

## Candidate Questionnaire

**From: Santa Cruz for Bernie**

**To: Candidates for Local Races in the March 5, 2024 Primary Election**

Santa Cruz for Bernie, with over 2,000 politically active members in the Central Coast region, requests that you complete this questionnaire so we can provide guidance to our membership in the upcoming important Primary Election in March.

Because SC4B members widely support policy proposals promoted by Senator Bernie Sanders, some of those topics are reflected in this questionnaire. (See [berniesanders.com/issues](https://berniesanders.com/issues))

*(Just start typing after the >> cue)*

1. Your full name >> **Monica Martinez**
2. Your city and county of residence >> **Felton, Santa Cruz County**
3. Office you are seeking >> **Santa Cruz County 5th District Supervisor**
4. Length of residence in your current District >> **11 years**
5. Your occupation or vocation >> **CEO, Encompass Community Services**
6. Significant memberships, affiliations, and leadership positions held (political, labor union, public service, etc.) >> **California Democratic Party ADEM Delegate, AD28, Labor Slate; Santa Cruz County Parks and Recreation Commission, Chairperson; Democratic Central Committee, North County Dems Club Representative; Democratic Club of North Santa Cruz County, Member; Emerge California, Alumni, Class of 2023; Health Improvement Partnership of Santa Cruz County, Board Secretary; LGBTQ+ Victory Institute, Candidate Training Graduate; Latino Community Foundation Central Coast Giving Circle, Founding Member; San Lorenzo Valley Water District, Budget and Finance Committee Member; Santa Cruz County Criminal Justice Council, Voting Member; True North Leadership at 1440 Multiversity, Teaching Fellow; Valley Women's Club, Member**
7. In what political campaigns, organizations, and movements have you been active, and what role did you play? >> **I have been involved in the movement to ensure housing and healthcare as a human right. I founded the successful 180/180 Campaign, a grassroots community effort to house 180 of the most vulnerable people experiencing homelessness in Santa Cruz County. This campaign was successful and has since become a sustainable program to advance permanent supportive housing as a solution to homelessness. I have also volunteered on a number of local campaigns, including Yes on Measure H (2018) and No on Measure D (2022).**
8. Which policy proposals championed by Bernie Sanders are you most passionate about? >> **The policies of Senator Sanders that resonate with me the most reflect my career path and values: Medicare for All, Housing for All, and Free Childcare and Pre-K for All. In my current role as CEO of Encompass Community Services, and in previous roles at Housing Matters and a Los Angeles nonprofit serving women experiencing homelessness, I have spent my career serving those who lack affordable healthcare and stable housing. I understand the impact that not having healthcare and housing has, not just on an individual, but on entire communities.**  
**I am also passionate about Universal Childcare and Universal Pre-K. It is essential that every child starts their education on an equal playing field and reaps the benefits that these programs provide, including school readiness, social and emotional learning, and cognitive development. It is unacceptable that Universal Pre-K is considered a luxury in our country, not a right.**
9. What actions would you take at the local level in support of single-payer healthcare including a national Medicare for All and a state CalCare plan? >> **I would rely on my strong relationships with our state and federal representatives to advocate for single-payer healthcare. As a candidate with an expertise in health and human services, I will use my experience and knowledge to demonstrate the value of high quality healthcare for all, especially those who come from economically disadvantaged communities. I will make the case for a greater investment in**

**upstream solutions and a broadening of the definition of “healthcare” to include vision, dental, behavioral health services and housing.**

10. What bold and transformative policy proposals would you support to address the climate crisis at the local, state and national levels? >> **Climate change isn’t going anywhere, and we need to find the right balance of investing in sustainable strategies that support the environment and offset the impacts of climate change, while also keeping up with our existing infrastructure needs, such as housing and transportation. An excellent example of a local project that strikes this balance is the Coastal Rail Trail, which will provide a zero-emission, affordable, alternative transportation method for Santa Cruz County.**

**In the 5th District, fire prevention and mitigation is a very important issue, and I am committed to investing in sustainable vegetation management programs to aid in wildfire prevention by helping residents create defensible space and remove dry fuels. I am also committed to promoting environmental stewardship by supporting investments in renewable energy programs and water conservation initiatives, and I am passionate about educating everyone, both residents and visitors, about the importance of conservation and environmental stewardship to protect our ecosystems and biodiversity.**

**At the state and national levels, I will meet with our representatives to ensure that they are voting on legislation that will address climate change, such as the policies outlined in the Green New Deal: moving away from dependency on fossil fuels; creating green, union jobs; and investing in sustainable transportation methods.**

11. What policy proposals would you support that address the issue of growing income/wealth inequality? >> **I would again utilize my pre-existing relationships with our state and federal elected officials to express my support for additional tax measures on the wealthiest Americans, as well as ensure that corporations are paying their fair share of taxes. I will also support policy proposals such as increased minimum wage, funding for job training, strengthening social safety net programs like CalFresh and unemployment insurance, and access to healthcare and housing.**

12. What policy proposals would you support that address our local housing and homelessness crises? >> **Affordable housing and homelessness are incredibly important issues in Santa Cruz County, as they are across the Central Coast. In the 5th District, our housing stock has been impacted by recent disasters, so we need to focus on preserving our existing housing stock by ensuring that damaged homes can be repaired or rebuilt as quickly as possible. We also need to invest in a sustainable housing ecosystem that prioritizes housing affordability and workforce and transit-oriented housing. On the issue of homelessness, we need to implement evidence-driven prevention strategies and ensure that those who are most vulnerable receive the support that they need to regain and sustain housing.**

13. What measures would you support to foster union jobs? (e.g. adopt project labor agreements with local hire and apprenticeship training requirements; invest in fully staffed public sector workforce.) >> **With a background in serving working families, I understand the significance of union jobs that provide equal wages and fair opportunities for all workers. I know that Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) can be instrumental in ensuring consistent and equitable pay rates across various construction projects. By advocating for PLAs, I aim to foster an environment where workers are compensated fairly for their skills and contributions.**

**Additionally, I am committed to hiring a local workforce and promoting economic growth within our community. By prioritizing the hiring of local workers, we can create jobs that directly benefit Santa Cruz County residents and contribute to the economic development of our region.**

**Diversifying our workforce is also a priority for me. I believe in the power of inclusion and providing opportunities to individuals from diverse backgrounds. Community Work Agreements (CWAs), with their focus on workforce diversity, align with my vision of creating a more inclusive and representative workforce within the construction industry.**

**I also understand the significance of equal wages and the importance of providing fair opportunities for all workers. I support the Davis-Bacon Act and State Prevailing Wage because it helps protect wages and benefits for workers, and I aim to foster an environment where workers are compensated fairly for their skills and contributions. The Davis-Bacon Act is especially important in Santa Cruz County, since it ensures that government construction projects benefit their local communities by providing fair wages. The cost of living in our county is very high, and it is critical that workers are paid a fair wage, contributing to reducing income inequality. Workers will also contribute to growing local economies when they are paid a higher wage. Additionally, paying prevailing wage can lead to higher quality work and better overall project outcomes, as well as attract skilled workers to government projects. Prevailing wage laws also help level the playing field for contractors bidding on government contracts. If all contractors are required to pay prevailing wage, competition can be focused on efficiency and quality of work, rather than who can pay the lowest wages.**

**14. If you were eligible, did you vote for Bernie Sanders in the Primary Election 2016? *Yes or No* >> No  
In 2020? *Yes or No* >> No**

**15. If elected, what do you realistically hope to accomplish during your term of office? >> In the 5th District, disaster recovery is arguably the most important issue. The Santa Cruz Mountains have been hit hard over the last three years between the pandemic, CZU Lightning Complex Fire, and the 2022-2023 winter storms. 911 homes were lost in the fire, and less than ten percent have been rebuilt, which is unacceptable. Streamlining the rebuilding process is a priority of mine, as well as creating a coordinated approach to disaster response and partnering with public and private agencies to ensure that residents have the resources they need when disaster strikes.**

**Infrastructure is another very important issue, as much of it is aging. We need to invest in projects that will have a lasting impact to ensure that residents have reliable roads, water, and connectivity. Expanding reliable broadband and cellular access for residents and small businesses is a priority in our rural community, as well as ensuring that it is available during emergencies. Additionally, we need to coordinate with public and private partners to expand safe routes to schools, pedestrian access, and sustainable, affordable transit options.**

**Water and environmental stewardship are also priority issues of mine. The Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin provides water to much of the 5th District, but the San Lorenzo Valley and Scotts Valley have been left out of much of the policy and planning processes over the last few years. We need a better advocate for our rural residents to ensure that we are fairly represented. I am committed to promoting environmental stewardship by supporting investments in renewable energy programs and water conservation initiatives.**

**Finally, affordable housing is incredibly important, as it is across the Central Coast. In the 5th District, our housing stock has been impacted by recent disasters, so we need to focus on preserving our existing housing stock by ensuring that damaged homes can be repaired or rebuilt as quickly as possible. We also need to invest in a sustainable housing ecosystem that prioritizes housing affordability and workforce and transit-oriented housing. On the issue of homelessness, we need to implement evidence-driven prevention strategies and ensure that those who are most vulnerable receive the support that they need to regain and sustain housing.**

**16. Give an example of when you spoke truth to power. Who were the players, what were the stakes, and what did you do? >> In my role as the Executive Director of the Homeless Services Center, I faced pressure from local elected officials to implement background checks and drug tests for our homeless clients, a move not rooted in best practices, but driven by fear and stigma surrounding homelessness.**

**The stakes were high – the well-being and access to essential services for our vulnerable clients. Despite the pressure and the risk to our public contracts, I refused to comply with this request. I firmly believed that imposing such barriers between our clients and the services they needed to survive was unjust and contrary to the principles of equality and compassion.**

**By standing my ground, I demonstrated courage and resilience in the face of powerful figures. This decision not only protected the dignity and rights of our clients, but also established a reputation for our organization as a staunch advocate for the most vulnerable members of our community. It showcased my commitment to speaking truth to power for a just and compassionate cause, even when faced with significant challenges and potential consequences.**

17. Are you running in coordination with any other local candidate? >> **No**

18. Why should members of Santa Cruz for Bernie vote for you to be their elected representative? (*max 50 words*) >> **I believe when everyone's voice is heard, public policy decisions create health and wellness across communities. I want to ensure all of us have the resources to build a resilient, thriving community. I will listen, collaborate, push when necessary, and work to represent all voices, accelerate recovery, and strengthen resiliency.**

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**Please return your completed questionnaire to [santacruz4bernie@gmail.com](mailto:santacruz4bernie@gmail.com) by October 13, 2023.**

**Thank you for your participation in this democratic process of candidate endorsement.**