

**The National Union of Healthcare Workers (NUHW)
Questionnaire for 2022 Local Government Candidates**

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

SECTION 1

Candidate Committee Information

Name: Karen Bass

Candidate for: LA Mayor

[REDACTED]

Background

1. Please list any elected office you currently hold or have held previously.

U.S. Congress, State Assembly (Speaker of the Assembly)

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

I am a proud member of the Medicare for All Caucus, the Congressional Black Caucus, Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth (Founder and Co-Chair), Congressional Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus, Coalition for Autism Research and Education (CARE), Congressional Diabetes Caucus, Congressional HIV/AIDS Caucus, Congressional Military Mental Health Caucus, Congressional Multiple Sclerosis Caucus, and Congressional Social Work Caucus. I am a lifelong Democrat and continue to serve on the Board of Directors for the National Foster Youth Institute.

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

After attending Hamilton High School, I received a BS in Health Sciences from Cal State Dominguez Hills, graduated from the USC Keck School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program, and also received a Master of Social Work from USC.

I began my career as a nurse and later worked as a Physician Assistant and clinical instructor at USC. In 1990, in response to the crack-cocaine and gang violence crisis that was gripping Los Angeles, I founded Community Coalition, a community-based social justice organization in South L.A. that empowers the African American and Latino community across generations to address substance abuse, poverty and crime in South Los Angeles. I also founded the Los Angeles-based National Foster Youth Institute, which advocates for the more than 400,000 foster youth in America by ensuring that current and former foster youth have a seat at the table alongside legislators, policymakers, decision makers, families, and advocates.

I have represented Los Angeles in both Sacramento and Washington DC for more than 14 years but have stayed rooted in the community here at home. As Speaker of the State Assembly during California's greatest economic crisis since the Great Depression, I led the Assembly in fast-tracking federal economic stimulus legislation, passed legislation to make healthcare more accessible and affordable and championed efforts to improve California's child welfare system. I am proud to have received the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award, along with my fellow legislative leaders for our work to balance California's budget during the economic recession.

In Congress, I have continued my work to improve the child welfare system, founding the bipartisan Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth, and I have led on criminal justice and policing issues, introducing and passing the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, the most transformative piece of policing legislation to ever pass in a chamber of Congress.

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 was a member of AFSCME in my early 20's.

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

Communications Workers of America (CWA) Southern California Council

EMILY's List

National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 24

Stonewall Democratic Club, Los Angeles

Transportation Communication Union Local 1315

United Steelworkers Local 675

United Steelworkers Los Angeles and Orange Counties Legislative Education Committee

Dolores Huerta, Labor and Civil Rights Leader

Cory Booker, U.S. Senator

Barbara Boxer, U.S. Senator (ret.)

Adam Schiff, U.S. Representative

Pete Aguilar, U.S. Representative

Judy Chu, U.S. Representative

Mike Levin, U.S. Representative

Ted Lieu, U.S. Representative

Alan Lowenthal, U.S. Representative

Katie Porter, U.S. Representative

Lucille Roybal-Allard, U.S. Representative

Juan Vargas, U.S. Representative

Diane Watson U.S. Representative (ret.)

Eleni Kounalakis, California State Lieutenant Governor

Fiona Ma, California State Treasurer

Steve Bradford, California State Senator

Sydney Kamlager, California State Senator

Isaac Bryan, California State Assemblymember

Autumn Burke, California State Assemblymember (ret.)

Hector De La Torre, California State Assemblymember (ret.)

Mike Gipson, California State Assemblymember
Chris Holden, California State Assemblymember
Reggie Jones-Sawyer, California State Assemblymember
Bonnie Lowenthal, California State Assemblymember (ret.)
John A. Perez, Speaker, California State Assemblymember (ret.)

Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Los Angeles County Supervisor (ret.)
Sheila Kuehl, Los Angeles County Supervisor
Holly Mitchell, Los Angeles County Supervisor

Antonio Villaraigosa, Former Los Angeles Mayor
Mike Bonin, Los Angeles City Councilmember
Marqueece Harris-Dawson, Los Angeles City Councilmember
Emma Sharif, Compton Mayor
Lula Davis-Holmes, Carson Mayor
Al Austin, Long Beach City Councilmember
Rex Richardson, Long Beach City Councilmember
Dionne Faulk, Inglewood City Councilmember

6. How much money have you raised to date? \$2MM

How much do you aim to raise? \$5MM

7. Have you conducted a poll? *No.* If yes, please provide relevant information from the findings.

8. Beyond our public endorsement, what specific support are you seeking from NUHW? *I would appreciate a maximum contribution to my campaign and I'd be honored to have NUHW members volunteering on my campaign to talk with voters. I would also appreciate input from NUHW on health care policy matters.*

SECTION 2

Overview

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

As an LVN and Physician's Assistant, I am the only candidate in this race who uniquely understands the immense pressure and stress health care workers are under right now. The COVID pandemic has taught us how critical our healthcare infrastructure is—and how lacking it is. Now more than ever, we need to fight for expanded urgent and emergency patient access, as well as preventive support. Far too many Angelenos live in "healthcare deserts," with hospitals closing in the neighborhoods where they are most needed.

As Mayor, I will work closely with the City Council to ease roadblocks to expanding Los Angeles' healthcare landscape for both hospitals and clinics. This focus is also critical to tackling homelessness and the healthcare failures that 40,000 unhoused people face every day. Investments in street medicine programs, more resources and fewer administrative burdens for providers, case managers and patients and their families, and streamlining supportive housing approvals are the real solutions we need. We cannot prioritize profits over patients' health and workers' ability to do their jobs safely and with the support they need.

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

The potential of Los Angeles is limitless.

Los Angeles can be a city where all people have access to quality health care. Los Angeles can be a city where its economy — one of the most robust, intricate and complex economies in the world — can work for everyone. Los Angeles can be a city where everyone can afford housing, where everyone can be paid livable wages, and where services and resources are provided to help get folks who may have stumbled, back on their feet.

Thirty years ago, I saw a city in crisis and stepped up to lead. As a Los Angeles native and a health professional, she saw crime and addiction tearing families and communities apart. So I dedicated my life to helping to bring people together to found Community Coalition, one of the most impactful and respected nonprofit organizations in Los Angeles. What started with closing liquor stores, organizing youth and helping people with drug addiction turned into a thirty-year force in creating economic, education and housing opportunities, as well as violence prevention and access to healthcare.

That was only possible by bringing people together—across neighborhoods, ethnicities, generations and ages—to be part of the solution.

Today Los Angeles faces another emergency. The public health, public safety and economic crisis of homelessness has evolved into a full-blown humanitarian emergency. 40,000 people sleep on the streets of LA every night – more than in any other city in the nation.

I'm running for Mayor because I know that solving the crisis of homelessness means developing a comprehensive approach that addresses the immediate crisis along with the root causes: lack of affordable housing, health care, access to job opportunities and residential alcohol and drug treatment.

There are no simple answers, but I have the experience and values, and I will work closely with our neighborhoods to get the job done.

3. What do you believe distinguishes you from your opponent(s) as the best candidate for this office?

Throughout my decades of service—as a nurse, community organizer, and a leader in the state legislature and in Congress, I have worked to give a voice to our most vulnerable communities, lift up working people, and create more opportunities for our next generation to reach the middle class. Unions have always been a key partner in my success.

Some of my accomplishments for working families in Los Angeles include:

Partnering with President Obama to pass the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to increase job training and placement, and reskill experienced workers for jobs that continue to evolve in the global economy.

Steering \$113 million in federal economic stimulus toward green job growth in California and prioritized displaced workers, at-risk youth, and veterans for job training.

Pushing for moratoriums on foreclosures to help financially struggling families stay in their homes.

Working to pass the CARES Act and the Paycheck Protection Program to get funding and services to our communities left most economically vulnerable by the COVID pandemic.

Helping secure nearly \$5 billion in federal funding to create thousands of good-paying union construction jobs to expand Metro and repair our aging roads and infrastructure.

I know that continuing my partnerships with unions to fix systemic injustices, give kids a great education, and train workers for emerging jobs will get more Angelenos into the good-paying careers that strengthen our communities.

SECTION 3

Free and Fair Elections, Protecting the Right to Vote

Free and fair elections where a citizen's right to vote is protected and made easy to exercise are essential to ensuring that the United States has a functional, representative, and genuinely inclusive democracy.

In recent years, before and since the outcome of the 2020 Presidential election, Donald Trump and others have been trying to undermine democracy by employing ever more aggressive Jim Crow-style tactics that create barriers to voting access, as well as by deploying false and misleading information to cast doubt on legitimate election results.

Question A: Please list the steps you would take to maximize voter registration and participation in your jurisdiction, particularly among communities historically underrepresented in the electoral process. (Some examples: expanding the number of early voting sites and ballot drop-off locations; increasing the extent of information made available by mail and online in all of the jurisdiction's ballot languages; allowing non-citizens to vote for school board and/or other local offices in which they are key stakeholders.)

As a member of Congress, I have and continue to work to strengthen and expand voting rights for all. I have dedicated my entire adult life to ensuring that people's voices, regardless of country of origin or legal status, are heard and acted upon, whether through a neighborhood association, in a community organization, or for and through elected representation.

I support voting in specific elections that affect people directly regardless of immigration status, and also know there are essential ways that people can make their voices heard before, during and after an election. I also supported California's Proposition 18 in 2020 to expand voting rights to 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections and special elections. Although this ballot initiative was not successful, I will continue to support efforts led by youth activists to expand their participation in the democratic process.

SECTION 4

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 continue unabated and workers' organizing efforts are squashed more often than not.

Question A: Yes or no, would you urge employers to respect workers' freedom to choose a union by either or both of the following methods:

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");

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. When I was an LVN at Children's Hospital, I saw firsthand the tactics the employer used when we tried to form a union. As a legislator and member of Congress, I've consistently supported legislation to make it easier for workers to unionize and collectively bargain.

Question B: 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.

Yes, I have engaged with employers many times in support of union organizing. For example, in 2015 I wrote a letter to the President/CEO and Board of Directors of the Alliance College-Ready Public Schools emphasizing the importance of the freedom to organize. After a five-year struggle, United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) was officially recognized as the union for Alliance educators and workers began collective bargaining in 2020. This was a long-fought victory for the labor movement – overcoming lawsuits and an employer's refusal to recognize the union. This uphill battle for unionization reinforces the importance of solidarity between workers, unions, community members, and elected officials. I remain committed to union organizing and will continue to encourage employers to respect workers' freedom to choose a union.

Question C: What legislation have you supported in the past or do you support currently to strengthen workers' freedom to choose a union, and what other steps would

you take to strengthen the labor movement using the power and platform of your office, if elected?

Most recently, I've supported the Employee Free Choice Act and the PRO Act.

Question D: Do you support H.R 842, the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, which improves employment protections related to employees' rights to organize and collectively bargain in the workplace?

YES, I am a proud cosponsor of the PRO Act.

SECTION 5

Industry Standards, Wages, Benefits, and Working Conditions

At the beginning of the 21st century, organized healthcare workers throughout California established common standards for wages, benefits, and working conditions across much of the state's healthcare industry. These standards benefited both workers and patients, but some of the state's largest healthcare employers have spent the past decade fiercely undermining them.

In recent rounds of collective bargaining, major healthcare industry employers have pushed to implement pernicious policies that hurt both workers and patients, including but not limited to:

- Subcontracting, which often reduces wages and benefits and eliminating workers' union representation while increasing workforce turnover and harming the quality of services;
- Cuts in healthcare and retirement benefits for remaining employees;
- Reductions in staffing levels;
- Closing facilities in underserved communities and cutting low-margin medical services in favor of building out high-end medical centers and growing profitable surgical specialties;
- Weakening workplace safety standards.
- Use of independent contractor employment models under which healthcare workers do not presently have the legal right to organize and bargain as a union.

While these threats persist, they have been eclipsed for the time being by the more immediate and pressing threats posed by COVID-19 and the multiple failures of healthcare employers and government authorities to respond to the pandemic effectively, responsibly, and transparently.

As the COVID-19 pandemic surged in the spring of 2020, frontline healthcare employees suffered from chronic shortages of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), employers' failures to follow infection control protocols, and a lack of timely, accurate, and complete information about the incidence of COVID-19 at their facilities, as well as significant negative economic consequences from their own illnesses, and from the inability of providers to meet coronavirus surges without closing down other services.

In response, NUHW adopted a *COVID-19 Healthcare Workers' Bill of Rights* to protect worker, patient, and community safety and worked for its adoption through collective bargaining and by legislative and regulatory action. While we made considerable gains in areas such as PPE, additional paid leave, and safer work environments, there is still progress to be made on several elements of our agenda, including mental healthcare, input and accountability, and safe staffing, and some of the protections that have been established are only temporary and are not guaranteed to be observed in the case of future public health emergencies.

Question A: Will you sign a pledge to support NUHW's COVID-19 Healthcare Workers' Bill of Rights? What concrete actions will you take to urge its adoption by employers, and to establish laws and regulations as may be necessary to ensure its implementation?

YES

Question B: What concrete actions have you taken since the pandemic started to help ensure the safety of healthcare workers and patients in your community?

As a leader in Congress, I voted to support COVID relief packages, including rental assistance, small business supports, and worker protections, hosted COVID-19 resources fairs and conference calls with thousands of residents to share real-time information about the pandemic and how to protect ourselves, and helped secure \$1B in federal revenue for community health centers to help Californians get vaccinated.

Question C: What if any other steps will you take to ensure that healthcare workers, patients, and communities continue to be protected from COVID-19 now, and in the event of future public health emergencies?

As we learn more and new variants break through, I will seek out input from our national, state, and local health care experts for solutions, as well as, health care workers on the frontlines of keeping our communities safe.

I will monitor the ever-evolving situation closely and take any emergency action needed to protect the health and safety of Angelenos. I will ensure that city, county and state guidelines are followed and enforced, and support the guidance of LAUSD to ensure that our children are safe while they're at school.

As Mayor, I will ensure that testing and vaccinations are available in every neighborhood at no cost, and that those whose health is most compromised are first in line to receive preventative and responsive healthcare. Culturally relevant and multilingual communications about the importance of getting vaccinated are critical.

Question D: Will you commit to standing against local employer outsourcing and municipal worker outsourcing that has the effect of reducing workers' wages and benefits, eliminating their union representation, and harming the quality of services? Yes or no, explain.

YES. I oppose contracting out and privatization. I understand that subcontracting and outsourcing is a race to the bottom, in terms of wages and working conditions. I believe that if employers are held accountable for their actions and the actions of their subcontractors, that will reduce some of the incentive to contract out.

Question E: The pandemic has highlighted local government's role in protecting public health. As a local elected leader, what capacities would you drive your jurisdiction to enhance so it can better monitor and respond to future public health emergencies?

I will work closely with scientists, medical professionals, and the county of Los Angeles to ensure that we are making the best and most consistent and coordinated decisions as we learn about current and future health threats.

Question F: In the wake of the pandemic and the widespread experience of enhanced health risk, burnout from overwork, and PTSD from exposure to unprecedented numbers of deaths and serious illnesses, there is a growing shortage of healthcare workers in California. This challenge presents an opportunity to create job pipelines for locally-trained, well-compensated, unionized health care workers. What steps would you take to develop such pipelines and which local institutions would you engage to help?

I am very excited about these possibilities. As I was getting my LVN and PA, it was less expensive, but still expensive for me. We need to lower the costs to entry and make the health care fields more accessible and rewarding financially. I will work with LAUSD, the Community College District, local hospitals and all of the unions that represent health care workers to ensure that there are pathways and pipelines identified.

As a former nurse and emergency room Physician Assistant, I understand the challenges of understaffing, overtime, and burnout firsthand. I also served as an instructor at the USC School of Medicine for many years, training and teaching fellow Physician Assistants – preparing the next generation of healthcare professionals is deeply important to me.

In Congress, I have prioritized workforce development and job creation in the healthcare industry – and I will continue to do so as Mayor. In fact, I am the lead sponsor of the Physician Assistant Higher Education Modernization Act (H.R. 2274) as well as the Physician Assistant Education Public Health Initiatives Act (H.R. 3890).

These bills are designed to expand access to healthcare worker training programs, including telehealth education programs. The two bills would also expand subsidized loans and loan forgiveness programs for healthcare workers; provide greater opportunities for Black and Latinx community members to join the healthcare workforce; and expand healthcare access in underserved and rural communities.

SECTION 6

Supporting Comprehensive Campaigns

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 win employers' agreement to industry standards. Since COVID-19 and the need for social distancing have constrained our ability to engage in the full range of campaign tactics we might normally undertake, support from our elected and community allies has become even more critical to ensure we secure justice.

To support workers and patients NUHW supporters engage in the following activities:

- Meet with the union organizing committee and bargaining committee members; *YES*
- Sign public letters of support for the union's organizing rights or bargaining proposals; *YES*
- Place phone calls to and meet with employer representatives on the union's behalf; *YES*
- Attend negotiations with employers to support and help present the union's position; *YES*
- Conduct facility walk-throughs to engage both workers and employers on issues; *YES*
- 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; *YES*
- Participate in picket lines, marches, rallies, and vigils; *YES*
- Assist in outreach to other government agencies and community-based organizations and faith-based groups; *YES*
- Use the government's power as a purchaser, contractor, or other market participants to guarantee workers' right to organize and win fair employment conditions? *YES*

Question A: Would you be willing to participate in any of the actions listed above (virtually when required for participants' safety/in person when conditions will allow). Please check-off those actions you would be willing to take, and please describe any such actions you have taken to support workers in the past?

SECTION 7

Behavioral Health – Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders

The National Union of Healthcare Workers has played an integral role in highlighting the severity of the behavioral health crisis in the American health care system at large and at Kaiser Permanente statewide. NUHW believes that the disparity of quality, access, and affordability between behavioral health care and care for other medical conditions is a systemic issue that requires a systemic solution.

NUHW has played an outsized role in raising behavioral health care standards in California. Over the past two years, NUHW has exerted increasingly strong leadership in the fight for behavioral health parity, helping to preserve and pass key elements of California's new omnibus behavioral health parity law (SB 855 – Wiener), and sponsoring and passing legislation to guarantee timely follow-up appointments to behavioral health patients in ongoing courses of care (SB 221 – Wiener).

Question A: While there have been great strides made to improve awareness of growing behavioral health needs and deficiencies in access to services, there is still much work to be done in order to achieve parity with care for other medical conditions.

Among other challenges: a) There is an acute shortage of therapists to provide linguistically and culturally appropriate care to Californians in underserved communities; b) There is a broader shortage of therapists willing to take patients whose care is paid for by HMOs and insurers due to low reimbursement rates, excessive administrative burdens, and other bureaucratic obstacles to providing quality care; and c) Both demographics and increased demand will create an overall shortage of therapists in the near future unless we recruit more behavioral caregivers and retain more incumbents.

What steps will you take to require and support insurers and providers to 1) hire more therapists capable of providing linguistically and culturally appropriate care to Californians in underserved communities; 2) improve reimbursement rates and streamline administrative procedures to increase the number of therapists willing to take patients whose care is paid for by HMOs and insurers, and 3) meet California's future needs by engaging in greater behavioral workforce development and retention efforts?

Again, this is an issue that will require a broad, multi-layered solution. I will work with LAUSD, the community college district, the Cal State system, unions, community organizations and employers to ensure that we are exploring all avenues to recruit, educate, train, support, and acknowledge that there are many pathways to social work. In the Legislature and in Congress, I've worked to increase reimbursement rates and will continue to do so.

Question B: Have you led any prior policy initiatives or engaged in any other previous activities to improve behavioral health access statewide or locally? Please give details.

As a trained social worker and Physician Assistant, I deeply understand the need to expand behavioral health access. I am proud to have championed a variety of policies to expand access to services. For example, in Congress I worked closely with bipartisan colleagues to enact the Family First Prevention Services Act – a new law that expands a federal entitlement program to fund behavioral health and substance use treatment programs for parents and children at-risk of entering the foster care system. Additionally, I authored the Community-Based Response Act with Senator Chris Van Hollen. This bill aims to expand emergency response programs led by professionals trained in mental and behavioral health, as an alternative to law enforcement responding to all 911 calls. This would help target the best professional intervention to individuals in need.

Question C: Although there are enough behavioral health clinicians across the industry in California, rural areas and BIPOC communities specifically are lacking in accessible behavioral health care. What would you do to prioritize resources for these underserved communities?

I will continue to support funding and policies that expand access to reliable and affordable health care, particularly in BIPOC communities.

Question D: No patient gets well in a prison cell. Our members believe that elected leaders should expand access to quality behavioral health care in community-based settings by increasing resources for these services rather than allocating more resources to the prison industrial complex. Do you agree with this position? Explain.

YES. Prisons are the most expensive and non-effective “treatment” for mental health concerns. One of the reasons I founded Community Coalition years ago was in response to politicians at the time wanting to lock everyone up. I fear we are headed in that direction now, again.

Question E: Most of California's local governments either purchase their own health coverage for their thousands of public employees or participate in CalPERS. Costs of

public employee health plans continue increasing every year, all while provider networks continue to narrow and access to behavioral health services remains persistently challenging. What steps would you take to leverage your jurisdiction's purchasing power or voice in CalPERS to improve access to behavioral health care?

I will continue to support policies that hold health care plans and providers accountable to expand access to reliable and affordable health care.

SECTION 8

Single-Payer Healthcare Reform and Public Financing for Healthcare Services

Obamacare has been 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 policies through Covered California, millions of working Californians remain uninsured. Meanwhile, employers who fail to provide affordable, quality health insurance for their employees face only limited penalties, incentivizing further reductions in employer-sponsored coverage as costs rise. By bringing so many more people into a publicly financed, publicly governed system of care, Obamacare set the stage for us to organize a collective reckoning with the real reform we need and begin a campaign in earnest to enact single payer healthcare.

Healthy California NOW is currently working to align: a) best practice recommendations for a unified healthcare financing system forthcoming from the Healthy California for All Commission; b) Newsom administration initiatives to engage the federal government in waiver discussions for the use of federal healthcare dollars; and c) concepts for healthcare cost containment, quality improvement, and access expansion advanced by unions and consumer advocates over recent years to craft concrete steps that can be advanced by the State Legislature as pillars upon which to build a single payer, Medicare for All system, consistent with the core principles set forth in AB 1400 (Kalra).

Question A: Yes or no -- Do you support the establishment of a single payer healthcare system - a publicly financed system of health care for all with a uniform standard of coverage that reduces costs by eliminating the profiteering, administrative waste, and marketing expenditures that accompany private insurance?

YES

Question B: Upon review of the activities listed in Section 6 "Supporting Comprehensive Campaigns", what actions would you be willing to take to support the campaign to achieve a single payer system?

As I mentioned in my first answer, what distinguishes me from my opponents is my ability to build coalitions, organize, work with people who don't see things exactly as I do to effect real, lasting change. I am an organizer at heart and in practice, so I will participate and encourage a wide range of grassroots tactics to make change legislatively and in people's hearts and minds.

SECTION 9

The Struggle Against Pervasive Racism, Anti-Blackness, and White Supremacy, and Overcoming Racial Disparities in Health Care Access and Delivery

It is fundamental to the identity of NUHW as a militant, democratic, and progressive trade union to oppose racism in all of its manifestations – systemic and institutional, economic and social, cultural and ideological – as an immoral and destructive force, inimical to human freedom and development, and as a key weapon wielded by employers to divide workers from each other. Equally, it is central to NUHW's identity to recognize the unique and supremely damaging role of anti-Blackness in American life: a role that has persisted unbroken and continues to evolve from the horrors of the enslavement of Africans to the terror of Jim Crow; to the denial of equal access to education, jobs, housing, and health care; to the structural violence of the criminal justice system and the carceral state.

As a union formed first of service and maintenance workers in hospitals and nursing homes, NUHW's history has always been bound up with the struggles for dignity and justice – on and off the job – of the many Black workers who occupied those positions, and the union's modern-day success has in large measure been inspired by and modeled on the Black freedom movement. At this moment of crisis and opportunity, when Donald Trump has fanned the flames of white supremacy more aggressively than any U.S. leader in a generation, and when the Movement for Black Lives, in the wake of George Floyd's brutal and brazen murder, has called the planet to conscience and built unprecedented demand for fundamental change throughout the world, NUHW is recommitting itself to the struggle against pervasive racism, anti-Blackness, and white supremacy, and is calling on all of its labor, community, and elected allies to join in this priority.

Question A: Have you explicitly endorsed or taken concrete steps to support the work of Black Lives Matter and the Movement for Black Lives? If so, describe the steps. If not, please explain.

Yes. As a Black woman, I am deeply committed to racial justice and Black lives. I have committed my life to racial justice. In the early 1990's, I founded Community Coalition in South Los Angeles, an organization designed to advance racial and economic justice

through Black-Brown solidarity and community empowerment. In Congress, I served as the Congressional Black Caucus Chair and championed racial justice in the Capitol, building coalitions with Latino, API, and Native coalitions. I also served as the lead sponsor of the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act to reduce racial bias in policing and fight for Black Lives.

Question B: Some elected officials have forsworn the endorsements and contributions of police, sheriffs, and correctional workers' unions, and will continue refusing them unless and until these groups recognize and begin working to root out racism in their own institutions and in society at large. Will you join in this incipient boycott of criminal justice union endorsements and contributions? If not, how will you challenge these groups to play responsible roles in the fight against racism?

I do not accept contributions from police unions.

Question C: Racial disparities in U.S. health care access and delivery have been documented in great detail, from differences in rates of health insurance coverage to differences in availability of primary and specialty care to differences in the quantity and quality of geographically accessible hospital infrastructure to differences in the courses of treatment for many disease conditions and the pain associated with them, to major differences in maternal and children's health outcomes. These differences have been placed in stark relief recently based on the higher rates of COVID-19 illness and death suffered by Blacks and Latinos in comparison to their white counterparts. What steps would you prioritize to redress racial disparities in health care access and delivery? Please cite specific initiatives undertaken by government officials and provider systems.

Throughout my life, I have always fought for equity, and against racial disparities in healthcare and throughout society. In Congress, I joined with several of my colleagues to introduce The Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act of 2021 to comprehensively address every dimension of America's maternal health crisis. The Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act would make investments in social determinants of health, community-based organizations, the growth and diversification of the perinatal workforce, improvements in data collection, and support for moms and babies exposed to climate change-related risks. In addition to direct efforts to improve Black maternal health outcomes, the Momnibus focuses on high-risk populations, including veterans, incarcerated people, Native Americans, and other women and birthing people of color.

As it relates to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, I will also use the bully pulpit of the Mayor's Office to hold the county health department accountable particularly as it relates to ensuring equity and meeting the needs of vulnerable populations. We need better data collection to learn how to most effectively tailor supports to individuals that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

SECTION 10

Immigration and Immigrant Rights

NUHW has pledged to do everything in its power to protect all of its members, their families and their patients regardless of their immigration status. A few years ago NUHW declared itself a sanctuary union, joining an expansive network of institutions committed to ensuring the safety and security of all members of their communities regardless of immigration status.

Question A: Please state your position on DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) and TPS (Temporary Protective Status) Do you support a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented people living in the US and the continued protection of DACA and TPS holders?

Yes, I support DACA and TPS, pathways to citizenship and comprehensive immigration reform. Los Angeles is an immigrant community. I am proud to be neighbors with and represent such a diverse community. Immigrants provide our City with economic and cultural vibrancy. Both documented and undocumented immigrants in Los Angeles deserve access to all services – including healthcare, education, housing, and more.

As a Member of Congress, I am a proud cosponsor of legislation in support of Comprehensive Immigration Reform. Specifically, I am a cosponsor of the U.S. Citizenship Act (H.R.1177) as well as the American Dream and Promise Act of 2021 (H.R. 6). These pieces of legislation include pathways to citizenship as well as strengthen labor protections for immigrant workers.

I also fought Trump's disgusting policy of separating children from their families at our southern border and went to the Brownsville detention center to bring attention to what his policies were doing to immigrant families. I helped lead legislation to stop the separations, hold the government accountable, and reunite families.

Question B: While federal immigration policies test the well-being of immigrant communities across our state, California is leading the way with its One California program that provides immigration assistance, services for citizenship and support for remedies from deportation. Can we count on you to protect and expand on programs like One California that are protecting immigrant communities in California? What ideas do you have to provide local assistance to immigrants seeking a more secure future in your city?

Yes, I support One California and am committed to immigrant rights. Los Angeles is an immigrant community. I am proud to be neighbors with and represent such a diverse community. Immigrants provide our City with economic and cultural vibrancy. Both documented and undocumented immigrants in Los Angeles deserve access to all services – including healthcare, education, housing, and more. As Mayor, I will prioritize immigrants of all nationalities and fight for immigrant justice at the local, State, and federal levels. For example, I will work with the Governor to continue to provide access to COVID resources for undocumented immigrants, and collaborate with the County of Los Angeles by supporting the Justice Fund for immigrant access to free attorneys.

Question D: Please share whether you support or oppose the cooperation of state and local governments with Federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials and explain why.

I do not support cooperating with ICE since indiscriminate deportations do not enhance safety in Los Angeles. In fact, ICE often stokes fear and discourages families from seeking health care or other services – this could exacerbate our current public health crisis. I support the reunification of families separated at the border by the Trump Administration and I want to do all that I can to strengthen our immigrant communities, not tear them apart.

SECTION 11

Housing and Homelessness

Californians have faced a worsening housing and homelessness crisis over the years. The public health crisis we're facing with the pandemic intensifies the need for housing solutions. However, landlords and real estate/land use activists have consistently blocked reforms to housing policy and utilized established law like the Ellis Act (1985) and the Costa-Hawkins Act (1995) to prevent housing solutions. In effect, working people are priced out of their homes by increased rents and rising housing costs.

Question A: What is your definition of affordable housing and how would you work to increase the affordable housing stock and create more inclusionary zoning?

YES, I will work to increase the stock of affordable housing. I will cut through red tape, expedite approvals, waive development fees and work with the community to build more permanent supportive, and affordable housing. Existing structures should be used to the full extent possible, and zoning-compliant permanent housing projects should be approved for immediate development. I will also consolidate all review and clearance functions within a single unit dedicated to approving 100% affordable projects.

Question B: What would you do to curb evictions? What actions have you taken so far to help fix the current housing affordability crisis?

In Congress, I pushed for moratoriums on foreclosures to help financially struggling families stay in their homes. For more information on my plan below for more information on evictions, housing availability, and treating the homelessness crisis like the emergency that it is.

Question C: Do you support rent control and the repeal of Costa-Hawkins?

I support rent control. As it relates specifically to the Costa-Hawkins Act, I would look forward to learning more from you, and helping to identify a compromise among realtors, landlords, and community stakeholders. I do believe that keeping tenants and homeowners in their homes is essential to preventing homelessness, speculation and gentrification. The City's current eviction protections are strong but we need stronger enforcement of the tenant anti-harassment ordinance, in addition to greater cooperation from the courts to fully ban no-fault evictions. I support the expansion of rent stabilization, the full enforcement of the City's existing anti-tenant harassment ordinance, and the renters' right to counsel.

Question D: The crisis of homelessness is aggravated when insecurely housed individuals who suffer behavioral health issues cannot get the care that they need but instead face criminalization. If elected, what would you do to ensure people with behavioral health needs facing homelessness receive adequate care and resources?

I am running for Mayor to lead Los Angeles through this time of crisis – a time when 40,000 Angelenos go to sleep every night without a roof over their heads and nearly four unhoused Angelenos die every day.

Homelessness is a crisis for the unhoused and for every one of our neighborhoods. It's a crisis on every level — public health, public safety, economic and humanitarian — and it requires a bold and aggressive emergency response. I will bring leadership, accountability and action to dramatically reduce homelessness and end street encampments in Los Angeles.

My model as a leader is to set a vision and build coalitions behind it. I'm a mother, former emergency room Physician Assistant, and community organizer who rolls up my sleeves and follows through to get the job done. It's what I've always done:

At County/USC hospital, I treated individuals who were homeless, crime victims, and cases of substance abuse and domestic violence. Seeing those patients every day helped drive me to work full time on addressing the root causes that led them into the ER in the first place.

As the founder of the Community Coalition, I advocated for converting motels into housing for the homeless in the 1990s, decades before COVID-19 prompted the creation of Project Roomkey.

And as Speaker of the Assembly during the Great Recession and Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus during the Trump Administration, I know how to both work across the aisle and make difficult decisions.

In each chapter of my life, I haven't run away from problems – I've run toward them. I'm a crisis-tested leader who will do whatever it takes to address the challenge at hand. That's the kind of urgency and leadership LA so desperately needs.

As Mayor, I will respond to homelessness like the emergency it is. I will lead with a comprehensive approach, beginning with aggressive emergency action to:

- *House 15,000 people by the end of year one*
- *Dramatically reduce street homelessness*
- *End street encampments*
- *Lead on mental health and substance abuse treatment*

I understand that only the Mayor of Los Angeles can command the public attention and bully pulpit necessary to hold government accountable and force bureaucracies to work together and get things done. I will be out front on our homelessness crisis and will hold every level of government accountable while building productive partnerships and coalitions.

For too many years, government action on homelessness has been siloed. Federal, state, county and city governments have all moved in different directions – with no coordination or overarching plan.

That simply can't happen any longer – there is no time to waste.

I am the only candidate for Mayor with the experience and qualifications to bring all the players to the table and implement a single plan that cuts through the bureaucracy and brings home every available dollar to solve homelessness.

I have been building coalitions – among elected officials and within communities – for the last three decades. I spent fourteen years as a leader in the community working alongside the city and county government. And for the last sixteen years, I have served at the highest levels of state and federal government. I am the only candidate with the experience and relationships to chart this new course.

Personally lead as Mayor and appoint a Homelessness Chief

As Mayor, I will lead on homelessness and personally drive action at City Hall to marshal the resources of every city department to fight homelessness and end all street encampments. I will also appoint and empower one individual – who reports directly to the Mayor – to carry out this vision. Personality conflicts and bureaucratic turf battles will not be tolerated. And every dollar budgeted for homelessness will actually go to solve homelessness – no accounting tricks, no added bureaucracy.

Forge a direct City-County partnership

The city is responsible for housing and the county is responsible for services, but in practice, this division of labor leads to jurisdictional battles and finger pointing. Any solution to homelessness will require daily communication, and genuine partnership, between the city and county. But that kind of sustained and direct conversation is not happening the way it should. Building on existing relationships, I will work directly with the members of the Board of Supervisors, and the homelessness Chief will be empowered to work directly with the County CEO and county departments to deliver results.

Do more with the money we have

Through the city's Proposition HHH and the county's Measure H, the voters of Los Angeles have invested billions of their dollars to solve this problem with not enough to show for it. These funding sources supplement an unprecedented amount of money flowing from the federal and state government. We must spend these resources effectively and efficiently – and that means getting more bang for our buck. Case in point: spending nearly \$750,000 per unit of housing is outrageous. I will be laser-focused on ensuring accountability, transparency and proper oversight for each dollar spent.

Maximize state funding

The Governor and Legislature committed \$12 billion of mostly one-time dollars that we can use to build housing units. Bass will make sure those one-time dollars are spent

with the greatest return on investment and will make the case in Sacramento for new ongoing resources to prevent and end homelessness.

Fight for federal dollars and the loosening of restrictive federal rules

Cities and states across the nation are grappling with increasing numbers of unhoused individuals. And with housing prices soaring and the COVID safety net expiring, the problem could get even worse.

Homelessness does not get the attention it requires in Washington but in Congress, I am working to change that. I am working directly with the Biden Administration to make housing vouchers more flexible, house our veterans and rebuild the broken mental healthcare and substance abuse systems. But I know the federal government could be doing a lot more.

As Mayor, I will join with other Mayors and Governors to elevate homelessness as a national issue because we all must own the solutions to this crisis together. I will be a fierce advocate in Washington for additional federal dollars and the loosening of restrictive federal rules that have prevented us from housing, treating and employing people as swiftly as we need to. Real partnership from the federal government can help us solve the crisis in LA.

Build more temporary housing

Temporary housing is not the solution to homelessness, but it is critically needed to help get people off the streets as soon as possible and provide a bridge to permanent housing. That's why as Mayor, I will seek community input and get more temporary housing up and running as quickly as possible.

Identify all available land

Master inventories of land including city-owned and other government-owned properties that can be used to build housing are already completed or underway. City-owned land is a great start, saving taxpayers the upfront cost of land and providing the flexibility needed to develop quickly. Rather than allowing these inventories to gather dust on a shelf, I will use them to start building.

Convert existing properties

By turning to motels, hotels, shuttered hospitals, and vacant commercial spaces, thousands of unhoused Angelenos can be provided with safe, clean temporary housing that respects people's privacy and individual needs.

Get the big corporations to contribute more toward solutions

Some of California's largest companies like Google, Apple and Facebook have already stepped in to make significant financial contributions to address the state's housing shortage, but much of it has been concentrated in the Bay Area. As Mayor, I will partner with LA's private sector leaders to make similar commitments here at home. Ultimately, solving homelessness is in everyone's best interests.

Build more affordable and permanent supportive housing

While we deal with the immediate crisis at hand, we must be relentless when it comes to building more affordable and permanent supportive housing if we want to solve this crisis.

Replace red tape with action and expedite affordable housing projects

In meeting with developers and providers alike across the city, I consistently hear stories of red tape and barriers we've erected over time that drag out projects and lead to ballooning costs.

As Mayor, I will cut through red tape, expedite approvals, waive development fees and work with the community to build more permanent housing.

Existing structures should be used to the full extent possible, and zoning-compliant permanent housing projects should be approved for immediate development. I will also consolidate all review and clearance functions within a single unit dedicated to approving 100% affordable projects.

The city should never be the obstacle standing in the way of progress.

In addition to making sure that government agencies responsible for housing are operating as nimbly as they can, I will explore other innovative financing solutions like securing bridge loans from the private sector to get projects underway while long-term financing is finalized.

Leverage Proposition HHH and Homekey

As Mayor, I will provide the leadership needed to complete the pipeline of projects funded by Proposition HHH, and I will leverage the \$2.75 billion made available by the state to convert additional hotels, motels and other properties into critically needed housing through the Homekey program. The latest round of Homekey funds are expected to create upwards of 1,000 additional units of permanent housing in the City of Los Angeles.

Expand master leasing

I will scale other tried and true practices that we know work like master leasing, which provides the certainty developers need on the front end to commit to building and provides readily available units that help outreach workers more easily do their job on the backend. When done at scale, this tool can more quickly house unhoused Angelenos.

Transition individuals from the streets to housing and services

As part of the coordinated emergency response to homelessness, I will deploy trained neighborhood service teams across Los Angeles – because the only way to successfully transition individuals from the streets to housing and services is through persistent on-the-ground engagement and outreach.

*Currently, we have a patchwork of city, county, and independent teams working on the streets, sometimes at cross-purposes. **As Mayor, I will lead, centralize, align, and scale these teams – and I'll invest the resources we need to make sure they succeed.** They know how to do the work – they just haven't had the resources needed to do it at scale.*

The teams will include trained outreach workers, medical and mental health professionals, and social workers – and I will create job opportunities for the formerly unhoused to work directly on these teams as well. As individuals with lived experience, they play a vital role as trusted messengers in helping others find the same stability they did.

While providers will be responsible for the outreach, these teams will be backed up by law enforcement or other security support to ensure the safety of all involved.

The current scatter-shot approach whereby different providers show up to different neighborhoods on different days isn't cutting it. My approach will ensure that each team will be on the ground every day in their assigned neighborhoods, allowing providers to build trust and relationships with the housed and unhoused alike. That consistent, community-based approach is a critical ingredient for long-term success.

When adequate shelter and services are available and offered, most individuals will accept. The fact is that when unsheltered individuals understand that there is a safe, clean place to go with the services they need, they don't want to live on the street. And when outreach is done right, cases of refusal are very rare.

For the small percentage of unhoused individuals who may resist, the service teams will evaluate the individual cases in order to determine the appropriate next steps. For

some, that could mean stays in residential treatment programs or appearances in drug courts. Temporary hospitalization may be needed for others who pose a danger to themselves and the public.

This strategic approach, which will lead to the vast majority of individuals accepting offers of housing, and then triage the small number of individuals that don't, will lead to the end of encampments.

At the end of the day, we cannot – and will not – tolerate open air drug trafficking or the violence that takes place in broad daylight or hidden behind tents.

Laws must be enforced to protect both the unhoused and the community at large.

Lead on mental health and substance abuse treatment services

Nearly fifty percent of unsheltered individuals are either suffering from severe mental illness or substance abuse. Meanwhile, our mental health and substance abuse systems have been decimated, the county is short thousands of beds, and a maze of bureaucratic hurdles prevents progress in the same way it does for housing.

I have been a leader in the fight against addiction and mental illness for decades. From founding the Community Coalition in South LA to address the crack-cocaine epidemic in the late 1980s, to helping pass laws to expand access to healthcare for families, I have a proven track-record of delivering tangible results.

As Mayor, I will leverage that experience to take the lead in working with the county, state, and federal governments to address the severe shortage of mental health and substance abuse disorder services, support, and capacity.

We need short-term placements to help transition individuals off the streets and we need long-term placements for cases of more serious health issues. From leveraging state dollars to co-locating healthcare services in housing placements to cutting through the misguided federal rules that prevent us from getting people the care they need – I won't accept that these issues don't technically fall under the jurisdiction of the Mayor. I'll step up and lead.

Equip the unhoused with job training and employment services to reenter the workforce

We know two things to be true: there are widespread worker shortages across the economy at the same time employment is a critical ingredient for unhoused individuals on the path to stability.

Individuals become homeless for different reasons, and we should target job training and employment assistance accordingly. Some of the unhoused are working but just aren't making the wages needed to afford living in LA. Those who are formerly incarcerated confront barriers to employment because of their backgrounds. When foster youth age out of the foster care system, resources are terminated and within a few short months, many fall into homelessness. Many other unhoused individuals simply have not had access to the opportunities they need.

Solving homelessness can be a jobs program. *As Mayor, I will promote access to social support services like SSI/SDI to make sure that individuals can access safety net programs. And I'll locate robust job training and counseling services in both temporary and permanent housing that can help get people back into the workforce and into good-paying union jobs.*

Prevent homelessness and keep our neighbors housed

In addition to the 40,000 unhoused Angelenos, another 352,000 Angelenos are in abject poverty at risk of becoming homeless. On average, every day in Los Angeles, 207 people find their way into housing while another 227 fall into homelessness. Providers are doing herculean work, but the forces leading people into homelessness are just too powerful.

As Mayor, I will be steadfast in addressing the root causes of homelessness to prevent folks from becoming homeless in the first place.

The best way to prevent homelessness is to keep folks in their homes.

More than 50% of the individuals who enter homelessness for the first time cite economic hardship as the primary factor for losing their home. Studies estimate that three out of four Los Angeles households are rent burdened, meaning they spend over 30% of household income on rent and utilities – making it extremely likely that they are one medical bill or car repair away from ending up on the streets.

The income inequality in our city is profound – and it is just becoming too expensive to live in LA.

I have been fighting for economic justice for my entire life. As Mayor, I will fight against unlawful evictions, prevent tenant harassment, and provide legal assistance to renters.

I will leverage my federal and state experience to maximize resources for rental assistance, direct cash assistance, and low-interest loan programs to ensure that we can keep our neighbors safely housed, even when money is tight.

And I will make housing vouchers work for more Angelenos. I'll work directly with the frontline city workers doing their best to get people into housing. The Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles recently received approximately 3,000 emergency housing vouchers, but shockingly, only about 500 have been issued, and even fewer have actually been used. Burdensome paperwork results in many vouchers going to waste, not to mention how difficult it is to find landlords willing to accept them.

With the crisis at hand, I will not allow so many life-saving vouchers to remain on the table. I will work with the federal government to cut through the red tape, and expand the availability and accessibility of housing vouchers. And I will increase incentives to landlords so that more are willing to accept them.

Most of all, I will continue to do what I've done my whole life: fight for better jobs, healthcare, and education to provide folks the opportunity they need to succeed in today's economy.