

EBWPA Endorsements June 2022
Candidate Profile

Candidate Name
Jennifer Esteen RN
Gender Pronouns
She/her
Office Sought
State Assembly AD20
Party Affiliation
Democrat
Website
www.jenniferesteen.com
FPPC#
1439250
Please tell us the elected office or board you serve on.
I currently serve in an appointed role on the Alameda Health System (AHS) Board of Trustees, my appointment began Dec. 2020. I am the Board’s Secretary Treasure and I chair the Finance Committee which oversees the billion dollar budget, manages four hospitals and 318 SNF beds. I also serve as an appointed member of the Eden Municipal Advisory Council since Dec. 2019. I have been a member of the Housing Conservatorship Working Group in San Francisco since Oct. 2019. In my union role, I serve as the Vice President of Organizing for SEIU 1021 and I have been in this role since December 2019. I’m also an elected member of AD20 ADEM.
For the following questions, please check “yes,” “no,” or “other.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you support the passage of a federal Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution as follows: “Equality Of Rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex.”?
Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you support requiring employers to provide paid sick days to their employees that can also be used to care for ill family members?
Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you support mandatory minimum paid parental leave?
Yes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please provide an explanation for each "Other" you checked in the space provided below.
<p>The following questions seek input regarding your position on choice. Please check "YES" if you agree or "NO" if you disagree.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A woman has the right to choose an abortion in accord with the principles of Roe v. Wade.
<p>Yes</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A woman has the right to choose an abortion at any time during her pregnancy to protect the woman's life and health.
<p>Yes</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women of limited financial resources have a right to public funding for family planning and abortion services.
<p>Yes</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women should be able to receive an abortion without a waiting period.
<p>Yes</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive, medically accurate, age appropriate sex education should be provided to all students.
<p>Yes</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FDA-approved emergency contraception should be offered without delay to all victims of rape or incest in all hospital or clinics.
<p>Yes</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FDA-approved emergency contraception should be provided in accordance with appropriate dispensing regulations, without delay or obstruction, to all women at all pharmacies in the United States.
<p>Yes</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may provide additional information to clarify a "Yes" or "No" answer here.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you marked "other" for any of the above, you must provide additional information.
<p>How would you use the platform of this elected office to advance gender equity?</p>
<p>I'm running a campaign based on my experiences as a Black women, psych nurse and a mother, Many women work providing care for others as childcare providers, in home caregivers, and as IHSS workers, but this work is often the lowest paid because of historical ties between this work today and its roots in slavery and unpaid labor. "Women's work" has often been confined to the home and seen as work that is not worthy of fair compensation. Black women and all women of color were excluded from the National Labor Relations Act when it was written. That level of exclusion is an example of the systemic barriers all women, especially women of color, have to overcome in order to close the gender pay gap and gain access to fair compensation and treatment at work.</p>

Now we must use this additional information to shape policy that will create and enforce pay equity standards. Ultimately standards for pay are best addressed when workplaces are unionized and objective factors are used to create pay scales based on things like years of experience not just school based education. To date, issues such as pay equity are reduced most thoroughly in workplaces that are unionized. Not only can gender based pay gaps be eliminated, but pay gaps based on race are also eliminated. Passing legislation to make it easier for unionization in workplaces, both public and private, will help eliminate pay equity issues in a robust way. Another route to pay equity includes fully funding our public education and public health systems. These tend to be sectors that traditionally employ women but can be a source of upward mobility for students and the public being served if investments in the systems center equity.

How will you work to end discrimination based on age, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, marital status, socioeconomic status, and disability?

I support civil rights legislation for all marginalized communities including all those listed here. This is exactly why I decided to run for office, and California must work to change the systems that lead to discrimination. That's why I support policies like healthcare for all, universal access to affordable housing, and fully funded education, because when we don't have these the most vulnerable people are those who get hurt first.

What do you think are the top 5 issues that impact women that are relevant to the elected office you are seeking? (Please rank in order of priority)

Though California is seen as a progressive haven, many of the problems women face around the country are challenges here as well. This includes pay equity, access to affordable childcare, access to reproductive care, and preventative healthcare, and protection from sexual harassment and violence. California suffers from a gender pay gap that is similarly egregious to the national one, along with an extreme lack of affordable childcare - which is a critical issue for mothers who can't afford to work because of childcare costs. In addition, though we do not have the same kind of threats to the legality of abortion and other reproductive healthcare in California, access can still be challenging. Women across all age groups still face sexism and sexual violence in schools and workplaces. The #MeToo movement has been helpful at shining a light on just how prevalent these problems are, but there remain many women, girls, and female identified folx who still operate in unsafe or unjust situations. While intimate partner violence has long been a critical issue faced by many women, the stresses of

What have you done to mentor women?

By setting an example through my service at the bedside, more visibly in my various appointed roles, and as an organizer for workers rights and community benefit advance issues for women and girls daily. I served as a mentor to high school aged girls through the Upward Bound program when I was an undergrad and helped them visualize their path from high school to college. Throughout my career as a nurse it has been the relationships I developed with women identified clients that were meaningful beyond the bedside. Being

present to help restore a sense of safety, dignity and humanity after dehumanizing experiences like being raped, assaulted, picked up by the police, or denied treatment. My presence and my kindness were always a lifeline to women identified people when they needed it most.

My work as Vice President of Organizing for SIEU 1021 has included spending countless hours advocating for fast food workers, majority women and people of color, immigrants and non-native English speakers who earn minimum wage, are treated with sexism and contempt. These folx often have to work multiple jobs to provide for their families and care for loved ones. In far too many restaurants the air conditioning doesn't work and women have blamed for being in menopause because management refuses to take responsibility for excessive heat while in 100 + degree kitchens.

The work I do and the work of women leaders is crucial because we have to break the barriers that patriarchy has put in place. We have to encourage women to speak up, fight back and work hard to overcome, but we also have to create policy that upends centuries of western, male centered rules, regulations and mindsets. As a legislator, I will continue to mentor women whether it's by supporting them as interns and staff or offering mentorship to women in AD20 and across the state who are seeking to step into healthcare, run for office or otherwise shape policy and dedicate their lives to service.

What is the gender breakdown of your campaign staff/volunteers?

My core campaign staff is comprised of 3 cis male staff (CM, PD, FD) and 2 women (field director and deputy field director). The majority of the higher level volunteer positions for the campaign are held by women - volunteer coordinator, events coordinator, tech support, etc.

If you are currently in public office, please provide examples of votes that you have taken or positions promoted which supported women's gender equality and/or reproductive health.

I have not held public office, but as I mentioned above, I have fought extensively for women's equality on the job in my role as a union officer. I welcome the opportunity to broaden the scope of my fight as a member of the legislature.

Please paste here your biography

Jennifer Esteen is a registered nurse, mother, and community leader serving on the Eden Municipal Advisory Council and the Alameda Health System Board of Trustees. She has spent her career delivering for the most vulnerable, first as a psychiatric nurse in the San Francisco General Hospital Psychiatric Emergency Room, where she saw firsthand the vicious cycle that patients experience from diminished funding for mental health care. and now as Vice President of Organizing for SEIU 1021. Jennifer is ready to fight for her community as an assemblymember in Sacramento. She will be a champion for working families – advocating for policies that will keep our communities safe and healthy. Jennifer will fight to ensure

corporations and special interests pay their fair share, so our community has access to housing they can afford, healthcare they deserve, and a quality education.

Additional Information or comments