



EAST BAY YOUNG DEMS

Questionnaire for Candidates Seeking National Office

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot: **Joan Buchanan**
2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number)
Member House of Representatives, CA- CD10
3. Are you the incumbent? Yes **No**
4. How long have you resided in this district? **Since 1982**
5. Is the office you seek partisan or nonpartisan? **Partisan** Nonpartisan
6. If partisan, please indicate party: **Democratic**

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name:	Joan Buchanan for Congress
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Please limit each answer to 250 words or less.

1. Young adults entering the workforce seem to have an especially hard time finding employment in this economy, let alone a good job with fair pay and benefits. Trickle-down from the stimulus is moving slowly, and the government has spent much more bailing out financial institutions than creating jobs or

building infrastructure. What kind of economic policies must we adopt to get out of this recession and feeling prosperous as a nation? How will you work to advance your goals at the national level and within your district?

I am well aware of the difficulty recent college graduates are having finding employment in this job market. My youngest son just graduated from UC Irvine, and he still has not found a job.

With respect to job creation, federal stimulus package primarily targeted new jobs that were “shovel ready” and saving jobs in the public sector by providing grants to states for health and human services and education.

The TARP funds were used to bailout the financial industry and businesses like AIG that were considered systemic risks.

Neither program targeted small businesses that are the backbone of our local economies and are responsible for over 50 percent of all job growth. I have toured small businesses throughout the Congressional district. Many have had their lines of credit cut or reduced and many are struggling to stay open.

In Congress we must do two things for small businesses: 1) provide federally guaranteed small loans or lines of credit 2) provide research and development grants to stimulate the development of new products and businesses.

To maintain our long-term economic competitiveness, we must invest in public education and make college affordable if we are going to have the workers and leaders to build the industries of the future.

2. How would you use your elected office to improve public education and make higher education affordable and accessible? Specifically, how would you improve federal student aid policies to reduce the reliance on personal debt to finance higher education?

No Child Left Behind has been nothing more than an empty promise and must be revised and fully funded. Science and technology must become the 4th and 5th Rs. College must become affordable for all students. Salaries should be high enough to attract the best and brightest to the teaching profession, and we need to invest in the training and time for training and for teachers to share best practices.

With respect to higher education, here's where I would start:

- 1) **Expand capacity. In California we have added only one UC campus since 1970 while our population has doubled. The federal government should provide grants and incentives to expand our community colleges, state colleges, and UC system.**
- 2) **Federal student aid must be expanded, and there should be incentives for students to go into professions with employment shortages – engineers, primary care physicians, nurses, etc.**

3) Incentives should be provided to expand capacity of programs with employment shortages or programs where there will be shortages in the future. For example, our nursing shortage is exacerbated by the fact that we do not have capacity to admit enough candidates into our nursing programs.

3. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have claimed the lives of too many young adults. Money spent on the war is needed for healthcare and education programs for young people at home. While there seems to be overt movement towards withdrawing combat troops from Iraq, the war in Afghanistan is escalating. How do you see the US's involvement in the future of Iraq and Afghanistan? Please be specific.

Our goals in both countries should be to bring our troops home safely as soon as possible.

In Iraq, I support the President's troop withdrawal plan and was very pleased to read this week that the schedule may be accelerated.

In Afghanistan we need to secure the border with Pakistan, restore political and economic stability, and have a plan for the safe and orderly withdrawal of our troops.

4. Young adults face special challenges to obtaining health care and many go without. How would you use your office to promote universal health care and move us towards a single-payer system?

Quality, affordable healthcare should be a right for all Americans.

There are three issues that must be addressed:

- 1) Providing coverage for the 47 million Americans that do not have insurance**
- 2) Reducing the costs for those who have insurance**
- 3) Increasing capacity so that we do not have a shortage of providers, particularly in rural areas**

There are four elements that must be included in any plan:

- 1) Preserving the patient/provider relationship**
- 2) Maintaining adequate provider reimbursement levels**
- 3) Focusing on preventive rather than acute care**
- 4) Including a fiscally responsible method for financing the plan**

I will vote for a plan that covers all uninsured and has these elements. It is an important first step in moving towards a single-payer system in the future.

5. The next generation's health and well-being depends on our choices regarding energy, development, and environmental stewardship. How will you use your office to promote sustainable energy, building, and environmental policies?

These are areas where the United States must lead by example. The policies we adopt in Congress along with plans implemented at the State level will shape our path to clean energy and a sustainable lifestyle. Our goals need to be achievable, and we must be prepared to provide economic incentives to support the conversion. The reward will be a healthier environment and a new economy fueled by green jobs.

As a member of the Assembly Utilities and Commerce Committee, I have knowledge in the areas of renewable portfolio standards, transmission, and clean energies: solar, solar thermal, wind, biodiesel, and hydroelectric. I have toured both solar and wind facilities. It also is important to note that the 10th Congressional District is home to two major wind farms.

Finally, I also am a strong supporter of the environment and smart growth policies. The decisions we make about our open space, parks and coast; the Delta; and the quality of our water and air, along with many other decisions will impact the quality of our lives for generations.

6. How will you use your campaign and position to defend the rights of GLBT families, promote marriage equality in California and other states, protect domestic partnership laws, and end Don't Ask Don't Tell?

I have no tolerance for discrimination. Our constitutional rights should apply equally to all. I will vote to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act and Don't Ask Don't Tell. In California I voted against Proposition 8 and I voted for AR 5.

7. Women's right to choose is under attack in our country. How would you use your office to protect a woman's right to choose in all 50 states?

I am 100 percent pro-choice and will vote accordingly.

8. If you could choose, what committee(s) would you sit on in the House of Representatives, and why?

Currently, I have an interest in 4 committees:

Financial Services: I have a background in finance and would like to see regulations that ensure our financial markets operate transparently and work for Main Street, protecting the investments of all Americans.

Transportation and Infrastructure: Transportation is an important issue throughout the district. Our transportation systems in California were designed primarily to transport people north to south, but the population has moved west to east. Therefore, we have inadequate transportation systems in a suburban district like the 10th, and we must develop better mass transportation options to get people out of their cars and reduce vehicle emissions.

Education and Labor: We must make education a national priority for reasons previously stated.

Armed Services: Travis Air Force Base anchors CD10 in the north and Lawrence Livermore Laboratory and SANDIA in the south.

EXPERIENCE

Please list or describe your current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement includes many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life. You may include a list of endorsements here as well.

Finance: I have both private sector and public sector financial experience. I have brought zero based budgeting principles to each, improving productivity and reducing costs. At Delta Dental, I was Assistant Director of the Actuarial Division responsible for rate development, underwriting, the corporate budget and other projects. I was the Director of the Commercial Operations Division completing a dramatic turnaround in just one year, implementing Total Quality Management principals to streamline processing and reduce inventory. Our school district was near bankruptcy when I was first elected. Today it is one of the best managed with the highest bond rating in the state.

Community: I have been a community activist for almost three decades working with local organizations to improve our community in areas from schools to parks and open space to zoning/planning decisions to road improvements to services for battered women. I have served on numerous boards and have been a member of many organizations.

Youth: I coached youth soccer for 15 years, and I coached softball and basketball teams. I have been involved in Girl Scouts, National Charity League and other organizations.

Education: I served on school board for 18 years working with educators and parents to improve our schools. I have served on numerous curriculum and assessment task forces. I was an active member of PTA and also organized parent advocacy groups. I was the CA-AAUW Education Representative. I serve on the board of the McCarthy Center for Public Policy and the Common Good at the University of San Francisco.

Elected/Campaign Experience: I was elected in 1990 and reelected in 1994, 1998, 2002, and 2006 to the San Ramon Valley Unified School District Board. I was elected in 2008 to the California State Assembly. I chaired the No on Vouchers Campaign for the Education Coalition in Contra County in 1994. I have chaired or taken major roles in 9 other local campaigns in the past 21 years.