

# National Union of Healthcare Workers Questionnaire for 2018 California State Constitutional Offices

To help NUHW assess your candidacy for state office, we ask you to complete this questionnaire.

## BACKGROUND

Name: **Tony Thurmond** Candidate for: **Superintendent of Public Instruction**  
Home Address: **1520 S. 55th, St. B** Personal Phone and E-mail: **(510) 681-4127**  
**Richmond CA 94804** **tony@tonythurmond.com**  
Current Occupation: **Assemblymember** Employer: **State of California**  
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Campaign Consultants: **SCN Strategies;** Campaign Contact Name: **Maddie Franklin**  
**Annie Eagan Consulting**  
Campaign FPPC Number: **1395467** Political Party: **Democrat**

1. Please list any elected or appointed public offices you previously have held.

I have served on the Richmond City Council and the West Contra Costa County School Board. I currently represent AD-15 in the CA State Assembly.

2. Please list any key volunteer organizational leadership roles you have played.

I volunteer at schools as a reader or guest speaker on career days.

3. Briefly describe your educational background and prior work experience.

I am currently serving my second term in the Assembly. I am a former city council member and school board member. I am a social worker by trade. Immediately prior to my election to the Assembly, I was a Senior Director at the Lincoln Child Center, where I created and oversaw programs for truancy prevention, parenting education, school-based mental health services and support services for foster youth and families.

I have two young daughters and received a MSW from Bryn Mawr College – I have dedicated my life to public service, helping those who need it most, especially at-risk youth. You can view my biographies and a selection of my accomplishments at <http://www.tonythurmond.com/meet/>, [www.tonythurmond.com/together](http://www.tonythurmond.com/together) and <http://asmcd.org/members/a15/>.

4. Are you currently a union member? To which if any unions have you belonged? If you have been a union member, were you an officer, steward, bargaining committee member or activist?

I am not a union member, but my entire life has been informed and improved by the Labor movement. After my mother died when I was six years old, my cousin and her husband, who were proud, middle-class, campus police officers – and union members – took me in. I walked my first picket line as a teenager during a campus police strike. Since then, I've fought hard to protect the right to organize and worked side-by-side with Labor for fair wages, better workplace conditions, access to quality health care and a quality education and many more issues important to working people and their families.

5. What significant endorsements have you received from organizations and individuals?

California Federation of Teachers  
State Building and Construction Trades Council of CA  
Northern California Carpenters Regional Council  
State Pipe Trades Council  
Kamala Harris, *U.S. Senator*  
Barbara Lee, *Congresswoman*  
Karen Bass, *Congresswoman*  
Mark DeSaulnier, *Congressman*  
Norma Torres, *Congresswoman*  
Tom Torlakson, *State Superintendent of Public Instruction*  
Alex Padilla, *Secretary of State*  
Betty Yee, *Controller*  
Dave Jones, *Insurance Commissioner*  
Fiona Ma, *Board of Equalization Member*  
Ed Hernandez, *State Senator*  
Hannah-Beth Jackson, *State Senator*  
Josh Newman, *State Senator*  
Ricardo Lara, *State Senator*  
Ben Hueso, *State Senator*  
Holly Mitchell, *State Senator*  
Toni Atkins, *State Senator*  
Anthony Rendon, *Assemblymember*  
Chris Holden, *Assemblymember*  
David Chiu, *Assemblymember*  
Eduardo Garcia, *Assemblymember*  
Freddie Rodriguez, *Assemblymember*  
Ian Calderon, *Assemblymember*  
Jim Cooper, *Assemblymember*  
Jim Frazier, *Assemblymember*  
Jose Medina, *Assemblymember*  
Kansen Chu, *Assemblymember*

Kevin McCarty, *Assemblymember*  
Kevin Mullen, *Assemblymember*  
Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher, *Assemblymember*  
Mark Stone, *Assemblymember*  
Miguel Santiago, *Assemblymember*  
Mike Gipson, *Assemblymember*  
Philip Ting, *Assemblymember*  
Reggie Jones-Sawyer, *Assemblymember*  
Rob Bonta, *Assemblymember*  
Rudy Salas Jr., *Assemblymember*  
Sharon Quirk-Silva, *Assemblymember*  
Tom Daly, *Assemblymember*  
Jesse Arreguín, *Mayor of Berkeley*  
Darrell Steinberg, *Mayor of Sacramento*  
Matt Haney, *San Francisco School Board - President*  
Jessica Ancona, *El Monte School Board - President*  
Mister Phillips, *West Contra Costa School Board*  
Joaquin Rivera, *Alameda Board of Education*  
Ken Berrick, *Alameda Board of Education*  
Rosie Torres, *Oakland School Board*  
Janet Zamudio, *San Lorenzo School Board*  
Josh Daniels, *Berkeley School Board*  
Dr. Bill Riley, *Peralta Community College District Board of Trustees*  
Steve Zimmer, *former Los Angeles School Board President*  
Ms. L. Karen Monroe, *Alameda County Superintendent*  
Ms. Karen Sakata, *Contra Costa County Superintendent*  
Dr. Jesse Ortiz, *Yolo County Superintendent*

*\*partial list*

6. How much money have you raised to date? How much do you aim to raise?

I have more than \$800,000 cash on hand to date. I aim to raise \$5.835 million, the voluntary expenditure limit in the primary for SPI, in order to defeat an opponent funded by a vast network of wealthy charter school donors.

7. Have you conducted a poll? If yes, please provide relevant information from the findings.

Yes. Our poll shows us our path to victory.

8. Beyond our public endorsement, what specific support are you seeking from NUHW?

I would be proud to earn your public endorsement and would seek a monetary contribution and help with volunteers.

## **OVERVIEW**

1. Why are you a candidate for this office and why are you seeking NUHW's endorsement?

I am passionate about improving public schools because it was my public school education that prepared me for my 20-year career as a social worker, and inspired me to serve on the West Contra Costa Unified School District Board, the Richmond City Council, and now in the CA State Assembly. I believe that it's time to make our public education system among the greatest in the nation, and I won't stop until we get there.

So much of my work has been focused on expanding health services for youth and low-income communities. My focus and priorities remain the same, and I would be honored to have the support of NUHW in this fight.

2. Briefly describe what will be your top legislative priorities and issue areas of focus if elected.

My top priorities are:

1) Opposing Donald Trump and Betsy DeVos's anti-public education policies and creating an education rainy day fund to protect against any future Trump cuts

2) Attracting and retaining qualified teachers by providing them with affordable housing, recruitment bonuses, scholarships, and higher wages

3) Preparing California students for the jobs being created by our fast-growing 21st-century economy

I will also continue my work from the Assembly to expand school-based health, mental health, and social service programs to remove the barriers that impede the ability of many of our students to learn.

3. What do you believe distinguishes you, over your opponents, as the best candidate for this office?

I have 10 years of experience in elected office working to improve public education.

## **WORKERS' FREEDOM TO CHOOSE A UNION**

Workers are regularly denied the freedom to choose a union due to intimidation, harassment, and other forms of coercion by their employers, and sometimes even by labor organizations. Legal remedies for such violations of workers' rights are far too little, far too late, with the result that these violations are legal and workers' organizing efforts are squashed more often than not.

4. Would you urge employers to respect workers' freedom to choose a union by:

a) remaining neutral on the question of unionization and recognizing a union as their employees' collective bargaining representative when presented with a petition demonstrating its support from a majority of the employees (frequently referred to as "card check neutrality"); or

Yes.

b) agreeing to a code of conduct for a fast and fair union election that prohibits both the employer and the union from disparaging each other's motives; requires them both to make only factually accurate statements when seeking workers' support; provides them both equal physical access and equal time to discuss workers' choice of a union with them; bans inherently coercive kinds of communications, like "captive audience" meetings and one-on-one discussions with supervisors; and establishes a short election period prior to a final and binding secret ballot vote?

Yes.

Have you ever interceded with employers to urge their adoption of one of these methods for workers to choose a union? If so, describe your experience and what you learned from it.

[As Assembly Labor Chair I lead the effort to defeat the right to work bill which sought to take away people's right to organize.](#)

## **INDUSTRY STANDARD WAGES, BENEFITS, AND WORKING CONDITIONS**

Over the first years of this century, organized hospital workers throughout California established a set of industry standard wages, benefits, and working conditions that brought these caregivers, who are predominantly of women, people of color, and recent immigrants, solidly into the middle class, while also creating a stable and experienced workforce in adequate numbers to protect the well being of acutely ill patients and improve the quality of care they receive.

5. In the quickly upcoming round of collective bargaining, will you publicly support NUHW members in their efforts to restore the industry standard wages, benefits, and working conditions that made California's hospital workers among the very best compensated of any in the nation?

Specifically, will you join workers in calling upon employers to restore:

- fully employer paid family health benefits
- defined benefit pensions
- a real voice in staffing levels with the right to arbitrate any disputes
- employment and income security for displaced workers
- a ban on subcontracting;
- scheduling policies that allow workers to live stable lives and maximize full time jobs?

Yes to all.

## **SUPPORTING COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGNS**

In order to secure the best results for workers, patients, and communities from recalcitrant employers, NUHW members often must wage comprehensive campaigns that build power in multiple venues through multiple means. Such campaigns are undertaken both to help unorganized workers assert their right to choose a union and to compel employers' agreement to industry standards. Elected officials are frequently called upon to play important roles in these efforts.

6. To support comprehensive campaigns aimed at recalcitrant employers, would you be willing to:

- meet with union organizing committee and bargaining committee members;
- sign public letters of support for the union's organizing rights or bargaining proposals;
- place phone calls to and meet with employer representatives on the union's behalf;
- attend negotiations with employers to support and help present the union's position;
- conduct facility walk-throughs to engage both workers and employers on disputed issues;
- participate in town hall meetings to highlight the union's organizing and bargaining campaigns and build support for union proposals in the press and with the public;
- participate in picket lines, marches, rallies, and vigils;
- assist in outreach to community-based organizations and faith based groups?

Yes to all.



## Single Payer Healthcare Reform and Public Financing for Healthcare Services

Obamacare represented a critical step forward in the long struggle to win affordable, quality healthcare for all, but much work remains to be done. Even with the expansion of Medi-Cal to cover the near poor and the availability of significant subsidies to help low and middle income families purchase coverage through the state exchange, millions of working Californians will remain uninsured as the price of coverage remains too dear, especially for those living in high cost areas. Now the Washington Administration is threatening these gains and millions are likely to lose their health insurance.

7. Do you support the establishment of a single payer healthcare system as prescribed in SB 562 Californians for a Healthy California Act a publicly financed system of healthcare for all with a uniform standard of coverage that reduces costs by eliminating the profiteering, administrative waste, and marketing expenditures that accompany private insurance? Do you support the Sales Tax and revenue measures in the SB 562 financing report? How would you participate in the campaign to enact a single payer solution to our healthcare crisis?

Yes, I am a coauthor of the current single payer bill SB 562. I think that healthcare is a right, not a privilege. As Superintendent of Public Instruction, I would use the bully pulpit raise awareness in support of a single payer solution to our healthcare crisis.

8. As you may know, NUHW members over the past several years successfully prosecuted a complaint against Kaiser Permanente for failing to provide its plan members with timely and appropriate mental health services. In prosecuting the complaint, we learned that the Department of Managed Health Care interprets current law not to require any specific timeliness standard for the scheduling of return appointments, even in mental health services where in many cases the close spacing of return appointments is absolutely necessary for the provision of clinically sound care.

Will you support NUHW members if we seek to close this loophole in the state's timely access law?

Will you support NUHW members in demanding that all members of the public have equal access to quality and affordable mental health care?

Will you support NUHW members in their contract disputes to improve the quality of care?

Yes to all.

## 9. SANCTUARY CITY AND NUHW

NUHW recently declared itself a 'sanctuary union' and a member of the growing network of sanctuary institutions that will do everything within our power to ensure the safety and security

of all members of our community regardless of their immigration status.

As a result, NUHW will:

- protect the rights and safety of every member of our union, our community and all patients including undocumented people and their families;
- will not voluntarily cooperate with federal agents to enforce immigration laws;
- pledge to stand up for, support and defend the most vulnerable among us; those deliberately targeted in the lead-up to the election; and those who have become victims of hate in its wake;
- urge its members to help address the social, emotional, medical and mental health needs of our patients and community members and to promote diversity and inclusion;
- declares its support for the following Legislation: The California values Act, which would prevent the use of public resources to aid federal immigration agents in deportation actions; the Due Process for All Act, which provides legal representation for noncitizens facing deportation; and the Stronger Public defenders Act, which would create state-funded centers to train defense attorneys and public defenders on immigration law and the consequences of criminal convictions.
- will request that our nation's hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare providers declare their support for and protection of undocumented people and their families, affirmatively create a welcoming environment for them, and declare themselves to be "safe zones" so that no member of our community feels threatened when seeking medical care.

Please state whether you agree with NUHW's sanctuary union action and the 'Sanctuary State' movement. And state what you will do to protect our communities from hate and possible federal action.

I fully support NUHW's sanctuary union action and the "Sanctuary State" movement. I have already voted on legislation to prohibit employers and landlords from cooperating with ICE enforcement. As a councilmember in Richmond, I supported our sanctuary city policy. One of my legislative accomplishments of which I am most proud is the Healthcare for All Kids bill (I coauthored), which guaranteed health insurance for undocumented children. As Superintendent of Public Instruction, I would continue to fight for the rights of undocumented students.

### **Housing and Homelessness:**

Californians are seeing one of the worst housing crises in recent memory. Working people are being priced out of their homes by increased rents and mortgages. Homelessness is increasing due to a lack of affordability and a lack of social services for wrap around care.

What is your definition of affordable housing? How do you propose to increase the affordable

housing stock/inclusionary zoning? What do you propose to do to curb evictions? What actions have you taken so far to help fix the current housing and affordability crisis? Do you support the repeal of Costa-Hawkins?

Affordable housing means not worrying about your rent increasing by double digits year to year; it means working class people can become homeowners. The housing crisis has hit teachers, who are underpaid, especially hard. When educators are forced to live outside of the community they serve, they are severely limited in their ability to participate in many after-school programs, establish crucial parent-teacher bonds or respond to localized student needs, all factors in providing an enriched learning environment for students. I have introduced legislation that would provide funding for affordable and workforce housing for renters and homeowners. I have also passed legislation to increase affordable housing through a bill that prioritizes junior accessory dwellings.

I support the repeal of Costa-Hawkins.