

# 2022 Endorsement Questionnaire- General Election - City Elections

Email \*

info@shengforoakland.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 note: your questionnaire will be posted on our website for Caucus members to review. Please submit your responses by Tuesday, Sept. 6 by 5 pm.

## Personal Information

Candidate Name \*

Sheng Thao

City and zip code of residence.

Oakland 94611

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What is your campaign website address?

Shengforoakland.com

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What is your campaign email address?

info@shengforoakland.com

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What is the office that you are seeking? \*

- City of Alameda, Mayor
- City of Alameda, City Council
- City of Alameda, School Board
- City of Albany, City Council
- City of Albany, School Board
- City of Berkeley, City Council, Dist. 1
- City of Berkeley, City Council, Dist. 8
- City of Berkeley, School Board
- City of Berkeley, Rent Stabilization Board
- City of Dublin, City Council, Dist. 2
- City of Dublin, City Council
- City of Dublin, School Board (short term)
- City of Dublin, School Board, Area 5
- City of Emeryville, City Council
- City of Emeryville, School Board
- City of Fremont, City Council, Dist. 2
- City of Fremont, City Council, Dist. 3
- City of Fremont, City Council, Dist. 4
- City of Fremont, School Board, #3
- City of Hayward, City Council
- City of Hayward, School Board (long term)
- City of Hayward, School Board (short term)
- City of Livermore Mayor

- City of Livermore, Mayor
- City of Livermore, City Council, Dist. 1
- City of Livermore, City Council, Dist. 2
- City of Livermore, School Board
- City of Newark, Mayor
- City of Newark, City Council
- City of Newark, School Board
- City of Oakland, Mayor
- City of Oakland, City Council, Dist. 2
- City of Oakland, City Council, Dist. 4
- City of Oakland, City Council, Dist. 6
- City of Oakland, School Board, Dist. 2
- City of Oakland, School Board, Dist. 4
- City of Oakland, School Board, Dist. 6
- City of Piedmont, City Council
- City of Piedmont, School Board
- City of Pleasanton, City Council, Dist 1
- City of Pleasanton, City Council, Dist. 3
- City of San Leandro, Mayor
- City of San Leandro, City Council, Dist. 1
- City of San Leandro, City Council Dist. 5
- City of San Leandro, School Bd., Area 2
- City of Union City, City Council, Dist. 2
- City of Union City, City Council, Dist. 3
- City of Union City, City Council, Dist. 4

New Haven School District, #4

Other: .....

Are you the incumbent?

Yes

No

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

Yes

No

Are you an APA Caucus member?

Yes

No

Why are you seeking the Caucus's endorsement?

I have been a longtime member of the Caucus and share its vision to empower more API candidates to run for office. If I win this race, I will be the first Hmong-American to be Mayor of a major City in US history.  
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List ONLY the top 5 endorsements that you have received. (Please reference your website if you want to alert us to more).

Attorney General Rob Bonta  
State Treasurer Fiona Ma  
State Controller Betty Yee  
Congressman Ro Khanna  
Congresswoman Judy Chu

[ShengforOakland.com/endorsements](http://ShengforOakland.com/endorsements)

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If we endorse you, will you use our name in your campaign materials?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

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

I have lived in Oakland for nearly a decade

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Educational background: What schools have you attended, date graduated, major and degree(s) earned.

I graduated from Merritt college with honors and transferred to UC Berkley where I received my Bachelors in Public Policy.

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Employment: List the last three (3) paid positions, indicating name of employer, job title, and length of employment.

Oakland City Councilmember, City of Oakland - 3 years  
Chief of Staff, At-Large Council Offices - 4 years  
Human Resources & Payroll Administrative Assistant, UC Berkeley - 1 year

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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.

Board Members, Redwood Heights Association  
Member, Montclair Rotary Club  
Member, East Bay Stonewall Dems  
Member, Wellstone Democratic Club  
Board Member, Chabot Space & Science Center  
Member, CA Women Lead  
Former President, League of CA Cities API Caucus  
Former AD-18 CADEM Delegate

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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/or as an individual.

My parents met in a refugee camp after fleeing the secret war in Laos. I understand the fear and trauma so many Asian families hold. I have faced the trauma of abuse myself as a survivor of domestic violence. As Oakland's Mayor I will be a voice for our Asian and refugee communities and will work to ensure they have the support and services they need.

I have fought to bring more resources to our API communities, including dedicated resources for Chinatown and Little Saigon. I regularly meet with these communities and engage with them because they are my communities.

More so than that, Black, brown, Jewish, Muslim, LGBTQ communities are all facing increased hate and violence. Oakland was already targeted once when the boogaloo boys came and killed a security guard during the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests. We need solidarity with all communities across Oakland and a Mayor who will fight for and uphold our diverse city.

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2. One out of every 3 Alameda County residents is of Asian ancestry but are underrepresented in elected office and make-up 28% of all eligible voters in the County overall. Do you believe the legislative body you are seeking to represent has adequately served Asian and Pacific Americans? Why or why not?

I do not. We have fallen short on providing holistic and targeted support for our Asian and Pacific Islander communities, including direct investments in public safety, small businesses support, language access, and healthy food. As your next Mayor this will be a top priority for me.

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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?

Oakland unapologetically supports our immigrant community and our current Mayor strongly stood up against Trump and ICE at one of the most dangerous moments in our nation. I believe we can do a lot more though, and that means focusing on the economic needs of our immigrant communities.

It's one thing to be a sanctuary city on paper, but if our immigrant populations can't afford housing, food, daycare, and more then how can we call ourselves a safe space to live?

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4. Please identify the three largest APA ethnicities in your district.

Chinese, Vietnamese, and Cambodian.

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5. Please identify the most at-risk APA community in your district and explain why.

Our refugee communities and seniors are the most at-risk due to poverty and violence they experience.

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6. What have you learned about Asian Americans in the past 2 years that you were previously unaware of and how has that impacted you?

I learned a lot more about the systemic oppression in Siskiyou County against the Hmong community. We have faced decades of oppression and discrimination by local governments, but Siskiyou County has been targeting the Hmong community with water shutoffs and harassing them with law enforcement to the point a Hmong American was shot and killed by the Sheriff. This issue challenged me to step up and be a louder voice and leader for my community.

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7. How do you think microaggressions and verbal harassment against Asians and other marginalized community members can be better addressed and what will you commit to doing? If you have intervened in the past, please describe what you did.

First and foremost it needs to stop being normalized. On tv, in comedy, in public -- we need to stop perpetuating Asian stereotypes as jokes or "normal". We also need to elect more Asian Americans to public office so people can see us in public leadership.

I regularly have issues where constituents will speak directly to my white, male staff instead of myself and I always politely remind them that I am the Councilmember.

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8. 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?

I am deeply connected with the Chinatown and Little Saigon businesses, and am a member of many API organizations.

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9. Please list any Asian American candidates you have publicly endorsed.

- Nikki Fortunato Bas for City Council
  - Alfred Twu for AC Transit Board
  - Berkeley City Auditor Jenny Wong
  - Fiona Ma for Treasurer
  - Mai Vang for Sacramento City Council
  - Aisha Wahab for State Senate
  - Ash Kalra for Assembly
  - Alex Lee for Assembly
  - Evan Low for Assembly
  - Ro Khanna for Congress
  - Judy Chu for Congress
  - Grace Meng for Congress
  - Mountain View Mayor Ellen Kamei
  - Irvine Mayor Farrah Khan
  - Many more to come!
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Thank you for completing our questionnaire.

Please Submit your responses by Sep. 6, 5 pm. We will be holding several zoom endorsement meetings covering all three regions of the County before the end of September, tbd. Only those candidates completing the questionnaire will be on our endorsement ballot. No changes to your responses can be made after it is submitted.

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