



February 25, 1998

Gerald J. Klaas
5109 Melvin Drive
Carmichael, CA 95608

Dear Candidate:

The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) is the largest union in California, representing city, county, school and state employees, hospital workers, homecare workers, janitors and more.

This year as part of our candidate evaluation process we are holding a Town Hall meeting on the morning of Saturday, March 14 at Sacramento City College for our members to meet and interview candidates for office in the Sacramento Area. This is very important part of our process and we strongly encourage your participation.

We are requiring all candidates who seek an interview with SEIU to complete and return the enclosed candidate questionnaire. It covers the areas of greatest concern to our members. Your thoughtful written comments are appreciated.

Please return this questionnaire by March 5 to the attention of:

Jeanine Meyer Rodriguez
Service Employees International Union
1007 7th Street, 4th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

We will not be able to schedule an interview with any candidate who does not return a signed completed survey.

Thank you for your interests in SEIU and the rights of workers. Should you have any questions please call Jeanine Meyer Rodriguez at (916) 933-0868.

Sincerely,

Jeanine Meyer Rodriguez

Jeanine Meyer Rodriguez

candidate ltr2-25.doc/opeiu29/afl-cio

SERVICE
EMPLOYEES
INTERNATIONAL UNION
AFL-CIO CLC

1007 7th Street
4th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814



**SEIU CALIFORNIA STATE COUNCIL
1998 QUESTIONNAIRE
STATE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY CANDIDATES**

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking time to fill out this questionnaire. In order to better inform our membership about where the candidates we support stand on the issues, the SEIU California State Council Executive Board has voted to require all candidates seeking our endorsement for the State Senate and Assembly to respond to this questionnaire. If you need additional space to complete your answers please use the back of the page.

SEIU is California's largest and most diverse union. With over 300,000 members, we are the largest union in state and local government, health care, social services, building services and the race track industry. We also represent classified school employees, law enforcement, corrections, probation and court employees. Our fastest growing jurisdiction is home care workers, where we are aggressively organizing In-Home Supportive Services providers in counties across the state.

Unions like SEIU are the economic backbone of the middle class. Our mission is to empower workers to provide economic security and economic opportunity for themselves and their families. SEIU fights for jobs with decent wages, health care, pensions, working conditions and opportunity for advancement. We also work in coalition with the consumers of the services our members provide to enhance economic opportunity and the quality of life in our state by advocating for and improving those services.

OVERVIEW

1. Briefly describe your top priorities and the policy areas that will be of most interest to you as a state legislator.

WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Organizing Rights

1. SEIU's number one priority is helping more workers join unions. Do you support the right of all workers to join a union? Will you oppose legislative proposals to make California a so-called "right to work" state?
2. Are you willing to speak out against employers in your District who interfere with workers' efforts to organize themselves into unions?
3. What steps have you taken to support worker organizing efforts in your District?
4. The Anti-Worker initiative will be on the June 1998 ballot and if passed, will prevent union members from fully participating in the political process by restricting the ability of their unions to raise political money. This initiative singles out unions, allowing corporations and other membership organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce, Sierra Club, and the National Rifle Association to continue to spend freely on politics. Do you support or oppose the Anti-Worker initiative?

Economic Justice for Working Families

1. In 1997, the Industrial Welfare Commission repealed wage orders guaranteeing millions of California workers the right to overtime pay after eight hours worked in a day, providing a billion dollar windfall to business at the expense of workers' paychecks. Did you support or oppose the repeal of the eight hour day?

SEIU Questionnaire for Legislative Candidates - Continued
Page 3

2. Will you support legislation to prevent contractors receiving public funds, tax breaks, or other government benefits from using taxpayer funds to oppose unionization?

3. Some people believe the best way to create jobs and economic growth is to reduce government regulation, spending and taxes so the private sector can do its job. Other people believe the best way to create jobs and economic growth is by investing in schools and universities, job training, employment and other services that improve the quality of life, the skills of the work force and the physical infrastructure of California. Which of these two views is closest to your own?

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Worker Rights

1. Under what circumstances, if any, do you support the contracting-out of classified school worker services?

2. Do you agree or disagree that teachers and classified employees working in charter schools should have the same collective bargaining rights as workers in other schools?

3. Paraeducators can help fill our need for qualified classroom teachers with the specialized skills our multi-cultural student population requires if school administrators provide the appropriate career ladders and training. Do you support or oppose measures to provide funding for training paraeducators to become teachers?

4. Governor Wilson has proposed the repeal of Education Code provisions that provide basic rights and protections to school workers. Do you support or oppose the wholesale repeal of these Education Code provisions?

5. All state and local government employees have the right to enter into an agency shop agreement with management except employees in the California State University and University of California systems. Do you support or oppose extending the right to agency shop to CSU and UC employees?

Education Reform

1. The 95/5 initiative on the June 1998 ballot would prohibit school districts from spending more than 5% of their total budget on administrative costs. The initiative is contradictory and ambiguous in defining whether many functions performed by schools and districts are "administrative," imposes fines on Districts that are out of compliance, and could lead to layoffs of classified school workers. What is your position on the 95/5 initiative?

2. The Bilingual (Unz) initiative on the June 1998 ballot would effectively eliminate bilingual education instruction and mandate schools use only English in teaching students. Children who are not English proficient could attend one-year of sheltered English immersion instruction before being mainstreamed into English only classrooms and allows schools to place students of all ages in the same classroom for immersion instruction. The initiative would hold teachers and educators to be personally liable for not implementing the terms of the initiative. What is your position on the Bilingual education initiative?

3. Did you support or oppose Proposition 174, the school voucher initiative, on the November, 1993, ballot?

4. The Edison Project, a private for-profit company, has contracted with three southern California school districts to run charter schools, including acting as employer of teachers and classified school workers. The Edison Project is now seeking to expand its operations in California. What is your position on using state public school funds to pay private for profit companies to operate California schools?

5. Much of the recent debate on education reform has focused on process reforms - vouchers, school choice, etc. Some educators believe we need to place more emphasis on reform efforts that focus on goals and outcomes. If you could make three changes in California's public schools, what would they be?

6. Local school districts must currently obtain a 2/3 vote of the electorate to pass bonds to fund school construction, maintenance, and other specific projects. Will you support a majority vote requirement for local school district bonds?

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Workers Rights

1. In recent years a number of bills have been introduced in the Legislature that would weaken existing collective bargaining and union representation rights of public workers. These bills include prohibitions on payroll deduction of dues and political contributions, "right to work" provisions, and repeal of collective bargaining rights altogether. Do you support or oppose these changes?

2. Do you support or oppose efforts to replace the current public retirement system, which has guaranteed benefits, with a system where benefits are subject to market risk borne by individual participants?

3. In the course of recent budget battles legislation has been adopted that would severely reduce the retirement incomes of workers in state and local government by creating two-tier pension systems. SEIU is strongly opposed to two-tier pensions which will force many workers to retire with poverty level pensions. Do you support or oppose eliminating two-tier pensions?

Tax and Budget Reform

1. Members of the Legislature frequently are asked to vote for special tax preferences - exemptions, deductions, or credits - that cost hundreds of millions of dollars each year. The effect of these tax breaks is to shift tax burdens from the wealthiest Californians onto middle income working people and reduce the ability of state and local government to provide needed public services.

(A) Another proposal to improve accountability in the tax expenditure process is to sunset all special tax preferences on a staggered basis and require the Legislature to review sunsetted preferences and decide which preferences to reenact as part of the annual budget process. Do you support or oppose this reform?

(B) Under Proposition 13, legislation granting tax preferences - i.e., creating new loopholes - can be passed by majority vote, but legislation repealing such loopholes must be passed by a 2/3 vote. Do you support or oppose this particular requirement of Proposition 13? Do you support or oppose changing it by requiring a majority vote to repeal special tax preferences or by requiring a 2/3 vote to pass them in the first place? Please explain your position.

(C) Please describe the circumstances under which you support creation of any new tax preferences, what kind of accountability you would require to prevent abuse, and how you would propose to pay for them.

Social Services

1. Should workfare workers have the same rights as other California workers?

Homecare (In Home Supportive Services)

1. The IHSS program allows hundreds of thousands of seniors and people with disabilities to live independently and with dignity in their homes. This achieves cost savings of millions of dollars for the State of California. SEIU is part of a coalition with consumer advocates in the disabilities and senior communities that is working to improve the delivery of IHSS services, give consumers a larger voice in the program and give IHSS workers the benefits of union representation by encouraging counties to create public authorities to run registries, screen and train workers, provide greater consumer input and bargain with workers to improve worker wages and benefits.

(A) Do you support the creation of IHSS Public Authorities?

(B) Are you willing to meet with members of County Boards of Supervisors in your District to advocate for creation of an IHSS Public Authority?

2. Although the majority of funding for the IHSS program comes from federal and state resources, current law specifies that IHSS Public Authority counties must assume the state's share of costs in any wage and benefit increases for workers above the minimum wage. Will you support legislation appropriating state funds to allow counties to receive full state and federal reimbursement for IHSS Public Authority costs, including wages and benefits for IHSS workers?

HEALTH CARE

Worker Rights

1. In 1997 Governor Pete Wilson vetoed legislation that would provide whistle blower protection to health care workers who report dangerous practices that put patients at risk. Do you support or oppose whistle blower protection for health care workers?
2. Just cause termination protects licensed health care workers from being fired for doing their jobs as the law requires. Do you support or oppose legislation to protect all health care workers, including physicians, from termination without just cause?
3. In order to cut costs, many health care providers have decreased staff, leading to tougher working conditions for health care workers and poorer service for patients. Current law requires minimum nurse:patient staffing ratios in some settings such as intensive care, but most patient care occurs in settings where there are no standards. Do you support or oppose updating and strengthening nurse staffing standards?

Health Care Reform

1. SEIU has joined with other health care and patient advocates groups in supporting the HMO Patient Bill of Rights, a series of bills protecting consumers and workers from documented abuses by HMOs. Do you support or oppose the HMO Patient Bill of Rights?
2. Currently more than 6 million Californians have no health insurance. The majority of California's uninsured work at jobs that provide no health benefits. Do you support true universal health care coverage?

3. County hospitals and clinics are an indispensable part of California's health care safety net. Funding for these facilities is threatened not only by recent State cuts in county funding but also by a State-imposed privatization of Medi-Cal. Not only does this leave county health systems without enough patients to support the continuing operation of their facilities, but it also is being reported in many counties that the private for-profit Medi-Cal providers are not providing adequate health care services to their patient caseload in exchange for the capitated payments they are receiving.

(A) Do you support or oppose adequate funding and other measures that strengthen our county health care systems?

(B) Do you support or oppose the Governor Wilson's efforts to displace county health services to Medi-Cal patients by for-profit private Medi-Cal providers?

Long Term Care

1. In its *Report Card on California Nursing Homes*, the consumer watchdog group California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform documented the substandard care provided by California's nursing home industry caused by under staffing, high turnover, and inadequate penalties when minimum patient care standards are violated. A bill is currently pending before the legislature, that, if enacted, would allow the nursing home industry to become self-regulating. Do you support or oppose this attempt to weaken regulatory oversight of nursing home operators?
2. Despite the lower standards of care provided by nursing homes, one new way the health care industry is attempting to reduce its costs and increase its profitability is by transferring patients recovering from major surgery, illness or injury from hospitals to nursing homes to recover. What do you believe the State should do in response to this practice to make sure that patients receive appropriate medical care?

BUILDING SERVICES

1. In building services and many other low wage industries in California employers frequently hire labor contractors who violate wage, hours, and tax laws. Efforts to crack down on these violations often are thwarted because contractors who are caught are simply replaced by other contractors who engage in the same practices. Do you support or oppose making employers who repeatedly hire contractors who engage in illegal employment practices liable for any future violations?
2. State contracts require building owners who lease property to the state to enforce prevailing wage standards on companies that contract to clean those buildings, but the Department of General Services refuses to require compliance with these regulations. As a legislator what would you do to remedy this situation?

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

1. Currently the State is being asked to approve a major expansion of off-track betting. Do you support or oppose measures that protect the job security, wages and benefits of workers as an essential ingredient in State approval of such expansion?
2. The governor appoints nine members to the California Horse Racing Board. How many of these appointees do you think should come from the ranks of organized labor?

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

1. Did you vote for or against Proposition 209 on the November 1996 ballot?

2. To what extent do you believe that employment discrimination continues to deny equal opportunity to minorities and women?

3. Do you support or oppose use of affirmative action programs to insure equal opportunities for women and minorities?

IMMIGRATION

1. In 1994 did you support or oppose Proposition 187? Please explain your position.

2. Should immigrant workers have the same rights as other workers?

3. Governor Wilson also has proposed an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to deny citizenship to the children of illegal immigrants who are born in this country. Do you support or oppose this proposal?

4. In the aftermath of Proposition 187's passage, a number of proposals have been made to deny public services to legal immigrants. Do you support or oppose denying public health care, social services, and/or education to legal immigrants?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please sign below and return the questionnaire as indicated in the cover letter.

Signed _____ AD/SD _____

Date _____



**SEIU CALIFORNIA STATE COUNCIL
1998 QUESTIONNAIRE
STATE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY CANDIDATES**

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking time to fill out this questionnaire. In order to better inform our membership about where the candidates we support stand on the issues, the SEIU California State Council Executive Board has voted to require all candidates seeking our endorsement for the State Senate and Assembly to respond to this questionnaire. If you need additional space to complete your answers please use the back of the page.

SEIU is California's largest and most diverse union. With over 300,000 members, we are the largest union in state and local government, health care, social services, building services and the race track industry. We also represent classified school employees, law enforcement, corrections, probation and court employees. Our fastest growing jurisdiction is home care workers, where we are aggressively organizing In-Home Supportive Services providers in counties across the state.

Unions like SEIU are the economic backbone of the middle class. Our mission is to empower workers to provide economic security and economic opportunity for themselves and their families. SEIU fights for jobs with decent wages, health care, pensions, working conditions and opportunity for advancement. We also work in coalition with the consumers of the services our members provide to enhance economic opportunity and the quality of life in our state by advocating for and improving those services.

OVERVIEW

1. Briefly describe your top priorities and the policy areas that will be of most interest to you as a state legislator.