



IndivisibleEB.org

Assembly Member Buffy Wicks
Assembly Member Rob Bonta
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To: Assembly Member Buffy Wicks & Assembly Member Rob Bonta

From: Indivisible East Bay

Date: May 10, 2019

Subject: Resisting the Trump Agenda

Introduction: Indivisible East Bay is a grassroots group of 3500 California constituents in Congressional districts 11,13, and 15 committed to making regular visits to our elected representatives in order to support them in resistance to the Trump agenda and to hold them accountable. The majority of our members are in assembly districts 15 and 18. We are part of a movement of Indivisible groups all over the state and country--at least two in every district. Our guiding principles are: Donald Trump's agenda will take America backwards and must be stopped; in order to work together to achieve this goal, we must model the values of inclusion, tolerance, and fairness.

Questions:

- Why does our CA legislature Democratic supermajority shy away from holding votes on so many progressive bills that appear to have a good chance of passing?
- Why do they seem unwilling to even consider ever overriding a veto from the governor?

Legislative Priorities: Indivisible East Bay has chosen a selection of bills before the CA legislature to focus our advocacy work on this session. We have also worked with other groups across the state to select some statewide priority bills.

Questions:

- What are your legislative priorities this session?
- What do you see as the biggest challenges to taking bold action?
- What can we do to convince the new governor to sign some of the good bills the old governor vetoed last year?
- Do you have any suggestions of where grassroots support in your district and/or elsewhere could have the most effect?
- Are there any bills on our list that you have concerns about supporting or want to see amended?

Thank you Asm. Bonta for authoring some of our statewide priority bills:

- Earlier in session, our statewide coalition of over 60 Indivisible groups (Indivisible CA: StateStrong) voted on some top priority bills. Several of Asm. Bonta's bills made it to the top of the list! Thank you for being a champion for issues that are important to Indivisibles across the state.
- AB 32, which would abolish for-profit prisons. We're curious how this bill this bill is faring? Do you expect it to get out of Appropriations? If so, do you have enough votes on the Assembly

floor to pass it? If not, are there specific members that it would be helpful for our fellow Indivisibles in other districts to pressure about this bill?

- AB 1332, the sanctuary state contract & investment act. We noticed that it's on the Chamber's Job Killer List and so we assume that you must be facing a ton of opposition to this bill. Do you expect it to get out of Appropriations? If so, do you have enough votes on the Assembly floor to pass it? If not, are there specific members that it would be helpful for our fellow Indivisibles in other districts to pressure about this bill?
- We were excited by Assembly Member Bonta's Green New Deal legislation (AB 1276) but know that it is now a two-year bill. We'd love to know what Asm. Bonta is doing to flesh out the bill for next session and what provisions we can expect a future amended version of this bill to include? We also know that any climate legislation will face a ton of opposition and would be excited to support Asm. Bonta in moving this legislation forward next year!
- AB 4 to expand Medi-Cal to undocumented immigrants of all ages. We are glad that the Governor has taken steps to expand Medi-Cal to undocumented young adults in his original budget and recent May Revise. However, we don't believe that anyone should be left out of access to healthcare. The Health4All coalition is especially disappointed that seniors have been left out. We know this is ultimately a budget fight, but is there any leverage that we have by passing AB 4 in the Assembly to push for full expansion? Is there any hope of getting broader coverage this year?

Criminal Justice:

- We ask you to support Weber and McCarty's AB 392. Which updates California law so that police can use deadly force only when necessary to prevent death or serious injury.
- We thank Asm. Wicks and ask Asm. Bonta to support AB 277, Parole Re-integration Credits, authored by Asm. McCarty. It would reduce the length of parole for participation in certain activities, such as education, training, and substance abuse programs. Such programs reduce the chances of recidivism by supporting positive alternative activities.
- We don't think SB 10, as passed, was good bail reform. The reliance on a variety (there are nine different tools cited in the California Chief Justice's proposal for bail reform¹) of non-standardized and proprietary risk assessment tools has the potential to further entrench bias in policing and detention.

Questions:

-We were disappointed by last minute changes to bail reform SB 10 last year. What are your thoughts on that?

-What do you think of proposals such as the Electronic Frontier Foundation's restrictions² on the use of pretrial risk assessment tools?

- Risk assessment scores must be accompanied by detailed descriptions of how they were calculated—or "audit trails"—and all of the information necessary to enable a reproducible calculation of a particular individual's risk score.
- Courts should not be allowed to rely on proprietary risk assessment tools if a vendor refuses to disclose information about how the risk assessment tool was developed.

¹ [Pretrial Detention Reform - Recommendations To The Chief Justice](#), October 2017

² [EFF Urges California to Place Meaningful Restrictions on the Use of Pretrial Risk Assessment Tools](#) (2018)

Poverty: We want you to fund the CalFood Program at \$24.5 million on-going to enable food banks to meet emergency needs and support the following bills:

- AB 1022, (Wicks) Federal 3-month time limit to SNAP.
- SB SB 285 (Weiner) to ensure all eligible Californians have efficient, equitable access to CalFresh
- AB 1434 (Karla) to end cuts to Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- AB 1593 (Reyes) Expand the California Earned Income Tax Credit (CalEITC) to immigrant workers with an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN)
- SB 499 (McGuire) Hunger-Free Schools and AB 842 (Limon) Hunger-Free Preschool and Child Care to increase K-12 school's capacity to provide healthy school meals – made with California grown fruits and vegetables – free to all students and ensure that low-income children in public pre-K have access to nutritious, free meals, and provide state funding for child care centers to serve nutritious meals to low-income children.

Questions:

-How can we help pass these bills?

-Are there any plans to try to put a child allowance in place in California? Something like the American Families Act?

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/10/26/16552200/child-allowance-tax-credit-bill-michael-bennet-sherrod-brown>

Education: We strongly support the right of every child to excellent and equitable public education, which is fundamental to democracy. Teachers and other public school employees must enjoy compensation and working conditions that allow our public schools to attract and retain a skilled and dedicated workforce for all of our public schools. We support our unions.

Questions:

-How do these values inform your thinking on the current package of charter reform bills?

-Does OUSD have a chance at forgiveness of its debt to the state – at the least the part that was accrued during state receivership? What can you, and what can we do toward that goal?

-We appreciate your support for the Schools and Communities First Proposition. Are there additional mechanisms that you are pursuing or considering?

Elections and Voting Rights: A unifying theme of our selection of voting rights bills is supporting the major goals of HR-1: expanding voting rights, campaign finance reform, and strengthening the government's ethics laws. HR-1 is an omnibus bill because the most effective changes work in tandem to complement each other. We see these bills as doing just that AB 49, SB 72, AB 363 and AB 177 collectively remove barriers to voting for everyone. ACA 6 benefits a group of people that is not just historically disenfranchised but increases civic engagement for their communities -- who in turn will benefit from easier voting access. SB 47 and AB 1217 work together to make it hard to evade the other.

We want you to support the following bills:

- ACA 6 (McCarty) Amend the California Constitution to ensure that Californians on parole can fully participate in our democracy. IEB will be working with the community co-sponsors of ACA 6, including Initiate Justice and All of Us or None, and our community partner Open Gate, which supports people exiting prison, including many on parole, to enroll in college with a support program at Chabot College in Hayward.

- AB 49, Voter Protection Act (Cervantes): increases the window of time before the election that vote-by-mail ballot packets must be mailed out to voters
- SB-72, Conditional Voter Registration: Satellite Offices (Umberg). require county officials to offer conditional voter registration at satellite offices.
- SB 47 and AB 1217 to improve campaign finance disclosure.

Questions:

- Especially with California settling the Judicial Watch, Inc., et al. v. Logan, et al. lawsuit and agreeing to purge voter rolls we want our elected officials to perform oversight to ensure that residents are able to access their right to same-day voter registration and provisional voting. What can you do to make sure same-day registration is operating as intended? Could you hold a hearing or ask for a report? How can we help?

- Are you aware of Colorado's election reforms of the past year? They provide a model for the sort of unified effort we mention above. In particular they make it much easier to both vote and track that one's vote was successfully counted. They've managed to make their whole process have higher turnout, be more accurate *and* cheaper and easier for counties to administer.

Public Banking:

Thank you for co-authoring AB 857, the public banks charter bill. The bill is expected to face a close floor vote and serious lobbying from big banks and CalChamber, so our members hope that you can help whip votes.

Health Care: We ask you to support AB 1611 to prohibit surprise emergency room bills.

Environment:

- AB 345 will mandate a 2,500-foot health and safety buffer zone between new oil and gas wells and sensitive land uses, which include schools, day care centers, residential homes, and hospitals. Nearly five and a half million Californians—mostly people of color—live within one mile of an oil or gas well. A safe distance between drilling operations and residences, schools, and other sensitive places is necessary to avoid serious public health risks. Can we count on Asm. Bonta and Asm. Wicks to support this legislation on the floor?
- We are concerned by the unilateral power of Transportation Committee Chair Jim Frazier installing critical environmental legislation. Do you have any ideas about how we can influence leadership to appoint a more environmentally-friendly chair to that committee?

Sheriffs: We thank Assm. Wicks for voting yes on AB 1185 Officer oversight: sheriff oversight board and ask Assm. Bonta to support it when he gets the chance. With a budget close to one hundred million dollars, and an enormous responsibility for the safety of our communities, both in and out of the justice system, it is essential that the Sheriff's department have reasonable oversight.

Assembly Bill 1185 is an important step in granting counties the opportunity to monitor the Sheriff's department's operations, allowing them to appoint an independent oversight board with subpoena power for an objective assessment when conflicts arise.

We appreciate your leadership on this matter and a yes vote on Assembly Bill 1185.

Questions:

--What are the prospects for 1185, and what can we do to help pass it?

-Are there other legislators that we should encourage to support AB 1185?

-More generally, we are very unhappy with our sheriffs in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, especially on immigration matters and in-custody deaths and abusive conditions in the jails What is your relationship like with their offices?

-Would you consider introducing a constitutional amendment to switch from elected to appointed sheriffs? Would you introduce a bill allowing counties to set term limits for sheriffs and D.A.'s?

Housing:

- We appreciate that addressing California's housing crisis is a priority for you. We have members who both support and oppose the (SB 50), but we are in agreement that something needs to be done and that affordability and displacement should be our biggest concerns. Can you tell us a little bit about your thoughts on the bill?
- Thank you Asm. Bonta for authoring AB 1481 (just cause eviction). Do you anticipate trouble passing it out of the Assembly? If so, are there specific legislators that could use extra pressure from our fellow Indivisibles?
- We're disappointed that AB 36 (to reform Costa Hawkins) was again stalled.