

State Assembly/Senate

Dave Cortese

State Senate District 15

Member, Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors

Top 3 priorities citywide

1. Housing/homelessness
2. Infrastructure
3. Climate Change

1. Who is your Campaign Manager?

Alex Maykowski

2. What is your Campaign Budget?

\$930K

3. Please share your Top Ten Endorsements:

All of our endorsements are equally important. However, since you are asking for the top ten, we will list them according to highest office held: Former Secretary Norman Mineta, US Department of Transportation/US Department of Commerce; Rep Ro Khanna, US House of Representatives; Rep Jimmy Panetta, US House of Representatives; Former Rep John Burton, US House of Representatives; Former Rep Mike Honda, US House of Representatives; Former State Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin; Senator Bill Dodd, California State Senate; Senator Bob Wieckowski, California State Senate; Senator Scott Wiener, California State Senate; Assemblymember Ash Kalra, California State Assembly

4. Would you support or oppose a 3 county ballot initiative for a permanent 1/8 cent sales tax to fund Caltrain?

Support

I support this measure for all the reasons stated above in the question.

5. Do you support funding to complete a valley to valley connection through high speed rail?

Support

I have long advocated for this project. I was instrumental in persuading the MTC to support the San Jose alignment.

6. Would you support a measure dedicated to build and operate a world class, seamless integrated transit system to better serve Bay Area residents, funded through a one cent sales tax, to better serve the transit dependent and those of us still in our cars?

Support

I have met with representatives of SVLG regarding the proposed measure and have been briefed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission administration. While many details are still being explored and determined, it is clear we need a mega-measure to keep up with infrastructure needs.

7. *Would you support state legislation to facilitate and encourage TOD within a half-mile of fixed-rail development, including streamlining housing approvals and establishing minimum zoning standards/heights?*

Support

I have been advocating for transit-oriented development for years and I've been very involved with current state and regional efforts in the area. My track record on this issue is clear.

8. *Do you support reform of CEQA?*

Support

I support CEQA reform for all the reasons stated above in the question.

9. *Would you support a ballot measure, such as Prop 8, that regulates the amount that healthcare providers may charge for services?*

Oppose

The cost factors involved in health care include insurance premiums, pharmaceuticals, health care provider services, hospitals, etc. My experience in Santa Clara County tells me that we need comprehensive and collaborative reform in all these areas, not just one. So I do support health care reform, however, I don't agree that singling out a specific segment of health care service is the right approach.

10. *Do you support requiring all new buses purchased with federal funds be zero-emission beginning on October 1, 2029 (which is California's deadline for transitioning all transit bus purchases to zero-emission buses)?*

Support

I have been a leader at VTA, MTC and Santa Clara County in supporting and requiring zero-emission vehicles. I was an early co-signer of Diesel-free by 33.

11. *Will you work with the Leadership Group and your Bay Area state legislative colleagues to develop a "Baylands Caucus" focused on a regional vision and plan of action for sea level rise, as well as funding to address our shared vulnerabilities?*

Support

I think the Baylands Caucus is a great idea. I have a strong track record regarding the issues of climate change/sea level rise and bay restoration. I was a charter member of the Bay Restoration Authority (ABAG) which put on a regional ballot measure to provide significant funding in this area. Additionally, I co-founded the Bay Area Regional Collaborative which brought together four regional agencies (Association of Bay Area Governments, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the SF Bay Conservation and Development Commission) to address sea level rise. Since then, I created, in

partnership with former Vice President Al Gore, the Counties Climate Coalition—a nationwide network of counties committed to becoming 100% renewable and to meeting the goals in the Paris Agreement. Most recently, I authored the Santa Clara County Climate Emergency Declaration.

12. Do you support or oppose a proposed amendment to Proposition 13?

Oppose

Over the last several years I have steadfastly opposed a split role measure on the basis that in California and particularly in Santa Clara County much commercial real estate investment is structured around triple-net leases. This means commercial property owners are passing property tax increases to the tenants who then pass costs on to consumers, resulting in an indirect form of regressive taxation. I believe this would be an unintended consequence of such a measure based on the advocacy arguments I have heard so far. That said, in the event that other revenue measures do not materialize to address our housing crisis and our educational system deficits, I could be persuaded to support split role as a last resort.

Update: Supervisor Cortese announced at our candidate forum on September 27th that he has in fact altered his position most recently to ‘support’ split roll due to his concerns about a lack of sources of additional education funding. He added, “I’m more than happy to keep discussing the issue.”

13. Will you support legislation that reduces the volatility of the California tax system?

Support

I am open minded about tax code changes that would result in less volatility.

14. Do you support the creation of a statewide student longitudinal data system?

Support

I was a founding member of the advisory group that launched DataZone, the regional education data repository presently housed at the Santa Clara County Office of Education. DataZone has since been successfully connected to a program I spearheaded—School Linked Services, a school and county coordinated effort to provide mental health and other wellness services to support student success. This data system is now informing educators, social workers, clinicians and other professionals how to best care for several hundred thousand students. This data-driven work should be replicated throughout the state.

15. Will you address the higher education opportunity gap for underrepresented students and increase the number of graduates prepared for innovation economy careers?

Support

I am committed to addressing the higher education opportunity gap for underrepresented students and increasing the number of graduates prepared for innovation economy careers based on all the reasons cited in the question above. I have a lengthy and accomplished track record of supporting STEM through my work as a school board member and as a city and county elected official. I was a co-chair in the Silicon Valley Education Foundation’s formal effort

to get school districts to adopt A-G (the prerequisite courses required for admission to UC/CSU) as their default curriculum for ALL students, not just a select few who were deemed “college material.” The East Side Union High School District, which has had a history of underrepresentation in our universities, was the first to adopt the standard. I have devoted much of my career to addressing the issue of underrepresentation in educational and economic opportunities and access as well as disproportionality in our correctional and dependency systems.

16. Tell us about a time when you were opposed to a position of one of your major supporters. What was the issue? How did you handle this situation?

When I was on the San Jose City Council, I supported an RFP that would have allowed San Jose Water Company, a private entity, to provide potable water to 25,000 customers. The South Bay Labor Council (SBLC) opposed the issuance of the RFP on the basis that it might threaten public employee jobs. I supported the RFP because I felt the competition was necessary. The item passed on a 6-5 vote. The SBLC had been a major supporter of mine during that period of time.