

2016 LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE



Candidate Name: Sandré R. Swanson Position You Are Running For: State Senate
Political Party Affiliation: Democrat Are You an Incumbent: Yes No

INTRODUCTION: Candidates for the state legislature in 2016 are respectfully requested to answer these questions relevant to the respective and often complementary roles of the state and city governments in California. While the League does not itself endorse candidates, the responses to this questionnaire will be shared with elected city officials in each legislative district for consideration in their own endorsement decisions as well as posted on the League website. Thank you for your participation. Please email your response to Bismarck@cacities.org or by fax to 916-658-8240 by no later than March 31. If you have any questions, please contact: League Public Affairs Director Bismarck Obando at Bismarck@cacities.org or 916-658-8273.

LOCAL CONTROL. The relationship between the state and cities functions best as a partnership where major policy issues are approached by the state with careful consideration of the varied conditions among the state's 482 cities and an appreciation of the importance of retaining local flexibility to tailor policies to reflect local needs and circumstances. Still, at times, cities have to respond to state legislation they believe undermines the principle of "local control" over important issues such as land use, housing, finance, infrastructure, elections, labor relations and other issues directly affecting cities. What is your perspective on local control and state preemption of local control? *(Please explain).*

I agree with the League of Cities' perspective on the importance of local control over critical issues facing cities throughout the state. State preemption of local entities can be problematic because of the unforeseen consequences that local entities frequently face of which the state may not be aware. As a prime example, the decision to end redevelopment agencies was a major policy issue that had a direct effect on the local entities ability to address the housing crisis. I voted against elimination of the redevelopment agencies because it took away important tools for local communities to address housing affordability and the development of low and moderate income housing.

2016 LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING. Cities and counties are struggling with a \$78 billion, 10-year maintenance funding deficit for the local streets and roads system. This amount is needed simply to maintain existing infrastructure; delaying these repairs by just 10 years would increase the deficit to \$99 billion. Meanwhile, millions of cars, trucks, busses and other vehicles have been added in California, utilizing our already over-burdened transportation network. At the same time, gas tax revenues (that benefit both the state and local system) have not been raised since 1994; they have been eroded by inflation, expanded use of electric and more efficient vehicles, and more recently declined 26% since Fiscal Year 2013-14. How would you support addressing this infrastructure funding deficit?

- Additional state gas or other vehicle taxes: Yes No
- Additional state user fees (similar to the vehicle registration fee): Yes No
- Expanded local authority to raise taxes and fees locally: Yes No
- Return transportation funding from General Fund (\$1 billion/yr.) and reform CalTRANS: Yes No
- Combination of approaches: Yes No
- Other approaches? *(Please explain)*

A combination approach would best address the current transportation funding deficit. The public responds best to proposals for revenue generation when they have a complete buy in to the proposal and when they are confident that the revenue will be used for its intended purpose. The intended purpose could be the promise of better roads or better transportation systems. I would work with the League of Cities to develop approaches that would have the best chance to succeed and benefit local communities.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING. With the loss of \$1 billion in redevelopment funding that previously went to affordable housing and the exhaustion of past state affordable housing bond funds, California has virtually no resources to construct affordable housing. Affordable units often require additional public subsidy so that rents and/or purchase prices can be made affordable to low and moderate income households. What is your solution to the affordable housing crisis?

- Allocate a portion of state general fund dollars for affordable housing: Yes No
- Establish a new permanent source of affordable housing funding from a new revenue source such as a recently contemplated \$75 state tax or fee on various real estate instruments: Yes No
- Establish a local-state matching program, where local funding commitments to affordable housing are matched dollar-for-dollar with a state contribution: Yes No
- Reduce the regulatory burden on housing production imposed by CEQA and other regulations: Yes No

2016 LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

- Combination of these approaches: Yes No
- Other approaches? *(Please explain)*

A combination approach would best address the affordable housing crisis. As one of the few members of the state legislature who opposed the elimination of redevelopment agencies it was easy to predict the current housing crisis. The state legislature with input from the local agencies must figure out how to respond and fix the resulting crisis facing communities. As a senator I would be committed to working towards solutions. There is no easy fix but I would seek input from the League of Cities to address the problems created by the elimination of the redevelopment agencies. I would work with the League to push forth proposals that would provide funds to local cities to address the housing affordability crisis. A regional approach is necessary to incorporate the needs of the surrounding cities who must be partners in any affordable housing strategy.

WATER CONSERVATION AND STORMWATER. Faced with the ongoing drought and increasing federal and state clean water regulations, local governments have struggled to enforce water conservation requirements and remove contaminants from stormwater and urban water runoff without reducing funding for public safety and other general fund commitments. How should the state assist cities with this challenge?

- Providing increased grants through state bonds financed from the state General Fund: Yes No
- Providing cities and other water agencies with increased flexibility to implement water conservation rate pricing and raise funds locally: Yes No
- Combination of these approaches: Yes No
- Some other approaches? *(Please explain)*

Here, a combination strategy would address the problems caused by the ongoing drought and state clean water regulations. I support an approach that incorporates increased grants through state bonds financed from the state General Fund and providing cities and other water agencies with increased flexibility to implement water conservation rate pricing and raising funds locally.

Candidate Signature: Sandrine R. Swanson