

# ***SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES NETWORK***

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## **CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES** **Board of Supervisors, November 2008 Election** **Winning Candidates' Responses**

The following questionnaire focuses on issues related to health, human services and community-based nonprofit organizations. The sponsor of this questionnaire is **The San Francisco Human Services Network**, an association of over 100 community-based nonprofit agencies dedicated to addressing issues critical to the health and human services sector of San Francisco. For more information, see <http://www.sfhsn.org>. For a list of our members, see [http://www.sfhsn.org/members\\_members.htm](http://www.sfhsn.org/members_members.htm).

HSN sent questionnaires to candidates in all of the districts. Below are the answers of the winning candidates in each district. Candidates were asked to limit their responses to 100 words.

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### **Election Winners:**

District 1- Eric Mar (did not submit response)  
District 3- David Chiu  
District 4- Carmen Chu (did not submit response)  
District 5- Ross Mirkarimi  
District 7- Sean Elsbernd (did not submit response)  
District 9- David Campos (did not submit response)  
District 11- John Avalos

### **(A) San Francisco Community**

*(1) In your opinion, what are the top three issues facing the City & County of San Francisco that you will prioritize as a Supervisor?*

Chiu (D3): My top three priorities are: 1) quality of life in our neighborhoods, including cleaner streets, better transit and public safety, 2) increasing affordable housing, and 3) creating jobs and promoting small businesses.

As a neighborhood association leader and Small Business Commissioner who has served as a criminal prosecutor, community court Judge-Arbitrator, civil rights attorney and chair of Chinatown Community Development Center after graduating from Harvard University, I am the candidate who with the most hands-on experience to move San Francisco forward on all of these issues.

Mirkarimi (D5): Increase low income/affordable housing, providing universal health/mental care access, economic severity resulting in more homelessness, and the need to pursue greater revenue enhancement.

Avalos (D11): Violence  
Limited economic opportunity  
Limited revenue

***(2) What are the most important steps we need to take to improve the public health of our City?***

Chiu (D3): Access to healthcare for all San Franciscans will be a high priority for me as Supervisor. The Healthy San Francisco Plan does much to cover uninsured individuals in San Francisco, but maintaining funding for the Plan will be a challenge because it relies heavily on funding from the Medi-Cal program. The State has taken a blunt axe to the Medi-Cal program, slashing rates for hospitals, physicians, adult day health care centers, and all sorts of other providers by ten percent. Accordingly, my priority is to maintain funding for the Medi-Cal program, and also the Healthy San Francisco Plan.

Mirkarimi (D5): Save St. Lukes; Rebuild SF General Hospital; Reprioritize and reform budget agenda between Mayor and BoS that commits more resources for health care.

Avalos (D11): Pass Prop A to rebuild general hospital  
Maintain adequate funding for treatment on demand mental health and substance abuse services  
Increase overall access to public health service, expanding the Healthy San Franciscans program.

***(3) What are the most important steps we need to take to improve the fiscal health of our City?***

Chiu (D3): While it is the job of the Board of Supervisors to ensure that our city does as much with what we have, in the face of federal and state budget cuts and mounting local budget deficits, I support the November 2008 ballot measures that would raise revenues by increasing taxes on property sold over \$5 million and closing tax loopholes on certain types of partnerships, which would raise real revenues and only affect wealthy individuals who have received significant tax breaks during the Bush Administration years.

Mirkarimi (D5): Reform budget process; exact commitments from Mayor and members of the Board of Supervisors; think medium and long term and plan accordingly with funding attached especially with a growing baby boomer population.

Avalos (D11): Increase revenue for the city by passing progressive taxes. This change would facilitate the passage of progressive taxation. We need to ensure that the City audit recommendations on department spending are implemented. The City needs to chop from the top to make sure that front line staff doing the face to face work with people do not get cut, but rather the management positions which would yield more cost savings.  
I'm considering changing the budget cycle from a one year to a two year cycle with added in adjustments for changes in revenue due to market forces.

(4) *Do you support or oppose the following November ballot measures?*

	<b>Chiu</b>	<b>Mirkarimi</b>	<b>Avalos</b>
<b>Prop A: San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center Earthquake Safety Bonds</b>	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
<b>Prop B: Establishing Affordable Housing Fund</b>	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
<b>Prop H: Setting Clean Energy Deadlines</b>	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
<b>Prop K: Changing the Enforcement of Laws Related to Prostitution and Sex Workers</b>	OPPOSE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
<b>Prop L: Funding the Community Justice Center</b>	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	OPPOSE
<b>Prop M: Changing the Residential Rent Ordinance to Prohibit Specific Acts of Harassment of Tenants by Landlords</b>	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
<b>Prop N: Changing Real Property Transfer Tax Rates</b>	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
<b>Prop O: Replacing the Emergency Response Fee with an Access Line Tax</b>	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
<b>Prop Q: Modifying the Payroll Expense Tax</b>	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
<b>Prop S: Policy Regarding Budget Set-Asides and Identification of Replacement Funds</b>	OPPOSE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
<b>Prop T: Free and Low-Cost Substance Abuse Treatment Programs</b>	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
<b>Prop V: Policy Against Terminating Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC)</b>	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	OPPOSE
<b>Prop 4: Waiting Period and Parental Notification Before Termination of Minor's Pregnancy</b>	OPPOSE	OPPOSE	OPPOSE
<b>Prop 5: Nonviolent Drug Offenses. Sentencing, Parole and Rehabilitation</b>	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	SUPPORT
<b>Prop 8: Eliminates Right of Same-Sex Couples to Marry</b>	OPPOSE	OPPOSE	OPPOSE

## **(B) The Health and Human Services Nonprofit Sector**

***(1) In what ways have you shown leadership in supporting the nonprofit health and human services sector and low income, disadvantaged populations? Please identify any nonprofits where you worked, served on the Board of Directors, or played an active role.***

Chiu (D3): I have served as board president of the Chinatown Community Development Center, which builds and manages affordable housing for low-income families, seniors and immigrants. I have served as chair of the Lower Polk Neighbors, which addresses the neighborhood needs of one of the lower-income neighborhoods in District 3. I served as board chair for the Youth Leadership Institute, which develops youth leadership programs for young people. And I served as president of the Asian American Bar Association of the Greater Bay Area, which provides countless hours of pro bono legal services for low-income individuals.

Mirkarimi (D5): My time in office has intersected with many non-profit health care and social service providers. We have collaborated on many fronts and issues primarily addressing budget shortfalls and threats to organizational stability; in addition, I have enjoyed working the HSN network among others, in championing workforce reform, to improve the City's ability in delivering more effective job skill training and placement programs.

Avalos (D11): I've worked for many non profits, including the San Francisco Conservation Corps, the SF Boys and Girls Club, Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth, Mission Neighborhood Health Center and the Youth Leadership Institute.. I've served on the board of Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center and Media Alliance.

At city hall, I have worked closely with nonprofit organizations to help come to consensus on budgetary issues. I've been accessible and have worked hard to ensure that people have power and influence at city hall. I've fought to extend the COLA for nonprofits, expand health and human services for SF's most vulnerable populations.

***(2) Do you have any specific recommendations to improve the programs or services provided or funded by the City & County of San Francisco for low-income and homeless populations?***

Chiu (D3): From my perspective, we need to continue to prioritize funding social services for the homeless, and integrate law enforcement functions in the context of these social service programs to make sure that homeless people are guided to receive the social services that they need. We need to support an integrated network of neighborhood homeless providers who can provide a more cost-effective and humane way of connecting homeless individuals and families to the programs that meet their needs.

Mirkarimi (D5): Without compromising IRS status, help elect officials that will meet and confer on the commitment and pledges made toward defending HSN budget priorities from draconian cuts. Each season spotlights the need to reform the budget process structurally and procedurally. We cannot rely on the Care Not Cash system as a substitute for not providing wrap-around services and housing, even temporary, for the low income and homeless - Replete case management and quality shelter services as a station into permanent housing or effective rehabilitation. As a measure

of accountability and public trust, routine performance audits need to be applied to benefit both funder and provider.

Avalos (D11): Follow the 5 Year Action Plan, the official policy to reduce homelessness in San Francisco. I wrote Prop T for treatment on demand and assisted in writing Prop B for affordable housing. These measures if passed will help to reduce homelessness. I wrote the legislation to establish a single standard of care for mental health services so that all who needed the services could access regardless of their ability to pay. This was cut by the Mayor's Office, I want to restore it.

***(3) The San Francisco Housing Element has identified the need for some 13,000 very low to moderate income homes, including: 3200 units of affordable accessible housing, 1500 units of affordable senior housing, and 5600 units of affordable multi-bedroom family housing. Given the declining level of federal and state financing for affordable housing development, how would you finance this level of affordable housing?***

Chiu (D3): As the chair of District 3's largest affordable housing organization, I support Proposition B's funding of affordable housing. As Supervisor, I would work to ensure that we leverage maximum federal and state dollars and private tax credits to build affordable housing. I will explore prioritizing in the planning process private developers who develop affordable housing levels that exceed current inclusionary requirements, or who provide substantial community benefits. I would also focus on a renovation strategy for existing public housing, as it is more cost-effective and environmentally-sound than building new housing, especially in a district with little vacant land for new development.

Mirkarimi (D5): Attach conditions through market rate development that dedicate housing for the above populations. This is exactly what I did in delivering the deal for senior LGBTQ housing at 55 Laguna (100 percent affordable at a BMR at 50-80%).

Avalos (D11): I helped to write Prop B and fought for housing funds in the city's budget process. I will continue to make such fights and allocations. When Prop B passes, I will ensure a transparent process for developing plans to meet the needs and targets listed above. Additionally, I will fight for higher levels of inclusionary housing and for RFPs and RFQs on development that push the envelope on affordable family and senior housing.

***(4) As Supervisor, through what mechanisms would you seek input from nonprofits when considering legislation that would affect agencies and the clients that they serve?***

Chiu (D3): I have worked closely with nonprofits over the years, served in leadership capacities on many nonprofit boards of directors, worked for a nonprofit (the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights), and as Supervisor, I would continue to nurture a close working relationship. I would proactively ask for advice on legislation from nonprofits working in relevant policy areas, solicit new policy ideas from nonprofit leaders, and meet with nonprofits as requested.

Mirkarimi (D5): Direct access from a union or caucus of nonprofits. My door is always open and desirous to listen to and collaborate with the CBO housing community.

Avalos (D11): I have a history of reaching out to nonprofits when crafting legislation that impacts their work. I will continue to do using their networks like HSN, the People’s Budget, the Housing Justice Coalition, the Childcare Providers Network, the Children’s Council, the Community Clinic Consortium, etc.

***(5) Do you feel that nonprofits receive adequate funding to meet the needs of the city and its vulnerable populations, and to ensure the health and sustainability of their organizations? If not, how would you address the need for more funding?***

Chiu (D3): I do not feel that nonprofits receive adequate funding to meet the needs of our most vulnerable populations. In addition to exploring revenue options discussed above, I would work to consolidate duplicative departmental functions (such as the fifteen departments that regulate small businesses), and use cost savings for more direct services.

Mirkarimi (D5): Insufficient funding is self evident. Using the bully pulpit and legislative muscle to deliver per my earlier suggestions.

Avalos (D11): I do not believe nonprofits receive adequate funding. I would factor in the cost of doing business for nonprofits in all future city budgets. These costs will address the rising cost of overhead, health care and other expenses so that contracts will expand each year with the true cost of providing services. I can see writing legislation to mandate that departments make these consideration when RFPing services.

***(6) As Supervisor, what would you do to reform the City’s current budget process of cuts and add-backs? How would you incorporate decision-making about nonprofit cost-of-living-adjustments (COLA) and cost-of-doing-business (CODB) increases into the budget process? (See the appendix for more information.)***

Chiu (D3): One approach I would consider would be to change the budget process so that Budget Analyst’s office would treat nonprofit contractors and city agencies more similarly in their analysis process, particularly in the assessment of COLA and CODB type increases.

Mirkarimi (D5): I would fight for budget reform so that critical needs aren't deflected onto the ultimatum process known as the add-back process - which is barbaric and unstrategic.

Avalos (D11): Factor these costs early on in the budget process. Require the Mayor do so when issuing budget instructions. If these costs must not be factored upfront then nonprofits will continue to compete with all other priorities in the budget process.

I want to increase accessibility and transparency of the process, a paper trail for each proposal seeking funding and ensure public hearings provide ample time and space for public input. I would seek to organize public input along service categories e.g. senior, mental health, substance use, public infrastructure, etc. I would use input to truly guide budget committee decisions.

***(7) Do you support the following:***

	<b>Chiu</b>	<b>Mirkarimi</b>	<b>Avalos</b>
<b>(a) Annual CODB increases for nonprofit contractors?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes

	<b>Chiu</b>	<b>Mirkarimi</b>	<b>Avalos</b>
<b>(b) Annual CODB increases that reflect actual increases in the cost of operations?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>(c) Contractor COLAs tied to the amount of the civil service COLA?</b>	Yes, for nonprofit contractor COLAs	Yes	Yes
<b>(d) Increases on general fund contracts only or on all nonprofit grants and contracts?</b>	All nonprofit grants and contracts.	For all contracts.	Yes

***(8) Should employees working on nonprofit city contracts earn wage rates that are comparable to civil service employees in similar job classifications? If so, what specific steps would you take to advance wage parity?***

Chiu (D3): Yes, I strongly believe in the principle of comparable pay for comparable work, and would support a salary study that compares wage rates as a first step for moving toward wage parity.

Mirkarimi (D5): If not unionized then it's up to parity legislation that I would support.

Avalos (D11): Yes, but this is not the prevailing notion. Services are contracting out as a cost savings to the city to avoid adhering to civil service requirements, including pay and health benefits. So we need a process that changes the mindset of the city. We also need a revenue source that can truly keep pace with the need for parity and the rising cost of living. I have been working on revenue for years and will continue to find sources as Supervisor.

***(9.) Many nonprofits urge San Francisco to undertake a long-term planning process that would guide the implementation of health and human services over the next 5 to 10 years, analyze and prioritize community needs and resources, ensure the sustainability of our system of care, and develop a plan that transcends the cyclical nature of the political process and individual department policies. What recommendations would you make to guide this planning process?***

Chiu (D3): As with most policy areas, this long-term planning process makes a lot of sense, and I would be happy to support it. I would recommend that the process entails a living plan that allows flexibility to adapt to changing realities, while establishing a core approach and philosophy of support of the health and human services sector.

Mirkarimi (D5): Are you kidding, 100 words doesn't even begin the cliff notes on this subject. I want to be part the crafting the vision and plan with budget priorities for the next 10 years.

Avalos (D11): There are some individual departments, like DCYF that create such a process internally. I would investigate how other departments and bureaus such as Community Substance Abuse Services do this work, find commonalities and make recommendations that can be used to initiate discussion for such long-term planning on guidelines that will govern the overall delivery of services and funding policies for such services. We need to look at population trends, changes to the mission of departments and nonprofits and overall funding in the Bay Area to nonprofit services, the supply of workers to meet demand and overall long term economic planning.

## Appendix: The San Francisco Human Services Network and the Nonprofit Health and Human Service Sector

**The San Francisco Human Services Network (HSN)** is an association of over 100 community-based nonprofit agencies dedicated to addressing issues critical to the health and human services sector of San Francisco and the people we serve. For more information, see <http://www.sfhsn.org>. For a list of our members, see [http://www.sfhsn.org/members\\_members.htm](http://www.sfhsn.org/members_members.htm).

**The San Francisco health and human service nonprofit sector:** Nonprofit contractors play a vital partnership role with the City in meeting the needs of disadvantaged San Franciscans. In 2001, the San Francisco Human Services Network and the San Francisco Urban Institute conducted a survey of health and human service nonprofits that contract with the City, which revealed that:

- Nonprofit agencies, with sites reaching every neighborhood and community, had an aggregate budget of over \$773 million in fiscal year 2000-2001, including over \$313 million in City contracts.
- Providers matched the City's contribution with over \$459 million in additional funds—leveraging every City dollar with an additional \$1.50 from other sources.
- With these funds, agencies achieve over 970,000 client contacts each year, providing services ranging from long-term case management to six-week job training programs to single-contact telephone hotline calls.
- Providers employ over 15,000 staff and enroll over 1000 “client trainees”.

The University of San Francisco's [Institute for Nonprofit Organization Management](#) is in the process of preparing a new research report on the size and scope of San Francisco's nonprofit sector. According to their early results, there are 783 health and human service nonprofits operating in the City, with aggregate budgets of about \$1.97 billion.

**Nonprofit costs of doing business:** Over time, flat funding of nonprofit contracts represents an "invisible" budget cut. In past years, the City provided occasional small increases for cost-of-living-adjustments (COLAs) to nonprofit staff. In 2005 to 2007, the Mayor and Board provided a cost-of-doing-business (CODB) increase on the full amount of general fund contracts, which helped nonprofits cover the inflationary costs of health insurance, rent and other operational expenses. Due to the severity of the current budget crisis, nonprofits received no COLA or CODB in the City's FY 2008-09 budget, and must absorb all cost increases at the expense of staffing and services.

Under San Francisco's annual budget process, the City generally addresses the question and rate of nonprofit cost increases after funding other departmental requests, often with funds identified by the Budget Analyst as cost savings. This process has led to nonprofit COLAs significantly below salary increases for City employees and CODBs inadequate to meet actual cost increases.

Even in years with typical increases of 2-3%, the CODB did not fully cover unavoidable operating cost increases and staff raises, threatening nonprofits with the slow degradation of their capacity to provide services. In addition, the growing disparity in wage rates between City-funded nonprofit and City human service employees leads to difficulty in recruiting and retaining nonprofit staff. HSN members seek parity with City employees performing similar work — if not in actual pay levels, at least in the percentage of their COLA, as well as adequate reimbursement for rising overhead costs.