

2024 Central Committee Questionnaire

We expect the responses to be based on each candidate's individual lived experience.

Email *

loren@lorenforoakland.com

Basic Information

Endorsement Questionnaire



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. Caucus members attending our Endorsement meeting on January 13 will be provided a ballot to vote. Only candidates who have submitted their completed questionnaire will be listed on the ballot. Questionnaires must be submitted by December 28 at 5 PM.

Personal Information

Candidate Name *

Loren Taylor

City and zip code of residence. *

Oakland 94605

What is your campaign website address?

Coming Soon... <https://www.empoweroak.com/acdems18slate>

What is your campaign email address? *

loren@lorenforoakland.com

What is the office that you are seeking? *

- Central Committee AD 14
- Central Committee AD 16
- Central Committee AD 18
- Central Committee AD 20
- Central Committee AD 24

Are you an incumbent? *

- Yes
- No

Are you a registered Democrat? *

Yes

No

Are you on a slate? If so, please identify. *

Empower Oakland Slate

Are you an APA Caucus member? *

Yes

No

Why are you seeking the Caucus's endorsement? *

As a lifelong Democrat, I am seeking the APA Caucus' endorsement because the AAPI Community which the Caucus represents is a very important constituency of the Democratic Central Committee. Diversity is our strength as a city, county, and region, and I have led as an Oakland City Councilmember tapping into that strength by actively partnering and collaborating with many racial and ethnic groups on initiatives including empowering AAPI businesses, fighting back to stop AAPI hate and protect our AAPI community from racist attacks, and addressing high traffic fatuity rates among AAPI neighbors. I would be honored to have the support of the APA Democratic Caucus, not just to emphasize how strong my past leadership and service have aligned with the goals and vision of APA Democratic Caucus, but also as a sign to others of our shared commitment to continue partnering in the future.

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

Yes

No

Maybe

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

I have lived in AD18 for more than 35 years.

Please list what experiences most qualify you to serve on the Central Committee (e.g., education, work, volunteer, life experiences, political campaigns) *

OVERALL LIFE EXPERIENCES:

- * As a 3rd generation Oaklander and lifelong resident of AD18, I have a deep understanding of/ connection to the district and its residents.
- * As a kid who grew up in Oakland, I have a deep understanding of the challenges plaguing our most vulnerable communities including poor health outcomes, poor educational outcomes, higher rates of poverty and homelessness, and increased incarceration rates. These are all challenges that are priorities for the Democratic party
- * As a product of local public schools who is raising children attending public schools I will bring to local Democratic Party strategy a real-world perspective on what is needed to support the education and success of future generations of Alameda County residents
- * With experience as both a union member and as a manager within business and government, I understand firsthand the need to support working families with policies/resources, as well as the need to ensure businesses are able to thrive in Alameda County and continue providing jobs to our residents.

EDUCATION:

- * MBA, UC Berkeley Haas School of Business
- * MS In Biomedical Engineering, University of Connecticut
- * BS in Biomedical Engineering, Case Western Reserve University

EMPLOYMENT:

- * CEO, Zaru Systems
- * District 6 City Councilmember, City of Oakland
- * Founder & Innovation Consultant, Custom Taylored Solutions
- * Healthcare Consulting Director, Pricewaterhouse Coopers
- * Biomedical Engineer, Kaiser Permanente

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

- * Oakland Ballet Company, Board Member
- * West Oakland Health Council, Former Board Member
- * Center for Youth Wellness, Former Advisory Council Member
- * 100 Black Men of the Bay Area, Inc., Former Board Member
- * Joaquin Miller Elementary School, Former PTA President

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS - Central Committee

1. What percentage of the district in which you are running are of APA heritage? And what are top three Asian ethnic groups? *

21% of Assembly District 18 has Asian Heritage according to the 2020 census. The top three Asian groups are Chinese, Filipino, and Vietnamese

2. Asian Americans are the fastest growing population in Alameda County and are in the majority in three cities. While the majority are Democrats, a growing number are registering as No Party Preference. How can the Central Committee be more relevant to these communities? *

The number one problem with the local democratic party is that most Democrats don't know that the central committee exists. While we are all familiar with national politics involving the President and Congress, the majority of party members are clueless about how decisions get made at the local level and don't perceive any of those activities as beneficial to their lives. The knowledge and engagement gap is more pronounced in some communities, including within the APA community. The local party has to make itself more relevant to these communities by:

- (1) Better meeting advertisement and location selection to encourage greater community participation. The central committee has been more concerned with party politics and activities which further alienates everyday county residents. The ACDems central committee needs to go out into the community and meet residents in easily accessible locations. In addition to better advertisement to help residents understand that the party exists and is intended to serve them.
 - (2) Translating materials into different languages and at a minimum, translations should be available for those languages spoken by 3% or more of the population.
 - (3) Choosing more relevant policies to advocate for and spend effort on - While we are all extremely concerned about and sympathetic to a range of global and national issues, we can't focus on them at the sacrifice of addressing local issues that more directly benefit lives of Alameda County residents who are dying in our streets, being evicted from their homes, worried about finding their next meal, be, and being failed by our education system. The local Democratic Party should prioritize the issues most relevant to improving lives of Alameda County resident.
 - (4) Host community events and table at events hosted by NGOs and other community partners to spread the word about the committee and the activities of the committee that are relevant to those who may not be aware.
 - (5) Actively recruit diverse populations of students to be fellows/ interns and advance meaningful projects with some mentorship and/or project supervision.
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3. List three ways in which you could help the CC promote a greater awareness of issues of concern to the A/PA communities and support greater representation on elected bodies. *

(1) As a former elected official, I could bring real-world knowledge and expertise to helping the Central committee partner with APA Democratic Caucus and other APA -serving organizations to plan and host a political candidates bootcamp targeted specifically toward APA community members.

(2) When I am a member of the Central Committee I will also advocate for (and support) the central committee to conduct listening sessions in different communities across the county to hear from residents whom we are supposed to represent to better inform our policy priorities. At least one of those should be conducted in partnership with APA-led and serving organizations.

(3) Lastly, I think a very critical method of increasing awareness and greater representation on elected bodies is to help those who we are targeting take on a volunteer leadership roles in the community that then evolves into a more substantive and higher profile role later on.

4. Please name local Asian American candidates the Central Committee has endorsed in the past 10 years. *

1. Ro Khana, US Congress 2. Fiona Ma, USTreasurer 3. Rob Bonta, Atty General 4. Alex Lee State Senate 5. Rashi Kesarwani, Berkeley City Council 6. Sheng Thao, Oakland, Mayor 7. Nikki Fortunato Bas, Oakland City Council 8. Janani Ramachandran, Oakland City Council 9. Lance Nishihira, BART Board 10. Jaime Yee, Pleasanton City Council.

5. Proposing and adopting resolutions is one of the main functions of the CC. Some of the resolutions over the past several years impacted members of the APA communities. Please comment on what you think of those resolutions. *

* Incumbents - response is required.

The CC resolutions are generally good at stating high level values and the direction the party intends to go in, but they fall short of directly addressing the real pain points of Alameda County residents with concrete commitments and specificity that leads to improved outcomes. The CC needs to move beyond symbolic and performative resolutions to those that will change quality of life for everyday Alameda County residents. That requires being closely connected to individual voters and representative organizations like APA Democratic Caucus.

6. Do you believe that the vetting process for Resolutions is adequate? Please explain your response. *

No. The current vetting process requires that resolutions only need be presented a week before the meeting in which they are adopted, which is insufficient for thorough review and analysis of the various sides of a proposed policy and only a handful of people are usually engaged enough to make a public comment during the meeting, so a resolution can easily be approved with low engagement and insufficient exploration of how communities such as the APA community are either positively or negatively affected.

7. How impactful have the past resolutions been on the quality of life for low-income Alameda County residents? *

Low income residents face many challenges including high housing and food costs. Recent resolutions made by the Democratic party have not been impactful, and in some cases they have made conditions worse for Alameda County residents. We are a big and diverse county with many different environments, circumstances, and priorities/ concerns. The party has been prioritizing and spending energy on the business of politics versus the business of improving lives through the political process. It is important to go back to the basics of improving lives of our immediate neighbors.

Thank you for completing our questionnaire.

Please submit your responses by Dec. 28, 5 pm. Our Zoom Endorsement Meeting is scheduled for January 13 beginning at 10 am. 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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