

## 2022 Primary Endorsement Questionnaire

DEADLINE: Submit by 12:00 Noon, Monday, April 18, 2022

Email \*

jimmiewilsonda@gmail.com



Thank you for your interest in being considered for an endorsement by the Asian Pacific American Democratic Caucus of Alameda County. Please answer each question in 250 words or less. Be honest and direct. Please submit your responses by 12 Noon, Monday, Apr. 18. All questionnaire responses will be posted on our website for Caucus members to review.

Personal Information

Candidate Name \*

Jimmie Wilson

City and zip code of residence.

Oakland, 96419

What is your campaign website address?

www.JimmieWilsonforDA.com

What is your campaign email address?

JimmieWilsonDA@gmail.com

Are you a registered Democrat? The APA Democratic Caucus can only endorse registered Democrats \*

Yes

No

Are you an APA Democratic Caucus member? \*

Yes

No

How long have you lived in the district which you are seeking to represent?

I have lived in Alameda County for over 36 years. I moved to Oakland in 1985 with my wife Patricia. We raised our three children in Oakland's public school system.

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What are the names of any community or nonprofit organizations with which you have been an active volunteer in the past 3-5 years.

I am a member of the Executive Board of the NAACP Hayward-South Alameda County. In this role, I lead Community Policing and Implicit Bias training programs with police partners across Alameda County to repair relationships, restore trust, and bridge gaps between the police and communities of color.

I have served in an Executive and Advisory Board capacity for over 10 years for Oakland's Elizabeth House, a transitional residential program for women with children who have experienced homelessness, domestic violence, addiction, or poverty.

I am a member of the Oakland Rotary, and Black Women Organized for Political Action (BWOPA) Hayward-South Alameda County.

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## CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

1. What actions have you taken to address anti-Asian discrimination/bullying/harassment?

Please explain in what capacity you have acted and whether any of these actions were prior to 2020. (i.e., as an elected representative, member of commission/board/organization, and as an individual.

I am a 17-year veteran Alameda County prosecutor. I have spent the majority of my career in the courtroom prosecuting criminal cases and supporting victims and families navigating the criminal justice system. Over these years, I have worked with countless AAPI victims and their families, some of whom were victims of hate crimes and discrimination. I have helped victims and families connect with support services, ensured that their voices were heard in the criminal process, and fought for justice on their behalf.

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2. One out of every 3 Alameda County residents is of Asian ancestry but are underrepresented in elected office. What have you done and will you do to elevate their issues of concern?

No, the needs of our immigrant communities in the criminal justice system are not adequately addressed by the Alameda County District Attorney's office. Immigrants are can be both more vulnerable to crime and less likely to report it to law enforcement. To make our community safe, we must work harder to build trust and mutual respect between law enforcement, the District Attorney's Office, and all our immigrant communities.

To begin with, the District Attorney's Office must hire a more linguistically diverse staff to ensure that our immigrant communities feel comfortable contacting the District Attorney's office, working with attorneys and staff, and navigating the criminal justice system. More than 45% of Alameda County residents speak a first language other than English, yet very few prosecutors and DA office staff speak a language other than English. The must change. When interpreters or translators are required, the District Attorney's Office must rely on certified and trusted services and organizations rather than using for-profit services such as Language Line. The few office staff members who do speak languages other than English are often called away from their original assignments to help with translation and interpretation. would like to see the office directly employ translators and interpreters, particularly in some of the more dominant languages we see in Alameda County including Mandarin, Cantonese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Language is just one of the many steps we must take to make the criminal justice system more accessible to our immigrant communities. We must work to build better relationships and increase communication between the District Attorney's Office and immigrant communities. DA office staff - and the elected DA themself - must get out into our immigrant communities, engage trusted community members and leaders, and listen to the needs and concerns of community members.

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3. One-third of Alameda County residents were born in another country. Do you believe that the needs of immigrants have been adequately addressed by the office you are seeking to represent? What changes are needed to better center their needs?

The staff of the District Attorney's Office should reflect the incredible diversity of the communities we serve. Currently, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office has only one person of Asian ancestry in a management position. This is unacceptable.

The District Attorney's Office also must have more of a presence in the AAPI community, and engage community members through meetings and forums. Many of the public safety issues our AAPI community has suffered over the past few years - particularly involving violent crime - have been longstanding in Alameda County and largely left unaddressed. This is something the District Attorney's Office should have been working with our AAPI communities to address long before 2020.

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4. What have you learned about Asian Americans in the past year that you were previously unaware of and how has that impacted you?

Over the past year, I've learned just how unheard our AAPI community feels in our criminal justice system. The Alameda County District Attorney's Office is not doing enough to engage our AAPI community or proactively partner with them to improve public safety and keep our communities safe. The DA Task Force created in the summer of 2021 does not do enough to address the violence and hate crimes in our AAPI communities. A task force of this nature must be adequately staffed with experienced attorneys, and engage our AAPI community to understand their public safety needs and proactively stamp down crime.

I am deeply disappointed by the DA's Office's lack of support for our AAPI community. I grew up in San Francisco's Bayview-Hunter's Point alongside a large AAPI population. My mother taught elementary at a school that almost exclusively served Chinese and Vietnamese children. I studied Asian Law and Culture at Laney College, and Chinese Law and Philosophy at UC Berkeley. I have a profound appreciation for our AAPI community, and feel a deep responsibility to ensure that our AAPI neighbors feel safe and heard in Alameda County.

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5. What is the difference between supporting Asian American/Pacific Islander issues and being an Ally?

Being an Ally means standing in solidarity with our AAPI community who have long experienced racism, discrimination, and harassment. Allies work to learn the history and culture of our AAPI communities, and understand how they can help support AAPI communities in culturally-competent ways. Allies listen to our AAPI communities, use their privilege and power to amplify AAPI voices, and encourage others with similar privilege and power to do the same thing. Allies support AAPI businesses and organizations that advance the needs of our AAPI communities.

Supporting the AAPI community means giving time or money to AAPI causes.

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6. What resources (people/organizations) will you tap to increase your knowledge and understanding of the on-going needs of the Asian and Pacific Americans living in your district?

When elected DA, my staff and I will be out in our communities engaging community groups and elected leaders to understand the needs of our AAPI communities and drive community-based solutions to crime. From non-profits to cultural and religious-based groups, I hope to work with all of our AAPI community partners.

I recently met with Carl Chan, John Loh, and Stanley Shen to discuss their concerns around public safety in Oakland and the needs of the AAPI community. These are the kinds of meetings that should be commonplace between community leaders and the District Attorney's Office. I am proud to have the official support of John Loh and Stanley Shen in this race.

As a member of the Executive Board of the NAACP Hayward-South Alameda County, I have met with Rob Bonta many times to discuss ways in which the NAACP and AAPI leaders can work together to collectively address our public safety concerns.

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7. Please identify any Asian Pacific American candidates whom you have publicly endorsed/supported over the past 5 years including this election cycle. If there are none, please explain.

Rob Bonta  
Phong La

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Thank you for completing our questionnaire.

Only candidates who submit questionnaires by noon Monday, April 18 will be considered for endorsement.

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