

Orange County's DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST VOTER GUIDE



2022 General Election
Orange County Democratic Socialists of America
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What is Orange County DSA?

Orange County DSA (OCDSA) is the Orange County chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America. We are a grassroots organization advocating for economic and social justice for all people. We envision a future beyond capitalism where workers direct the society their labor has already created.

We meet once a month in Orange County and we have working groups focused on mutual aid in our community, political education, defunding the police, and electoral politics. Find us online at ocdsa.org, sign up for our email lists, and join our meetings the third Saturday of every month or one of our social events.

About this Voter Guide

OCDSA's electoral program is about putting socialists in office. Even when socialists aren't on the ballot, we will recommend progressives who truly take an interest in improving the material conditions of the working class in each community. It's essential that positions for public office be filled by effective leaders who promote working-class interests, responsible governance, and environmental justice. While elections don't bring about socialism on their own, the right officeholders can effect positive change.

Some offices will not be covered

Given the abundant information available about statewide races, candidates, and measures, we have decided to focus on the less-covered local races to offer more context on local issues.

Regrettably, we have not been able to cover all school districts, special districts, or even cities in the county, but we have covered the municipal elections for the largest cities.

- Check out [this voter guide](#) from our comrades at DSA-LA! They have exhaustive coverage of statewide races, ballot propositions, and recommendations for your friends and family in L.A. County, plus a slate of endorsed candidates

and members running for office in the city and across the region. Take a look!

- The Orange Juice Blog released a [comprehensive guide](#) on almost every Orange County and statewide race. While they're not socialists, and they do recommend a lot of centrists, take a look at their work for contests we might have missed.

There may be blank boxes on your ballot...

We have not recommended candidates in all offices, as we focus only on socialists and progressives. We don't believe in voting for the lesser evil simply for the sake of voting for the *least bad* candidate (which is still a bad candidate), but some cases of malfeasance warrant giving an officeholder the boot or denying them a victory.

Recommendations

United States Congress

Congressional District 38

We have two very mainstream candidates running in this district, one liberal Democratic incumbent, one Republican mayor of Walnut. Nothing particularly noteworthy here.

Congressional District 40

Dr. Asif Mahmood (D) is our pick for CD-40. He is by far and away a better choice than incumbent Young Kim (R) who is turning sharply to the far-right. Mahmood is running on a platform of lower healthcare and prescription drug costs, codifying abortion access, and a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants.

Congressional District 45

Michelle Steel (R) has an extensive history of malfeasance and insider dealing while in office. One scandal in recent years was the attempted sale of part of Upper Newport Bay to a campaign contributor, robbing the public of public land that has been

enjoyed by the community for decades. Steel deserves to lose her seat, and while we're not particularly enthused about **Jay Chen (D)**, we encourage you to vote for him and kick Steel to the curb.

Congressional District 46

There are no good choices to be had here: out-of-touch Democratic right-winger Lou Correa (D) is facing Chris Gonzales, an even more reactionary choice, and Lou will handily carry this district regardless of what anyone does. Feel free to leave this one blank.

Congressional District 47

Katie Porter (D) remains one of the most powerful pro-working-class voices in Congress. After working for years at the CFPB fighting big banks on consumers' behalf, she makes capitalists wince and shudder as she paints their misdeeds on her mighty whiteboard. While not anti-capitalist, she shows class consciousness and deserves your vote.

Congressional District 49

Mike Levin (D) and Bryan Maryott (R) are the candidates here, nothing very interesting to discuss here. Maryott is a financial planner and businessman who is pretty much what you'd expect from a Republican. Levin is a liberal Democrat who pledged to not take any corporate PAC money, but is otherwise very conventional.

State Senate

We have not found any compelling socialists or progressive candidates for the state Senate. No recommendation.

State Assembly

No recommendation. This is a collection of conventional Democrats, Republicans, and one NPP Libertarians vying for seats, no one of particular note in the bunch. Avelino Valencia (D), who was a significant figure implicated in the Anaheist influence scandal, is running in AD-68 against Mike Tardif (R), so you can hold your nose and vote Republican to spite Avelino if you want.

Judge of the Superior Court

Our collective efforts are better spent abolishing the prison-industrial complex. No recommendation.

County Offices

Supervisor, District 2

Vicente Sarmiento, current mayor of Santa Ana, is hoping to bring his progressive bona-fides to the Board of Supervisors in a race against Kim Nguyen, a current councilmember in Garden Grove. Sarmiento is promising to improve the quality of OC neighborhoods and is talking real reform. He has received endorsements from local progressive organizations. Nguyen is doubling down on more cops and more police funding. We're choosing Vicente as our pick for the board.

Supervisor, District 4

Doug Chaffee (incumbent) is running against Sunny Park. Chaffee has been a long-running disappointment, siding with Republicans quite often and just feeling out-of-touch with his constituents. Park says she is committed to improving material conditions for the working class but also uses veiled pro-police funding rhetoric. No recommendation.

Supervisor, District 5

This race pits Katrina Foley, a mainstream Democratic hack, versus Pat Bates, a Republican hack. No recommendation.

Cities

City of Anaheim

Anaheim is one city everyone is watching closely after the corruption scandal and FBI investigation that rocked the city earlier this year. A slate of candidates has emerged promising to resist Disney's and the resorts' outsized influence in city politics.

Mayor

We recommend **Ashleigh Aitken** for mayor. She is not affiliated with the resort PACs, has not made statements asking for more

cops, and as not implicated in the recent corruption scandal. She is our pick against pro-cop and pro-business Lori Galloway and Trevor O'Neil

Council District 2

No Recommendation.

Council District 3

Al Jabbar is our pick for District 3. He is endorsed by other progressive organizations and candidates and supports campaign finance reform. He is running against Chamber of Commerce darling Natalie Rubalcava.

Council District 6

No Recommendation.

Measure J (Hotel Tax)

A **Yes** vote is recommended. The resorts need to pay their share of city services.

City of Costa Mesa

Mayor

No recommendation. John Stephens, a Democrat, is running against John Moorlach, a more moderate (in most regards) Republican focused on fiscal issues. Stephens is endorsed by the cops.

Council District 3

John Thomas Patton, an anti-development candidate, is running against Jorge Miron and Andrea Marr. Miron is opposed to homelessness services because they "[attract] more homeless". Marr is endorsed by the city's police union.

Council District 4

No recommendation. Manuel Chavez is running unopposed.

Council District 5

Arlis Reynolds is running against Robert Dickson. Dickson is running on an anti-development platform, while Reynolds is

pitching herself as a problem-solver who has the endorsement of mainstream Democrats. No recommendation.

Measure K

Yes. We need every tool we can use to build more housing in the region and hopefully fix the lack of supply, which will continue to drive prices up for market-based housing. Measure K allows for denser housing to be built along existing transportation infrastructure, redeveloping industrial, retail, and office zones for residential use, and is not a handout to developers. We need more housing now!

City of Huntington Beach

Council At-Large (Vote for up to 4)

Oscar Rodriguez is one certified progressive activist and candidate to vote for in HB! Other names worth mentioning: Kenneth Inouye, Gina Clayton-Tarvin, and Jill Hardy may be worth your vote. Finally, fascist Gracey van der Mark shouldn't be welcome on the council.

City Attorney

Scott Field is sane, and Michael Gates is not. Gates' tenure as city attorney has been disastrous for Huntington Beach. Attorneys should be advocates for their clients, in this case the city, and a city attorney feuding with the council doesn't serve anyone's interests. In the name of good governance, vote for Field.

Measure L

Yes. These revisions to the charter seem sensible and these documents should be regularly updated.

Measure M

Yes. These measures ensure some base level of competence in city government.

Measure N

Yes. This clearly defines the relationship between the council and city attorney and makes the attorney accountable, which is difficult to do when said attorney is elected instead of appointed.

Measure O

Yes. Taxing cannabis creates an important revenue stream for city government.

City of Irvine

Mayor

No recommendation. The incumbent mayor, Farrah Khan, has presided over an awful launch of the Orange County Power Authority, which has been horribly mismanaged, and has proven unpopular. Branda Lin is running as a reformer, but no candidate in this race really stands out to us.

Council Member At-Large (Vote for up to 2)

No recommendation.

City of Orange

There are no candidates for mayor or city council that are compelling enough to recommend. Most are beholden to conservative interests, with no one being particularly noteworthy.

City of Santa Ana

Mayor

Sal Tinajero is our pick for mayor. He is running on a platform of housing for all, health equity, and police oversight, better than the opponent by a long shot.

Council, Ward 2

Benjamin Vazquez is the candidate for Ward 2. He is a reformer supporting more affordable housing, workers' rights, education, immigrant and economic justice, and Santa Ana would be well served by his leadership. He is the leader of El Centro Cultural and one of the leaders of the progressive movement in the city, endorsed by several local progressive groups.

Council, Ward 4

Amalia Mejia is a reformer challenging Phil Bacerra. She is running on a promise of enacting rent control and delivering affordable housing, is opposed to the prison-industrial complex, and she has

gotten under the skin of the pro-cop old guard of the city. Mejia has the endorsement of local progressive organizations.

Council, Ward 6

Manny Escamilla is another promising candidate for City Hall. He is focused on housing reform including social housing, policing reform, addressing environmental injustices in the city, and more. Manny is endorsed by many local progressive organizations.

Measure W – Business Tax Equity, Flexible Tax Holiday

No recommendation. We'd like to see workers at these businesses own the fruits of their labor, but this measure doesn't do that.

Measure X – Charter Amendments

Yes. This is a sensible and necessary proposal to keep the city charter up to date.

Acknowledgments

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We welcome your feedback. If you have questions or comments about this guide, contact the Electoral Politics Committee at electoral@ocdsa.org. Find us on Twitter (@DSAOrange County), Instagram (@ocdsa), and on Facebook. Join our mailing list at ocdsa.org.