

# Sonoma County DSA

# VOTER GUIDE



CALIFORNIA PRIMARY

JUNE 2, 2026

This voter guide is intended to help Sonoma County DSA members and allies make informed decisions when they go to the ballot box for the June 2nd primary election. Our recommendations are voted on by the electoral committee, which is open to all members. If you want to get involved in future elections work, please join a meeting or chime in on Discord!

In this guide, we are focused primarily on local offices and measures where we believe our recommendations can have the biggest impact. We know it can be hard to find meaningful background and context for small local races, and have attempted to provide it here. We have a special excitement for the District 2 County Supervisor race where our endorsed candidate Joanna Paun is running!

Where relevant, we've covered several races for state office, though State Offices are covered by California DSA as well. We urge you to check out the [California DSA voter guide](#) to learn more.

# County Offices

## SoCo DSA Endorses: **Joanna Paun** for **County Supervisor, 2nd District**

We are proud to share that Joanna Paun, the grassroots pick for 2nd District County Supervisor, is a SoCo DSA member and our first endorsed candidate! A democratic socialist running on progressive policies and a people-first approach to politics, she has an impressive background and is backed by the people, not regional corporate interests. She has earned endorsements from many other local progressive organizations and people, including: SEIU 1021, California Working Families Party, Teamsters Local 665, and CA Assembly Members Damon Connolly and Chris Rogers.

Paun currently serves as a Petaluma School Board Trustee and works as Sonoma County's foster and homeless youth education coordinator. A mother of four, she has been a Petaluma resident for 20 years, and has a professional background in counseling.

In brief, some of Paun's progressive priorities include:

- Ending Sonoma County's cooperation with ICE
- Lowering the cost of living and delivering affordable housing
- Fixing our roads, waterlines, and aging infrastructure
- Safeguarding health care and hospitals from the Trump administration's funding cuts
- Improving mental health care services in schools

### Context and Policies

Sonoma County needs a County Supervisor that prioritizes the safety of all residents. Joanna Paun is the only District 2 candidate committed to ending Sonoma County's cooperation with ICE, which the current Board of Supervisors has refused to do. At present, Chris Coursey (District 3) is the only supervisor in support of publicly asking for non-cooperation. If we elect Joanna Paun and Melanie Bagby to office, three out of five supervisors in 2027, a majority, will be in agreement on this.

Paun's campaign intends to address a catalog of other important issues impacting our county. She has committed to address the housing crisis by building affordable housing in the district. She intends to link county funds and services to public schools in the community, easing the burden on schools struggling to provide these services to at-risk youth. In a breath of fresh air compared to current District 2 Supervisor Rabbit's accountability issues, Paun is committed to open and accessible meetings with the community in order to bring transparency to local decision-making.

### Opponents

There are three other competitors in the race: John King and Shelina Moreda, whose

campaigns lean conservative, and Sylvia Lemus, who is also running a left-leaning campaign (with several important caveats).

Although Lemus has a somewhat progressive background as Cotati's mayor, she entered the race only after being recruited by Rob Muelrath, a political consultant and corporate lobbyist finagling tax breaks and labor loopholes for corporations such as Walmart, Dutra, and PG&E. Some local discussions have characterized Lemus as the more experienced candidate due to her time as mayor of Cotati. As regards this claim, we would like to note that Joanna Paun's seven years of experience on the Petaluma School Board (versus Lemus's four years as mayor) means she has spent nearly twice as much time in local government making decisions about a school system with a budget several times that of the town of Cotati.

Of note regarding the conservative candidates in the race: King unequivocally supports Sonoma County's cooperation with ICE. Moreda's constant punting on issues and odd decision to lie about her age to the Press Democrat reveal her to be obfuscatory about her background and policy goals.

## **SoCo DSA Recommends: Melanie Bagby** for **County Supervisor, 4th District**

The only candidate taking a firm stance against the Trump administration, endorsed by the North Bay Labor Council, SEIU, Working Families Party, Latino PAC of Sonoma County, and Sonoma County Conservation Action. She has progressive goals aiming for a sustainable environment and economy.

Bagby's priorities include:

- Protect our community and immigrant neighbors from Trump administration policies
- Defend voter-approved civilian oversight of law enforcement.
- Build mutual-aid capacity for climate resilience and disaster response
- Lead on the housing crisis and homelessness, water security, clean energy, and transportation
- Champion family agriculture, local food systems, small business, and job training

### **Competitors**

Bagby's opponents are Todd Lands and Tom Schwedhelm. Both are retired Law Enforcement officers (Sonoma Sheriff & Santa Rosa Police) endorsed by big ag, big business, and policing-related organizations, such as the Cloverdale and Santa Rosa Police Officers' Associations respectively. These candidates' backgrounds in policing suggest that they would be unlikely to implement oversight of the Sheriff's office.

# State Office

## SoCo DSA Recommends: Jackie Elward for **Member of the State Assembly, 12th District**

Jackie Elward is running a progressive campaign with addressing the climate crisis and defending our communities from the Trump administration top of the list. She has served as mayor and vice-mayor of Rohnert Park, and is a proud labor organizer, educator, and immigrant. Her impressive achievements in Rohnert Park local government include establishing housing-first solutions to homelessness and increasing building of affordable homes.

Among other progressive policies, Elward supports:

- Universal healthcare
- Expansion of Medicare within California
- Affordable housing
- Anti-ICE

In a field filled with candidates clamoring for the title of “progressive,” Jackie stands head and shoulders above her opponents on the issues true progressives care about. She has gained endorsements from the Working Families Party, the North Bay Labor Council, the California Federation of Labor Unions, along with many other progressive organizations.

### Competitors

Elward has four competitors running as Democrats. Several of these competitors support Israel despite the genocide in Gaza and current invasion of Lebanon, which runs counter to our values in the DSA. As the world's fourth largest economy, California has the ability to help end these actions by divesting and sanctioning Israel for its actions. Electing politicians who oppose Israel's actions takes us a step further towards ending the atrocities and achieving justice for its victims.

Eric Lucan, the most viable candidate running against Elward, is supported by corporate democrats such as Adam Schiff and Jared Huffman. He has been unwilling to criticize Israel's numerous and recent war-crimes, and has been skittish about calling the genocide in the Gaza Strip what it is: a genocide. Though he pays lip service to progressive ideals, especially in regards to LGBTQ rights, he does not support universal healthcare and leans more toward austerity measures than taxing the wealthy.

# Ballot Measures

Depending on where you live, several ballot measures related to school district funding and SMART train funding may be on your ballot. We recommend the following:

- **Measure A - Vote YES**

Renews the previously approved educational parcel tax of \$89 per year per parcel to provide funding for the Cotati-Rohnert Park Unified School District. Maintains locally-controlled funding without increasing tax rates to keep the schools running smoothly. Voting yes maintains this important source of funding for our schools, which brings in \$1,300,000 annually. Funding for local public education is important!

- **Measure B - Vote YES**

Renews the previously approved ¼ cent sales tax for 30 years to fund the SMART train and bicycle/pedestrian pathway services. This measure extends an important, existing tax that allows SMART—essential infrastructure for seniors, youth, essential workers, and low-income households—to maintain service for Sonoma county residents.

- **Measure C - Vote YES**

Adopts an educational parcel tax of \$49 per year per parcel to provide funding for the Bellevue Union School District. Provides funding for STEM programs, library programs, and maintains arts and phys ed programs. Voting yes creates a vital source of locally-controlled funding and will raise \$350,000 annually.

## Other Recommendations

California DSA recommends several state assembly and state senate candidates with strong progressive values and backgrounds. While not locally relevant, we do recommend you read the CA DSA voter guide for the following candidates:

- [Chris Rogers](#) - Member of the State Assembly, 2nd district
- [Audrey Denney](#) - United States Representative, CA-1
- [Damon Connolly](#) - State Senate, District 2