe Simitian
Supervisor, Santa Clara
County
Democrat

Key Supporters ?

For Dixon

- Jason Crow, U.S. representative
- Don Davis, U.S. representative
- Jared Golden, U.S. representative
- Pat Ryan, U.S. representative
- Mikie Sherrill, U.S. representative

For Kumar

- Arjun Batra, City Council member, San José
- Nora Campos, former state Assembly member
- Kansen Chu, former state Assembly member
- Lydia Kou, City Council member, Palo Alto
- Our Neighborhood Voices

For Liccardo

- Matt Mahan, mayor, San José
- Congressional Hispanic Caucus

For Low

- Laphonza Butler, U.S. senator
- Ro Khanna, U.S. representative
- Eleni Kounalakis, lieutenant governor, California
- California Labor Federation
- South Bay Labor Council

For Lythcott-Haims

- Cory Booker, U.S. senator
- EMILY's List

For Simitian

- Dev Davis, City Council member, San José
- Anna Eshoo, U.S. representative
- Sergio Jimenez, City Council member, San José
- Pat Showalter, mayor, Mountain View
- Greer Stone, mayor, Palo Alto

Positions on Key Issues ?

Do you support a cease-fire in Israel's war with Hamas in Gaza? Would you support additional U.S. military aid to Israel?

Dixon says in his time as a Marine he served alongside the Israel Defense Forces and oversaw a Palestinian refugee camp in Iraq. "I appreciate the intent behind calls for a cease-fire but I think what is more effective in this case is the creation and the safeguarding of civilian evacuation corridors so that Palestinian civilians on the ground have more than one direction to get out of the line of fire," he says.

Liccardo supports a humanitarian pause in the Israel-Hamas war in order to bring aid into Gaza, but adds, "I fundamentally agree with the notion that you cannot negotiate with a terrorist organization that has just killed 1,200 members of your own community." He says the U.S. should engage with other Arab nations to find a new civil authority for Gaza. "It cannot be one that's simply bent on the destruction of Israel."

Lythcott-Haims is for a "bilateral humanitarian cease-fire," while adding, "It's not that simple — how do you negotiate a cease-fire with a terrorist organization like Hamas?" Lythcott-Haims says as a mother "whose children are half-Jewish, I explored my anguish for what Jewish people and Israelis are experiencing at the hands of Hamas." She fears Israel's response is fomenting the "creation of hate toward Israel, because kids are losing their parents and parents are losing their children."

Kumar opposes an immediate cease-fire "because I think the hostages are trapped," he says. "We have to forge a path for peace, but it begins from dismantling Hamas." Kumar supports continuing the U.S. relationship with Israel and wants the countries to further collaborate in order to prevent cyberattacks on the U.S. "That partnership is very, very important," Kumar says.

Low says, "Let us recognize that Hamas is a terrorist organization, and that we must do everything that we can to completely dismantle that terrorist organization. But number two, recognizing that we as taxpayers have an obligation ... that we must help ensure that this cannot be sustained for a long period of time." He says the U.S. commitment to Israel is critical because of Israel's leadership in the Middle East on LGBTQ rights.

Simitian says, "Whatever you call it, we want an end to the violence as soon as possible," while adding, "I understand and support the desire of Israel to essentially remove Hamas from Gaza." He supports America's involvement in pursuing a two-state solution.

What immigration policies would you support in the House? How should Congress respond to the record number of apprehensions of migrants at America's southern border?



Dixon says, “I also served with folks who were immigrants to the country and who believed in the American dream to the extent that they were willing to volunteer to go overseas and fight for it and not all of them came back.” He adds, “If we lose that, we not only lose the fundamental essence of what makes us American, but we lose a lot of the secret sauce of Silicon Valley itself.”

Liccardo supports providing a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants “who have been working here and living here for decades, building lives and families and communities.” Liccardo points to his experience prosecuting drug smuggling and human trafficking as a U.S. attorney. He opposes changes to the asylum system, such as limits on parole authority and “credible fear” standards, which he says “are beyond those that I would consider negotiable.”

Lythcott-Haims wants to ease the processing of asylum claims and adds that “I hope that this country will always be a place that welcomes the tired, huddled masses.” She thinks that “there are a lot of people skeptical about brown immigrants. So when they’re crossing the southern border, certain folks have concerns. When they’re crossing in from Canada or Western Europe, they don’t have those concerns. Let’s call that what it is: It is racism.”

Kumar supports changes to the country’s asylum system. “What’s happening at the border is unsustainable. ... Our borders cannot be open because everything we do, we do it legally. So why are we permitting something illegal?” Kumar also wants to protect workers in the H-1B visa program from abuse and remove per-country limitations on employment-based visas. “I think we need to attract this type of talent, but we do it legally,” he adds.

Low is in favor of expanding the immigrant workforce for engineering and agricultural jobs. “We simply just don’t have the type of workforce to fill the pipeline that is so required,” Low says. “Why would we educate someone here coming as an international student and then kick them out to become a job creator and a startup in another place?”

Simitian supports American engagement in Central and South American countries where migrants are fleeing from. He also supports increasing judicial staff to deal with asylum claims. “The whole system is broken in terms of simply an inadequate judicial corps to manage those issues,” he says. “So part of the solution, not particularly flashy, is to simply ramp up the ability of the system to deal with the level of demand.”

What policies have you supported and will you support to reduce carbon emissions and help residents deal with the effects of climate change?



Dixon says, “As I think about the world that I want my daughters to inherit, or this next generation to inherit, the habitability of the planet, it’s in question right now, and we have an opportunity to do our best — but it’s right now.” He supports investments in climate-resilient infrastructure and providing job training for clean energy careers.

Liccardo wants Congress to enact low-cost financing for homeowners to make climate-friendly investments in their homes, such as rooftop solar, energy storage or home hardening, which makes homes more resistant against fires and storms. As mayor, he helped launch municipal electricity generation supplier San José Clean Energy and supported a ban on natural gas infrastructure in all new construction. “We worked really hard on a strategy that would really decarbonize our grid,” he says.

Lythcott-Haims touts Palo Alto’s climate goals, such as the city’s push to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. She supports programs to help residents pay for clean energy upgrades through charges on their utility bills. “So you can pay for your own transition to electric and you can contribute to a pot of money that is going to allow those who can’t personally afford it to make the same transition.”

Kumar vows to invest in technology to combat climate change, such as carbon capture systems. He blasted the California Public Utility Commission’s decision to reduce payments to homeowners with solar panels in order to fund new incentives to help residents purchase rooftop solar systems. “We talk about climate change on one hand ‘Oh, we are so progressive,’ but on the other hand, you’re hurting the solar industry.”

Low says the district’s representative should keep the climate goals in mind “that we, of course, have reflected in the state of California [while] also using homegrown technologies to get us to that point.” He has voted to extend California’s cap-and-trade program to limit greenhouse gas emissions and a bill banning new oil and gas wells near schools and homes.

Simitian says Congress should work on ensuring the nation’s electrical grid is prepared for a transition to clean energy sources. “You’ve got to make sure we have battery storage so that renewables can be captured and then used when the demand is there,” he says. “These are all things where the federal government can and should play a key role.”

How have you helped and/or how will you help the Bay Area's transit and housing needs as a member of Congress?



Dixon proposes to tap empty land controlled by the federal government for housing, such as Moffett Field, near Mountain View. “One of the particular talents that I have is being able to go and free up money out of the Pentagon, which has the responsibility still in part for that land and make sure that we get the resources necessary to set the stage to build not just hundreds, but thousands of homes,” he says.

Liccardo pushed for temporary homes for the homeless during his time as mayor. To help pay for the sites, he is proposing that residents of interim housing be allowed to use federal housing vouchers. He also supports incentives for converting vacant office buildings into housing “in the downtowns where people have access to transit.” He led a campaign to pass the Measure RR sales tax in 2020, creating a dedicated funding source for Caltrain.

Lythcott-Haims wants the federal government to increase investments in affordable housing and help fund the operations, not just the capital projects, for Bay Area transit systems. She touts her work in Palo Alto expanding safe parking for people living in their vehicles and raising height limits on residential buildings to increase density in some areas of the city. “There are all kinds of ways in which we are as a city saying, ‘You know what? We do welcome everybody here.’”

Kumar says he would use the power of the federal purse to make significant changes to transit in the district. He wants to shut down the VTA light rail (“we are burning cash every day with that, nobody’s using it”) and pivot funding from the state’s high-speed rail system toward regional transit needs, such as improving commuter rail between the South Bay and Tri-Valley communities such as Pleasanton and San Ramon.

Low says, “I am a millennial, and I struggle to be able to afford to live in the community that I currently represent.” In the Legislature, he voted for bills to streamline the approvals of new housing, and in 2019 he voted in support of Assembly Bill 1482, which enacted eviction protections and established caps on rent increases.

Simitian touts his work on the board of supervisors supporting an affordable housing project for residents with developmental disabilities and orchestrating the purchase and preservation of the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park. “I said ... let’s think about how we hang onto that supply of affordable housing and prevent 400 people from being out on the street.” He also pushed to redirect local sales tax funding from the BART extension in San José toward other transportation projects.

What do you see as the role of Congress in regulating AI? How will you approach regulation of the tech industry?



Dixon launched his campaign with an AI-assisted video and the political organization he founded, With Honor, is advocating for the U.S. and its allies to develop a shared AI strategy. “The society that creates the rules has to be baking its ethics into it,” Dixon says. “And I would much rather have that be us as Americans versus somebody else, like the Chinese Communist Party.”

Liccardo says, “It’s critical that Washington [has] a champion for the innovation economy.” He believes Congress, not European governments or state legislatures, should be taking the lead on tech regulations. “You can’t expect leaders in the innovation economy to navigate a thicket of 50 different laws to determine what exactly the rules are around privacy or AI.”

Lythcott-Haims brings experience as an intellectual property litigator in Silicon Valley. She says regulations on AI should be tailored so that they are not too onerous on startups. “We want innovation and we want guardrails so that our amazing inventors, disruptors, futurists can really guide us toward what’s next and do so in a way that tries to ensure that we’re behaving ethically and in a manner that doesn’t harm humans.”

Kumar believes Congress needs more representatives with experience in the tech industry. “We see the congressional tech hearings and they become spoof videos in a nanosecond.” Kumar supports regulations that prevent a select few companies from monopolizing the development of artificial intelligence. “We have to ensure that every small startup that is probably happening right now will actually be the next Google,” he adds. “And so I think we cannot create competitive advantages here.”

Low says, “Silicon Valley must send the most ardent supporter of technologies” to Congress, but says he will also focus on “some of the perilous challenges that exist as well, which is that of the displacement of workers and jobs.” In the Legislature, he voted for the California Consumer Privacy Act, which gave residents more control over the collection of their personal information by businesses.

Simitian says Congress will have to “thread that needle” on AI regulations. “How do you foster the innovation and yet protect people against potential harms?” In the state Senate, he served as chair of the Senate Select Committee on Privacy, and in 2002 he wrote the first law in the country mandating entities with databases containing sensitive personal or financial information to notify individuals about a data breach.

Additional Candidates



Joby Bernstein **Climate Investor**

Democrat. Bernstein is pursuing an MBA and MS in Climate Science at Stanford. He is focusing his campaign on climate change, touting his "experience, stamina, and commitment to be part of the generational transition that ensures America is prosperous for the next 30 years."



Peter Ohtaki **Former Council Member, Menlo Park**

Republican. Ohtaki touts his work balancing municipal budgets in Menlo Park and says in Gaza, the U.S. "must stand by Israel against Iran-backed terrorists."



Greg Lin Tanaka **City Council Member, Palo Alto**

Democrat. Tanaka supports policies to boost the use of nuclear and renewable energy and wants to reduce airplane noise in the district.



Ahmed Mostafa **Women's Rights Attorney**

Democrat. Mostafa was the first candidate to call for an immediate ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas War. "I would not support additional military aid to Israel," he says.



Karl Ryan **Small Business Owner**

Republican. In 2020, Ryan won a seat on the Santa Clara County Republican Party Central Committee, the board of local officials who work to elect Republicans in the county.

State Assembly, District 23



Why does this race matter?

This is a liberal district with some of the nation's most expensive zip codes, such as Atherton and Los Altos Hills. Lydia Kou's sharp critiques of incumbent Marc Berman, a fellow Democrat, have the chance to turn this race into a referendum on policies passed by Democrats in Sacramento.

What does a state Assembly member do?

State Assembly members represent communities at the California Legislature in Sacramento. The 80 members of the state Assembly write and vote on state bills, serve on policy committees and vote on the annual state budget. The top two finishers in this primary election, regardless of party, will face off in the November election. The winner will serve a two-year term.

Key Candidates ?



Marc Berman
State Assembly
Member
Democrat



Lydia Kou
City Council Member,
Palo Alto
Democrat



Gus Mattammal
Chair, Midcoast
Community Council
Republican

Key Supporters ?

For Berman

- Gavin Newsom, governor, California
- Alex Padilla, U.S. senator, California
- California Democratic Party
- Planned Parenthood Advocates Mar Monte

For Mattammal

- California Republican Party
- San Mateo County Republican Party
- Santa Clara County Republican Party
- San Francisco Log Cabin Republicans

For Kou

- Ed Lauing, vice mayor, city of Palo Alto
- Lynette Lee Eng, council member, city of Los Altos
- Stan Mok, mayor, town of Los Altos Hills
- Greer Stone, mayor, city of Palo Alto

Positions on Key Issues

What do you make of the state government's push for local governments to approve more housing? Has the legislature gone too far? Not far enough?

Berman voted for zoning reform laws to streamline the approval of housing at the local level, such as Senate Bill 35 in 2017 and a bill last year (Senate Bill 423) to extend that law. He says the housing and homelessness crises are a result of “decades of inaction and decades of failure, frankly, at every level of government to build the housing that we need to support the really robust economy that we have.”

Kou opposes the zoning reforms passed in Sacramento and says as a council member, “I find it harder and harder to represent my constituents — mostly because of the state laws and state mandates that come forward that have really usurped our local land use and zoning laws.” Kou supports more funding from the state government to preserve and maintain existing affordable housing.

Mattammal says, “We cannot change the rules on people who have invested their lives and their hard-earned dollars by taking control of their neighborhoods away from them, and I will oppose or seek to undo any policy that does that.” He is proposing to allow “dramatically expedited” development along busy roads such as El Camino Real and Stevens Creek Boulevard. “This would significantly increase available housing, but not in our residential neighborhoods,” he says.

What would you do to improve public safety for residents? Do you support any changes to Proposition 47?

Berman says the state should focus on combating criminal organizations running retail crime rings “as opposed to locking up somebody who steals a couple of hundred dollars worth [of] goods for multiple years.” He points out that California’s threshold for when theft becomes a felony (\$950, set by voters with Proposition 47) is already one of the strictest in the country. “I think the solution is to enforce the laws that we currently have,” he adds.

Kou points to changes she voted for on the city council to reform police practices in Palo Alto, such as banning chokeholds and requiring de-escalation techniques. She says the Prop. 47 theft limit should be changed so more thefts are felonies instead of misdemeanors. She says current law “incentivizes people to go and say ‘I’m not responsible for anything and ... I’m just going to go and get it from the store.’”

Mattammal says he has used his voice on the Midcoast Community Council to push for expanded broadband access for coastside San Mateo County residents, in order to ensure reliable internet during emergencies. On Proposition 47, Mattammal says, “I am always open to a discussion of thoughtful, well-designed criminal justice reform, but Prop. 47 is not that at all, and I would repeal it in its entirety.”

How would you approach regulation of the tech industry, and specifically artificial intelligence, as a member of the state Assembly?



Berman wrote the first law in the country to regulate the use of deepfake technology in elections. This year, he proposed outlawing child sexual abuse material created by AI. “We actually had law enforcement agencies who saw the work that I’ve done around AI over the past five years, they came to us and they said, ‘We are arresting people that have sexually explicit material of children, but those images were created by technology.’”

Kou supports regulations that mitigate the harms of social media and artificial intelligence on youth. She wants the state to mandate that a certain level of employees work remotely, to ease demand on housing and transportation. Kou also wants to encourage companies to move outside of the district. “Make some incentives for companies to have their headquarters other places versus just all gathered here,” she says. “Why is it only focused on Mountain View and Palo Alto?”

Mattammal says he is worried that regulations on business drive companies out of the district. On artificial intelligence, he says, “What we need is disclosure. In today’s society, the biggest challenge many people face is identifying what is real and believable, so in my view, AI should be allowed in just about anything, but should always be disclosed so that people can easily assess what is real from what is artificially produced.”

Additional Candidates



Allan K. Marson
International Attorney

Republican. Marson has experience as an attorney working for U.S. companies in Taiwan and China.

State Assembly, District 26



Why does this race matter?

This Assembly seat opened up when incumbent Democrat Evan Low launched a run for Congress. The district includes the cities of Cupertino, Santa Clara and Sunnyvale and is home to the headquarters of tech giants like Apple, NVIDIA and LinkedIn.

What does a state Assembly member do?

State Assembly members represent communities at the California state Legislature in Sacramento. The 80 members of the state Assembly write and vote on state bills, serve on policy committees and vote on the annual state budget. The top two finishers in this primary election, regardless of party, will face off in the November election. The winner will serve a two-year term.

Key Candidates ?



Patrick Ahrens
Trustee, Foothill-
DeAnza Community
College District
Democrat



Omar Din
City Council Member,
Sunnyvale
Democrat



Tara Sreekrishnan
Vice President, Santa
Clara County Board of
Education
Democrat

Key Supporters ?

For Ahrens

- Evan Low, state Assembly member
- Gail Pellerin, state Assembly member
- Cindy Chavez, supervisor, Santa Clara County
- Susan Ellenberg, supervisor, Santa Clara County
- Mike Honda, former U.S. representative

For Din

- Maimona Afzal Berta, trustee, Santa Clara County Board of Education
- Raeena Lari, trustee, Santa Clara County Board of Education
- Russ Melton, City Council member, Sunnyvale
- Sunnyvale Employees Association
- Sunnyvale Public Safety Officers Association

For Sreekrishnan

- Dave Cortese, state senator
- Nancy Skinner, state senator
- Melissa Hurtado, state senator
- Susan Ellenberg, supervisor, Santa Clara County
- California Democratic Legislative Women's Caucus

Positions on Key Issues ?

What is your plan to reduce homelessness in California? ^

Ahrens says his work will be informed by his experience with homelessness earlier in his life. "This area got more and more expensive, and I found myself having to live in my Ford Escort hatchback edition while getting an education," he remembers. As a member of the Foothill-DeAnza Community College District, he backed a proposal to spend \$200 million on affordable housing for students and faculty, a plan he wants to scale statewide.

Sreekrishnan touts her work in the office of state Senator Dave Cortese on a guaranteed income program for homeless youth in Santa Clara County. "I would address the root causes [of homelessness] which are getting folks into housing, getting them jobs, and making sure students have access to high-quality education, even from their very early years."

Din provided a key vote on the Valley Transportation Authority board in favor of a controversial plan to build temporary housing on VTA land for people experiencing homelessness. "That allowed us to get 200 units of emergency interim shelters built on VTA land, and doing it in a way that actually took [transit] workers' input into account." Din vows to push for more state funding to help cities reduce homelessness.

What would improving public safety mean for you as a state legislator? Do you support changing any parts of the criminal justice reforms that voters passed in Proposition 47? ^

Ahrens says, "I think what is really wise to do is taking a look at [Prop.] 47 with community stakeholders and coming up with solutions that are not just coming out of Sacramento, but coming from local law enforcement agencies and coming from community stakeholders. ... But the way it is now, I don't think it's working." As an Assembly member, Ahrens would support funding mental health providers to respond to calls that are currently falling to police officers.

Sreekrishnan says she is "open to the conversation" about changes to Proposition 47. She says her approach to public safety would start with "fully funding our schools, making sure we have recruitment and retention of our staff, especially our staff in early education. I think that's where it starts, is investing in education."

Din says, "I think you're seeing a lot of organized crime that comes in and is trying to hit these retailers and do retail theft, and so finding ways to hold them accountable is very important." Din says he would keep an open mind about changes to existing criminal justice and sentencing laws. He adds that as a Sunnyvale council member, "I'm actually really proud of how closely I've worked with our public safety department."

2023 was a banner year for organized labor in the state capitol. What did you make of laws passed to increase paid sick leave and make striking workers eligible for unemployment benefits? How will you balance the needs of workers and businesses?



Ahrens supports both the paid sick leave expansion and the unemployment for striking workers, which was vetoed by Gov. Gavin Newsom. “The governor got it wrong there,” he says. In the Legislature, Ahrens wants to play a “convener” role — bringing together labor and business interests to reduce income inequality without harming small businesses in the district. “One of the underutilized attributes of a state Assembly member is the power to convene.”

Sreekrishnan supports both the paid sick leave expansion and the unemployment for striking workers. She supports expanding apprenticeship programs across the state. “These are really great opportunities to get folks in the middle class, and there are different careers across the board, whether it’s health care or construction careers or the education workforce which we need to just increase the pipeline to.”

Din doesn’t have an opinion on those two bills. He says he will pursue collaboration between labor and business interests in the capitol. As a Sunnyvale council member he helped create a grant program to help small businesses weather the COVID-19 pandemic. “I think that’s really important, especially for me, because both my parents are small-business owners,” he says.

Additional Candidates



Ashish Garg
Director, Fremont
Union High Schools
Foundation

Democrat. Garg wants to use his experience as an accountant to the state budget. “I bring a fresh perspective and seek to break away from traditional politics that often prioritize special interests,” he says.



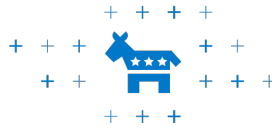
Bob Goodwyn
Retired Pilot

Libertarian. Goodwyn wants to focus on reducing the size and reach of state government. “We have too many laws and too much government spending.”



Sophie Yan Song
Certified Public
Accountant

Republican. Song served on the city of Cupertino’s Audit Committee and says she “would advocate for reform of the Sales Tax laws ... and request the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration to make sales tax information public.”



Democratic Presidential Primary



How does the presidential primary work?

California will send 496 delegates to the Democratic National Convention, of which 277 delegates will be allocated by congressional district to each candidate who finishes with at least 15% of the vote in each district; 147 delegates will be divided among each candidate who finishes with at least 15% of the statewide vote; and 72 delegates will be state and party officials not pledged to a candidate through the primary vote.

Who can vote in this primary?

Voters registered as Democrats, along with voters registered as No Party Preference. No Party Preference voters will need to request a crossover ballot from their county elections office to vote in this primary.

Key Candidates ?



Joseph R. Biden Jr.
President, United States of America
Democrat



Dean Phillips
U.S. Representative
Democrat



Marianne Williamson
Author
Democrat

Key Supporters ?

For Biden

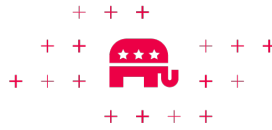
- Gavin Newsom, governor, California
- Alex Padilla, U.S. senator
- Nancy Pelosi, U.S. representative

For Williamson

- Maebe A. Girl, neighborhood councilor, Silver Lake

For Phillips

- N/A



Republican Presidential Primary



How does the GOP presidential primary work in California?

Last year, the state Republican Party changed its rules for selecting delegates. Under the new rules, if a candidate gets more than 50% of the statewide total of Republican votes cast, they get all of California's 169 Republican delegates. If no candidate manages to get a majority of the votes, delegates will be awarded in proportion to the share of the statewide vote that each candidate receives.

Who can vote in this primary?

The California Republican Party holds a "closed primary," meaning only voters registered as Republican can vote to choose the party's nominee. If you wish to vote in this primary and are not a registered Republican, you can re-register [here](#). After Feb. 20, you can change party registration, up until election day, in person at your local polling place, a vote center or your county elections office.

Key Candidates ?



Nikki Haley
Former Governor,
South Carolina/Former
Ambassador, United
Nations
Republican



Donald J. Trump
Former President,
United States of
America
Republican

Key Supporters ?

For Haley

- Lanhee Chen, fellow, Hoover Institution
- Tim Draper, Silicon Valley venture capitalist
- Jeff Gorell, supervisor, Ventura County
- Suzette Martinez Valladares, former state Assembly member

For Trump

- Shannon Grove, state senator
- Darrell Issa, U.S. representative
- Kevin McCarthy, former House speaker
- Michelle Steel, U.S. representative