South Bay Progressive Alliance
Candidate Questionnaire
For Office

Please download and complete the questionnaire and email the completed document to info@SouthBayPA.org. By submitting your responses to this questionnaire to the South Bay Progressive Alliance (SBPA), you agree that your responses are public and that we may share your responses with others.

Name: Sally Lieber
Which office are you running for: State Senate, 13

Address: PO Box 652, Redwood City CA 94064

Phone(s): 650-597-2587

Email: sally@sallylieber.org
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Committee Name: Sally Lieber for State Senate 2020 (FPPC # 1406093)

Line of Work: State Assemblywomen (Ret.); Nonprofit Leader

Candidate Pledge:

If you cannot not make the following 4 affirmative pledges, the SBPA cannot endorse you at this time.

CORPORATE-FREE. As a corporate-free candidate I commit to refuse donations from corporations, industry lobbyists, corporate representatives, and Political Action Committees (except for union PACs and PACs that refuse corporate donations) and publicize that I am a corporate free candidate in my campaign literature.

YES ☒ NO ☐

PLEDGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY. I commit to publicize and hold regular listening sessions with my constituents, to stay in touch with their needs and concerns.

YES ☒ NO ☐

PROGRESSIVE POLICIES. I commit to author, co-author, support, promote and defend people-focused progressive policies and practices that incorporate SBPA core values to improve communities and the quality of life for my constituents.

YES ☒ NO ☐

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION. I commit to help level the playing field for ALL people and prioritize the development of leadership among under-represented communities.

YES ☒ NO ☐

**I have already accepted and solicited contributions from small businesses and consumer rights law firms that are corporations.
General Questions:

1. **Endorsements**—
   a. Who are you endorsing, from national races all the way down ballot to local races?

   Huy Tran for San Jose City Council District 4
   Jake Tonkel for San Jose City Council District 6
   Sergio Lopez for Campbell City Council
   Otto Lee for County Supervisor
   Magdalena Carrasco for County Supervisor
   Karina Dominguez for State Assembly

   b. Which candidates, if any, are you endorsing anyone else in your own race?

   No.

Who has endorsed you?

Dolores Huerta, Activist and Organizer
Erin Brockovich, Consumer Advocate and Environmental Champion
Hon. Delaine Eastin, CA Supt of Public Instruction (Ret.)
Hon. Loni Hancock, CA State Senate (Ret.)
Hon Gil Cedillo, CA State Senate (Ret.)
Hon. Kansen Chu, CA State Assembly
Hon. Sharon Quirk Silva, CA State Assembly
Hon. Paul Koretz, CA State Assembly (Ret.) and Los Angeles City Council
Hon. Mark Ridley-Thomas, CA State Assembly (Ret.) and Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
SEIU California
Peninsula Progressives
Faculty Association of Foothill De Anza Community College District
Hon. Nancy Reyering, San Mateo County Harbor Commissioner
Hon. Edmundo Larenas, San Mateo County Harbor Commissioner
Hon. Sabrina Brennan, San Mateo County Harbor Commissioner
Hon. Shay Franco Clausen, Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
Hon. Lateefah Simon, BART Board of Directors
Hon. Maurice Goodman, San Mateo County Community College District
c. Whose endorsements are you seeking or expect to receive?

I am seeking the endorsement of Smart Justice, California Nurses Association, Equality California, Planned Parenthood, NARAL, Sierra Club CA, the California Labor Federation and multiple labor unions.

2. **Campaign Funding** — How much money do you plan to raise for your campaign? Where will the money come from? Describe sources of financial contributions for your campaign that you would refuse to accept (if any). How much money do you currently have for this race? How much money do you plan to raise? Where will the money come from?

I plan to raise $400,000 total for my primary campaign for State Senate. I am not accepting contributions from corporate PACs, fossil fuel industries, bail bonds, payday lending or private prison businesses. I am the only candidate who has chosen to sign the No Fossil Fuels pledge.
I have raised over $200,000 total, and have roughly $180,000 Cash On Hand.

City Council Questions:

1. **Motivation:** Why did you choose to run for this office?

I am running for office to fight for progressive change in the State Legislature.

When I served in the California State Assembly, I saw the corrosive impact that special interests have on the process: how sponsored, 'empty calories' bills that do little more than make little fixes for big corporations predominate. The policies that get squeezed out of a money driven system are those most needed by everyday Californians: public health protections, environmental conservation and protection, consumer protections, and equity and empowerment for underserved communities.

In local office and in the State Assembly, I saw how it is possible to get a movement started, get a bill passed, and make a change that impacts the lives of everyday Californians for the better. Unfortunately, making changes requires challenging the comfortable status-quo--and too few people are willing to do that. For the good of the community, I will always challenge the status quo.

That is why I am running for the Senate: to be a prizefighter for progressive values and to make real change for the people who need it the most.

2. **Priorities:** What do you believe are the major issues facing residents of your jurisdiction? What are some specific tasks (e.g. specific legislation, policies, etc.) you intend to accomplish while in office?

I believe the major issues facing residents in my district are housing affordability, the climate crisis and the need to recreate a safety net and policy infrastructure to move California forward.

California needs a more balanced jobs/housing ratio, investment in affordable housing and child care programs for middle-class and working families. California needs to create a public pension system that includes private sector employees with mandated contributions from employers, and change tax codes to remove incentives that allow businesses and corporations to maximize executive pay on the backs of frontline workers.

I support the Schools and Communities First Initiative on the November 2020 ballot to provide for reassessment of commercial properties. It’s critical to make this reform. I also support luxury service taxes and a wealth tax on unearned income to fund programs to address childhood poverty and access to opportunity.

Housing costs and homelessness are at a critical level in our region. We need more affordable housing at all levels, including compact housing for single adults, workforce housing, supportive housing, housing for youth, families and seniors. I propose a tax on the sale or transfer of luxury homes in California to help fund affordable housing projects throughout California, colocated near public transportation. I also support the measures needed to help Californians keep the affordable housing that they have: rent control, just-cause required for eviction, repeal of Costa-Hawkins, vacancy controls, and disincentives to hold properties vacant.

Protecting our environment and addressing climate change is the most pressing issue of our time. I strongly support new laws that move California toward 100% renewable energy now. We need to implement increases in renewable supply to replace greenhouse gas producing natural gas more quickly. California is still too dependent
on carbon producing natural gas. I will push to accelerate our transition to clean energy while working to reduce pollution and toxic chemicals that contaminate our air and water, and compromise the health of farm workers, factory workers and the community overall. Workplace standards for chemical exposure should be equal to community standards for those same chemicals, not woefully inadequate, as they are now.

We must also reduce the use of plastics in packaging and single use plastic containers and mandate post-consumer recycled content to create a market for recyclable materials. Our environment and wildlife are literally choking on these materials, which show up in the bodies of nearly every human on earth now too. The complete public health impact of our current practices is unprecedented and unknown. Let’s save ourselves by putting public health above the profits of corporate polluters. We can do so with a double bottom line: protecting the environment and human health. That’s what we did when I authored successful legislation to create the Bay Restoration Authority: addressing sea level rise, while restoring habitat and creating opportunities for healthy recreation for families.

Finally, we must relieve working families of the burden of constantly being financially precarious. We need more asset building strategies, Medicare for All, livable wages, and scheduling consistency for hourly workers.

3. **Qualifications**: Please give a brief summary of your background and qualifications for office, and include any community volunteering or activism. If you’re an incumbent, how would you assess your own job performance? Please give some specific example of accomplishments and setbacks.

I am a progressive activist Democrat. I’ve served at the local level as a City Councilwoman, Mayor, County Commissioner, and at the state level as a three-term State Assemblywoman and Speaker pro Tempore.

At the local level I led on tobacco control, affordable housing, socially responsible investment policies, environmental protection, access to reproductive rights and services, and reform of juvenile justice and dependency care.

In the State Assembly I led on action on the climate crisis, green building standards, affordable and supportive housing, gun control, minimum wage and earned income tax credit, mortgage reform, restrictions on toxic chemicals, air quality, environmental justice, human trafficking, hate crimes, marriage equality, access to abortion and contraception, consumer rights and prison reform.

I have a 100% rating from labor, Sierra Club, Planned Parenthood, Equality California, NAACP and other social justice organizations.

4. **Housing**: If elected what policies and programs would you put in place to address affordable housing, market-rate housing, and homelessness? Should the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act be repealed? Would you work to implement rent control? If so, what would your rent control policy look like?

California’s housing prices are the highest in the nation and population growth is continuing. People are being pushed in homelessness or are slipping into becoming homeless. Gentrification of existing, formerly affordable, housing has affected this district greatly. We need to take action to keep more tenants in the housing they have, build more affordable housing, with options for youth, families and seniors, and strengthen our capacity with more supportive housing, compact workforce housing, single adult housing and affordable family housing.

I support a tax on the sale or transfer of luxury homes in California to go towards funding affordable housing projects. The state also needs to give real incentives to local municipalities and counties who build affordable housing.
I support just-cause and other tenant protections and rent control policies, including vacancy controls, and including mobile home space rents, and the right for a homeowner to sell in a mobile home park. We must also ensure that Section 8 vouchers are considered as income by landlords statewide.

5. **Public safety**: How would you prioritize and address the most important public safety issues facing the residents of your district? Consider community trust, racial tensions, police conduct, use of force, etc.

Police overuse of force, overcharging by district attorneys, racial bias, horrible conditions in jails, the impact of ICE, lengthy parole terms, and the prevalence of mental illness and developmental disabilities in the criminal justice system are all issues that require immediate attention.

Senator Nancy Skinner’s successful bill to overturn the felony murder rule in CA is a great example of this. Previously, too many developmentally delayed, mentally ill, and intimidated people were sentenced to life terms in CA at great expense and no increase in public safety or additional justice for victims’ families. We need to both reduce new incarcerations and pursue decarceration, including people with older convictions for more serious crimes who have maintained a good record in prison.

I have always supported and carried forward measures to address sentencing disparities and to highlight the lack of treatment options in communities of color for people who have compulsions that result in repeat convictions and incarcerations.

I strongly support Assemblywoman Shirley Weber’s AB 392 and believe that California needs to continually do more to revise its use-of-force guidelines, and create and enforce greater transparency and accountability for our police departments. We need our police departments to focus on de-escalation tactics that have proven effective in many European countries, move away from the use of tasers that have been proven deadly in many circumstances, and move towards community policing. I am the only candidate in this race who has been on the record opposing deadly use of force by police, and overcharging by our local District Attorneys (including extreme examples in San Mateo County).

We need to get serious about reducing our reliance on incarceration, invest in the education of our low-income communities and communities of color; and provide greater access to higher education and vocational training for all students in California. We must also provide opportunities for economic mobility for communities of color, ensure a living wage, and implement initiatives that make housing and healthy communities a reality for these families.

We also need oversight of the 58 county jails where inmates are incarcerated post-realignment. Most county jails are much more dangerous than the state prisons. Many do not separate people awaiting trial from those already convicted. Currently, county jails are only overseen on a statewide basis by one small board comprised almost exclusively of rural sheriffs. We need to extend the resources and statutory authorization of the Prison Law Office to county jails as well and deal with the issue of people stranded in the county jails who have been found incompetent to stand trial and not able (due to lack of capacity, to be transferred to a state hospital.)
Some steps that would help to stem our current addiction to incarceration would include: addressing the school-to-prison pipeline with the use of restorative justice; identifying the over-representation of people of color in the criminal justice systems and demanding greater accountability from counties with racially disparate outcomes; reducing the number of people who end up in the system because of a mental illness or developmental or cognitive disability; greater accountability for conditions within county jails, juvenile halls, and the state prisons; better programming for working with families, particularly at juvenile halls, but also at other institutions; greater use of early diagnostics for students of color and protocols to avoid criminalizing students with behavioral issues; restoration of previous state services (such as the state hospitals) that provided alternatives to incarceration; more funding for aftercare and safe re-entry; and decarceration of more people that do not pose a danger to society.

Let’s also restore state funding for innocence determination and give a good hard look at the recommendations of the Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice.

6. **Diversity**: What policies and practices would you implement for inclusiveness and diversity in government, particularly for women, people of color, and the LGBTQ+ community?

I have long been a strong supporter and mentor of women, people of color, and LGBTQ+ candidates for local, state, and federal office, and staff positions. A strong step toward implementing policies and practices that create inclusiveness and diversity in government, is to diversify who gets elected and who staffs the process.

We must also ensure that biases are dealt with effectively. Studies show that most ‘diversity training’ doesn’t work--and that we need training on unconscious biases and other strategies to confront sexism, misogyny, racism and homophobia--and to protect people in the workplace from harassment.

In the Legislature, I worked consistently to add protections to the law to address the needs of Californians for justice: marriage equality, equal pay for comparable work, and bans on discriminatory practices. Last year, I was one of the very few current and former legislators to sign on to a public letter that surfaced abuse within the Capitol and capitol community, a necessary step, even when some people find it upsetting.

7. **Criminal justice**: What can be done to improve our local criminal justice system? Do you support the current local sanctuary policies?

Some steps that would help improve our local criminal justice system would include: addressing the school-to-prison pipeline with the use of restorative justice; identifying the over-representation of people of color in the criminal justice systems and demanding greater accountability from counties with racially disparate outcomes; reducing the number of people who end up in the system because of a mental illness or developmental or cognitive disability; greater accountability for conditions within county jails, juvenile halls, and the state prisons; better programming for working with families, particularly at juvenile halls, but also at other institutions; greater use of early diagnostics for students of color and protocols to avoid criminalizing students with behavioral issues; restoration of previous state services (such as the state hospitals) that provided alternatives to incarceration; more funding for aftercare and safe re-entry; and decarceration of more people that do not pose a danger to society.

I fully support California’s sanctuary laws and believe that California should expand access to education, public services, and health care for immigrants regardless of immigration status. I have always been against ICE being in the jails, courthouses, or anywhere else for that matter.
We should not allow private prisons for immigrants and refugees to operate in our state and should assist advocates in suing the Trump administration over inhumane conditions, unlawful detention and abrogation of human rights.

The state should stand strong against the Trump Administration’s attacks on our immigrant communities, by pushing to abolish ICE, refusing to facilitate the illegal activities of ICE, standing up against the administration regarding their ill-conceived border wall, and the illegal detention of immigrant children.

8. **Land use**: How would you balance development vs. preserving and/or enhancing open spaces? What are the most important land use issues facing your district?

Meeting our climate goals will require an aggressive effort to reduce fossil fuels and greenhouse gases. We should transition by investing in natural climate solutions. Conservation and development strategies that maximize the carbon storage potential of our landscapes, and maximize the potential of existing developed areas by creating more dense housing near existing transit that includes non-residential uses such as office or retail space. We do not need to encroach upon our open spaces with development.

I strongly oppose building a new ‘city’ for 40,000 people on restorable Bay wetlands (currently underwater!) in Redwood City, and proposals to violate greenbelt areas in south county. Likewise, we must consistently fight land grabs on the coast—once lost to private development these areas will be gone forever.

9. **Business**: How do you view business growth in your jurisdiction? What, if anything, would you do to ensure residents are not displaced? Under what circumstances would you support corporate subsidies, tax breaks, and credits, to attract businesses locally?

I recognize that business stability is important to the financial status of municipalities and families throughout my district. Yet, our communities locally have done much to incentivize business, while needed housing is not available. High rents and gentrification are also affecting small businesses, so we should focus attention on how to keep a diverse set of businesses and not just rely too heavily on one or two sectors.

We are so used to reaching out to woo large corporations without providing adequate housing, funding for our schools, or alleviating our traffic congestion problems. Through the Schools and Communities First ballot initiative, and other measures, we must ask for more from the very large employers in our area--especially when the public picks up the tab for contracted out positions that pay artificially low wages.

I am very concerned about the current push to do a regional transportation measure through a sales tax, which is regressive, rather than through a business tax.

10. **Transit**: What specific proposals do you have to alleviate traffic? What are your views and positions on public transit-oriented development?

I am a strong proponent of transit-oriented development. I believe that municipalities and countries through my district and the state should create policies and general plans to move us towards transit-oriented development and colocation of small businesses and housing near transit.

Improving the usability of CalTrain is an important step: frequency, connections to other transit, etc. We need a
free or very low cost transbay transit option, but must not rely simply on spillover development into the Central Valley.

Ideally, we need to create transit-oriented housing that could house employees close to their jobs. However, this may not be a popular idea in an area where people are used to the convenience of their vehicles, but we need incentives for the use of public transportation (timeliness, less stress, etc), as is done in Seattle, New York, Boston, Washington D.C. and other metropolitan areas.

11. Environment: What local policies would you propose to locally address climate change and the environment? Do you think your district should be a zero-carbon district?

I am very encouraged with Former Governor Brown's ambitious climate target of 100 percent use of zero-carbon electricity by 2045. However, when I am elected to the State Senate, I will strongly push to speed up this goal. We can not wait until 2045 to get to 100 percent renewable energy.

I do believe my district should be a zero-carbon district, and some local policies that should be proposed in getting us there include revising land use priorities that create green buildings; implement transportation policies that favor foot, bicycle, and public transit over auto; restore damage caused to the environment (bay restoration); promote recycling and resource conservation; and extend community choice aggregation of renewable energy into the Central Valley.

12. Budget: If you were elected, what decisions would you make differently from this year’s budget? Do you think the State needs additional revenue, and if so, how would you generate it?

This year’s budget was promising, especially in its commitment to early care and education. I do think that the state not only needs additional revenue, but we also need to diversify our state’s revenue sources so that the state budget is not directly tied to the economy. We also need to require more accountability in the budget for the impact of policies on poverty. I am in strong favor of the Schools and Communities First Initiative on the November 2020 ballot that will bring a 'split roll' reform to Prop 13, allowing reassessment of commercial properties and reinforcing homeowners' protections. I am also proposing luxury service taxes and a wealth tax on the unearned income of billionaires to ameliorate the impacts of poverty in California.

13. Youth: What are your priorities and policies for youth and how would you implement and finance them?

We need to work to make all early care, childcare, and pre-K through post-grad education of outstanding quality and free. We must also ensure multiple pathways to success, including apprenticeship and job training.

We must also build on the resources currently provided to homeless youth, invest in family support and reunification services, and strengthen our mental health care system. For all youth, not just those identified as being ‘at risk,’ mental health services should be open and accessible.

We must also address and help remove the pressures of poverty, eliminate the barriers to accessing programs and services in the child welfare system, and expand mentorship and afterschool problems especially for high-risk youth. I am particularly concerned about the number of youth aging out of foster care who are impacted by the opioid crisis and by repeated incarceration as juveniles.
Without a critical support system, young people, especially the children of addicted parents, can be at high risk of becoming homeless, delinquent, incarcerated, sexually exploited, victims of violence and abuse, substance use, mental health crises, and having high rates of suicide. Better outcomes can be achieved through the development of youth leadership and self advocacy skills.

14. **Education**: How could your city improve education opportunities for our young people? What is your position on charter schools?

I am very concerned and skeptical about the power given to charter schools to access public funds and cherry-pick students, with little accountability or oversight. In California, the state with the most charter schools and the most charter students, charters cost California school districts millions of dollars a year and divert much needed money and resources from already cash-strapped traditional public schools. It is particularly dismaying that the chartering entity does not even have to be within the district.

We need to invest heavily in our public education system, pay our teachers as professionals, and pass the Schools and Communities First Initiative on the November 2020 ballot. We must work to close the achievement gap and offerings gaps (where students of color are not offered challenging coursework because of racist perceptions), so our communities don't feel the need to look for alternatives. And we must offer families high quality, affordable childcare and early education to make school success more likely.

I am the only candidate with a strong stance against charter schools in this race. I know that the charter school industry will fund charter-friendly candidates in this race and I will not be one of them.

15. **Elections**: Would you support electoral and campaign finance reform? If so, what kind? How would you propose to improve civic participation?

Yes, I support electoral and campaign finance reform. I have seen up close how monied special interests have impacted the legislative and electoral process in California--and have now served on the board of the Clean Money Campaign for years. The influence of money (often to both Democrats and Republicans simultaneously) and the perceived need to constantly fundraise crowds out needed policy development and shapes policy away from the public interest and toward the benefit of corporations and large scale, repeat donors.

The pressure placed on candidates who are running for the state legislature has created a fundraising "arms race," in order to be viewed as ‘viable.’ Many campaigns for the legislature see more money spent on the campaign than the amount someone would spend on buying a home.

The influence of money in our legislative process is a huge problem. Members of the legislature are pressured into raising more and more money, and corporate lobbyists use the perceived need to raise more money as leverage to water down legislation that would otherwise protect consumers. There is little scrutiny on the source of bills and the true range of policy alternatives.

California's initiative process has also become largely captive to the influence and impact of big money interests and needs reform. Absolute transparency should be our goal, even when it raises objections in our own party.
16. **Access**: How do you propose to make yourself accessible and accountable to the residents of your district?

I have always emphasized my own accessibility and accountability while in elected office. During my tenure in the State Assembly, I had a standing commitment to always leave committee meetings, the floor, or any other activities, to meet with constituents or any low income person who needed help. I also attended many public events and spent time on the streets, in the prisons, in workplaces, in the state hospitals and in labor camps, to gather information and input.

In the State Senate, as I did in the Assembly, I will regularly meet with constituents, hold policy forums, and town halls to gather input from my constituents--and go to where people whose voices are underrepresented in the process are.

I also believe in substantive depth in pursuing constituent casework. I value and emphasize the need for our elected legislators to make helping people solve their critical problems as a priority of our public service work.

17. **What is your position on payday lenders and marijuana dispensaries in your district?**

Payday lenders are predatory. Their goal is to use very high interest rates to trap individuals into a cycle of debt. There is no amount of regulation that is enough for the payday lending industry. We must also work to provide alternatives, including community and public banks.

I am in favor of having marijuana dispensaries available. The voters approved legalizing marijuana, and inherent in that is making it available through dispensaries, which many prefer to online vendors.

**Anything Else?** Is there anything else you would like to share?

The California State Senate District 13 encompasses the San Francisco Peninsula and the northwestern areas of Santa Clara County. It forms the main corridor between San Francisco’s two largest cities: San Jose in the south and San Francisco in the north.

There are five candidates currently in this race. Three of these candidates are local city council members from Burlingame, Redwood City, and Millbrae. The fourth candidate is a tech entrepreneur from Menlo Park.

I am the only candidate with previous legislative experience and am definitely the most progressive candidate. I have significant name ID and am finding a lot of pent up demand for more progressive representation.

I am the only candidate who has worked on clean money issues and pledged not to accept money from corporate PACs and other sources that are proven to not act in the public interest. I know that this means that we will have less funding than other candidates, but I believe it will also help generate grassroots support.

We need help from progressive champions like yourselves, to remain competitive in this election.

**Positions on Issues**

**Please answer YES or NO for each statement.**
Do you support raising the minimum wage?  
YES ☒ NO ☐ To what amount? We already need to raise the wage beyond $15. I believe we should raise the minimum wage based on inflation.

Do you support a restorative justice program in lieu of prosecution?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Do you support ending bail bonds?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Do you support participatory budgeting (citizen involvement in budgeting)?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Would you support an elected rent board?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Do you support a civilian review board of your police department?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Will you support divestment from fossil fuels?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Do you support funding projects to reduce the number of cars on the road?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Do you support Ranked Choice Voting?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Do you support Proportional Representation?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Do you support “amending the Constitution to make clear that corporations and other artificial entities do not have Constitutional rights and that money is not speech and campaign spending should be limited through regulation”? Pledge from MTA (https://movetoamend.org/take-pledge-amend)  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Do you support free public education from pre-school through graduate studies?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Do you support legalization with a path to citizenship for 11M undocumented immigrants in the U.S.?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Do you support marriage equality and the right of transgendered individuals to use the restroom of their choice?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Do you support the use of city funds to develop worker-owned cooperatives?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Do you support an ordinance or charter amendment to create a public bank for your city?  
YES ☒ NO ☐

Do you support Medicare for all?  
YES ☒ NO ☐