

# Jonah Mann's March 2024 California Endorsements

## Preface

My endorsements are informed by my personal research and opinions, and draw inspiration from, but sometimes disagree with, the following:

- [SF YIMBY](#), a pro-housing organization. YIMBY stands for “Yes in my back yard”.
- [GrowSF](#), a YIMBY-aligned organization whose scope extends beyond housing.
- [TogetherSF](#), an organization that calls itself “radically pragmatic”. I generally agree with them in substance but find them to have an unfortunately reactionary vibe.
- [Barak Gila](#), a friend whose input I value and whose conclusions I sometimes agree with.

I didn't research local races outside of SF, but if you're not in SF I strongly encourage you to vote to legalize the construction of housing<sup>1</sup> and recommend taking a look at the YIMBY Action [voter guide](#).

## Here we go

0. Make sure you are a registered Democrat.
  - This will enable you to vote for the Democratic County Central Committee (DCCC), which is the most important race on this ballot (see item 2).
  - In California you can still vote in primaries regardless of your registration, except for the Presidential primary (item 1 below) and the DCCC (item 2 below).
  - If you don't want to be associated with the Democratic Party brand, then just change your registration after the election; don't throw away your power here.
1. President. I am going to vote for **Biden**.
  - Can't believe we're putting all our eggs in this basket, but here we are.
  - Biden will be 82 at the start of his second term. According to [the Social Security Administration's most recent actuarial tables](#), the probability that an 82-year-old man in the United States lives to 86 is 67.4%, giving us a 32.6% chance of President Harris.
  - Biden has [publicly committed](#) to keeping Harris on the ticket.
  - What matters above all else is having a Democrat actually win the general election, and I think (as [this recent CBS News poll](#) shows) that Harris's presence on the ticket makes that less likely. Given that the VP doesn't actually do anything, it would make sense to pick someone who increases the chances of winning.

From what you've seen so far, does the job Kamala Harris is doing as Vice President make you...?

Think better of the Biden administration overall	18%
Think worse of the Biden administration overall	42%
Doesn't really matter	39%

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<sup>1</sup> Yes, it's currently illegal in almost the entirety of California for a private person to use their private money to construct multifamily housing on land that they privately own!

- I would have liked to have a robust primary where I could send that message, but somehow The Party has coalesced around Biden.
- I gave some thought to voting for Dean Phillips, in part as a signal to The Party (whoever that is) that I want at least a forum for thinking about other options. [Phillips's platform](#) is fine, but I do find [stuff like this](#) to be a disqualifying demonstration of bad judgement.
- I am satisfied with Biden's performance so far as president (and especially with his performance as vice president), so I'm okay to give him my vote again.

2. County Central Committee. **This is the most important race on the ballot!**

Assembly District 17 (East side)	Assembly District 19 (West side)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emma Heiken</li> <li>2. Lily Ho</li> <li>3. Cedric Akbar</li> <li>4. Nancy Tung</li> <li>5. Michael Lai</li> <li>6. Laurance Lem Lee</li> <li>7. Peter Ho Lik Lee</li> <li>8. Trevor Chandler</li> <li>9. Carrie Elise Barnes</li> <li>10. Lyn Werbach</li> <li>11. Joe Sangirardi</li> <li>12. Luis A. Zamora</li> <li>13. Matt Dorsey</li> <li>14. Bilal Mahmood</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parag Gupta</li> <li>2. Michela Alioto-Pier</li> <li>3. Jade Tu</li> <li>4. Mike Chen</li> <li>5. Dan Calamuci</li> <li>6. Lanier Coles</li> <li>7. Sara Barz</li> <li>8. Catherine Stefani</li> <li>9. Marjan Philhour</li> <li>10. Brian Quan</li> </ol>

- When you see in the general election that someone is “endorsed by the Democratic Party”, these are the people who made that endorsement. From what I've heard, the Democratic Party endorsement sways between 3% and 15% of the vote in the general election, so this committee matters a lot.
- Depending on where in the city you live, you'll have different options.
- The candidates that I support are running as a slate that they're calling [SF Democrats for Change](#). I recommend that you vote for all of them, and that you not vote for any others.

- Here are the endorsements they display on their website.



3. U.S. Senator. I'm voting for [Adam B. Schiff](#).
  - He's been a member of the House of Representatives since 2001 and was a leader of the impeachments of Donald Trump.
  - Katie Porter is popular and claims to support housing but unfortunately either doesn't understand the current state of California's housing laws or just is a denialist of the social science of economics.
  - Barbara Lee is the third prominent name in the race.
  - The organizations I follow haven't really made endorsements in this race. [Schiff](#) and [Lee](#) both have pages on their websites showcasing their endorsements.
4. U.S. Senator again. **Schiff** again. As Barak Gila put it:
 

You get to vote twice because Dianne Feinstein died. Feel free to split the vote if you're feeling feisty; the ballot that matters more is the "term ending 2031"
5. U.S. Representative. I'm voting for [Pelosi](#).
  - I wish we had some other option, but we don't.
  - Even Moses wasn't allowed to enter the Promised Land, but unfortunately we don't have a Joshua yet. I couldn't even find any information on the other Democrats listed on the ballot. As for the Republican options (which registered Democrats can indeed vote for in California), I think their choice to affiliate themselves with the Republican Party brand right now is itself disqualifying.
6. State Senator. I couldn't endorse [Scott Wiener](#) more strongly.
  - He's the best state legislator in the country. He proposes big, visionary solutions to problems like the housing shortage and is willing to compromise to actually get things

passed. His solutions are realistic, effective, and guided by science rather than ideological purity or symbolism. He takes an “all of the above” approach rather than letting the perfect be the enemy of the good.

- Here’s what Barak Gila said in his voter guide:

The leading 2030 CA Governor Candidate, Scott Wiener has done more for San Francisco in his years on the state senate than the entire executive branch of its own government, combined.

His achievements include

- Passing SB 828 to get SF to build 80,000 new homes in 8 years.
- Passing SB 35 and SB 423, which make it easier to get housing developments approved in California and have directly led to thousands of new homes.
- Pro-LGBT, progressive activism, and not backing down despite receiving some horrible abuse from the right.
- Pro-transit, including being a key figure in stabilizing BART and MUNI funding and keeping the systems running through and after the pandemic.

- He’s endorsed by SF YIMBY, GrowSF, and TogetherSF.

7. State Assembly Member. **Matt Haney** for District 17 and **Catherine Stefani** for District 19.

- Both are endorsed by SF YIMBY, GrowSF, and TogetherSF.
- Matt Haney is similar to AOC in that both started out as NIMBYs, but both genuinely care about studying issues and supporting policies that make the world a better place, and both are now YIMBYs.

8. Judge of the Superior Court Seats #1 and #13. **Chip Zecher** and **Jean Myungjin Roland**.

- Both of these candidates are trying to unseat incumbents. Both are endorsed by GrowSF and TogetherSF, who find the incumbents to be insufficiently tough on crime.
- I don’t think judgeships should be elected offices, and so considered just voting for the incumbents, but this is the system we have. I’m willing to trust GrowSF on this one. Also, Zecher’s opponent has been campaigning with the worst of the NIMBY Supervisors. I’m taking that as a signal that 1) he wants to be treated as a political candidate and not an impartial judge, and 2) his political preferences are contrary to mine, so I’m eager to vote against him.

9. Prop 1. **Yes.**

- Money for mental health and substance abuse treatment for homeless people and veterans.
- Endorsed by GrowSF, TogetherSF, Gavin Newsom, and the California Professional Firefighters.
- Opposed by some Republicans in the state legislature and the vile Howard Jarvis Taxpayer Association.

10. Prop A. **Yes.**

- Money for affordable housing.
- Endorsed by London Breed, SF YIMBY, GrowSF, and TogetherSF.
- Opposed by [this asshole who I assume paid \\$2/word to have his bad values broadcast publicly](#). I’m voting yes primarily to make him mad.

11. [Prop B](#). **No.**

- Originally written by Supervisor Matt Dorsey to fund hiring more police officers, it was hijacked by Supervisor Ahsha Safaí so that the spending is only allowed if voters approve new or updated taxes in subsequent elections.
- 'No' is endorsed by GrowSF and TogetherSF. From TogetherSF:  
Opposition for the amended proposition comes from the measure's author Supervisor Matt Dorsey, Mayor London Breed, the San Francisco Travel Association, the Hotel Council of San Francisco, and the Golden Gate Restaurant Association.

12. [Prop C](#). **Yes.**

- Waives the property transfer tax when commercial real estate is converted into residential.
- Converting empty offices downtown into housing sounds great! More people can have shorter commutes, and with more residents nearby, downtown amenities won't all shut down after business hours.
- Taxes on land value are great in part because they incentivize landowners to sell their property to people who can put it to better use. Property *transfer* taxes have the opposite incentive (i.e., they disincentivize selling property), and so are bad.
- Endorsed by SF YIMBY, GrowSF, and TogetherSF.

13. [Prop D](#). **Yes.**

- From GrowSF:

Prop D will put the Ethics Department in charge of the annual ethics & bribery trainings, rather than let each Department train themselves. We're not sure if this will significantly alter the training procedures, but it will prevent departments with endemic corruption from excluding certain things from training.

Prop D will also tighten the reporting rules on gifts and expand the restrictions on what is considered a gift or a bribe.

- Endorsed by GrowSF and TogetherSF.

14. [Prop E](#). **Yes.**

- Seeks to reduce the amount of police officer time spent on administrative tasks.
- Endorsed by GrowSF and TogetherSF.

15. [Prop F](#). **Yes.**

- From GrowSF:

Proposition F is an Initiative Ordinance from Mayor London Breed that will require drug screening and substance abuse treatment for single adults receiving cash assistance from the City. It will not apply to families or seniors.

Under current law, individual adults who have housing but need assistance can receive up to \$712 per month. Individuals who are homeless can receive \$109 per month, plus in-kind benefits such as shelter, food, and other services.

Proposition F will not change the amount of cash assistance provided to individuals addicted to drugs, but will require them to participate in drug screening and substance abuse treatment in order to receive the cash assistance.

Individual adults who are suspected of being dependent on illegal drugs will be required to undergo a professional evaluation for substance abuse by the Department of Public Health. If they are found to have a substance abuse issue, they will be required to participate in a treatment program in order to obtain the cash assistance. If they fail to comply with the treatment program (provided at no-cost to them), their cash assistance will be suspended for 30 days. However, their housing assistance will continue, and may be extended for longer if necessary to prevent eviction and homelessness.

Individuals will not lose their benefits if they are not 100% sober; they only need to participate in the treatment program.

- Endorsed by GrowSF and TogetherSF.

16. [Prop G](#). **Yes.**

- A decade ago, the SF Board of Education decided that the right way to address racial disparities in math advancement was to prevent anyone in SF from taking algebra until high school (unless their parents could afford to move to the suburbs or send them to private school). Notably, this made it impossible to reach calculus by 12th grade.
- This is a non-binding proposition that merely expresses that the preference of voters in SF would be that the district offer algebra to 8th graders.
- Endorsed by GrowSF and TogetherSF.