

NAME: Robert Rivas

ELECTION: Assembly District 30



Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club  
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

June 5<sup>th</sup> 2018 General Election

1. How long have you been a registered Democrat?

*I am a life-long Democrat. I've been a Democrat since I registered to vote on my 18<sup>th</sup> birthday!*

2. Give three reasons why the PV Cesar Chavez Democratic Club should endorse your candidacy.

1. *I am committed to fighting for our Central Coast values in Sacramento.*
2. *I have dedicated my entire career to serving my community and working on behalf of the Latino community.*
3. *I will be a bridge builder and I will work closely with the Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club to help deliver results for our community.*

3. Describe three things you have done or plan to support Pajaro Valley Democrats and residents?

1. *I believe it is important to elect Democrats to local office. I pledge to be a partner of the Pajaro Valley Democrats and help you elect Democrats to local office. I will raise money, I will knock on doors, and I will bring in volunteers to help you accomplish your goals.*
2. *I will continue to stand up to corporate interests to ensure our residents have clean water and can continue to enjoy our beautiful environment.*
3. *I plan to bring more good paying jobs to our region and work to provide more affordable housing for our residents.*

4. Describe your qualifications for this office? Include lived experiences as well as education.

*I grew up in farmworker housing at Almaden Vineyards in South San Benito County. I was raised by my single mother and loving grandparents who taught me the value of hard work and fighting for what is right. I saw first hand the power of organizing and working together to fight for justice, equality, and better working conditions. Watching my grandfather work for equal rights has served as my inspiration and the reason I decided to run for office.*

*I have worked for the County of Monterey as a Deputy Clerk of the Board, as a staffer for Assemblymembers Simon Salinas and Anna Caballero, I have been a paid-call firefighter and a student support specialist for San Benito High School Special Education. I am currently a Student Support Manager at San Benito High, a lecturer at Gavilan College and the District 3 Representative on the San Benito County Board of Supervisors.*

*I received my Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Sacramento State University and my Master's degree in Public Administration from San Jose State University.*

5. Name three of your priorities and goals for your first two years in office.

- 1. Provide more resources for education and academic programs*
- 2. Ensure all Californians have access to high quality health care*
- 3. Create more good paying jobs*

6. How would you support bringing good paying jobs to our local community and increasing revenue for South County?

*I would support creating more jobs here locally. Thousands of AD 30 residents commute to work outside of our district. Creating more jobs locally would drastically increase revenue in South County. Moving jobs to the areas that residents are currently commuting from would have the added benefits of reducing traffic congestion, creating a higher quality of life and reduce greenhouse gasses polluting our environment. I support increased funding for job training programs and loan programs for first time business owners.*

7. What impact do you plan to make while in office?

*I'm running for public office because I want to work to help create opportunity for all Californians. When I was young, growing up at Almaden Vineyards with my family, my grandfather would constantly remind me that if I worked hard, went to school everyday and attended college, I would have great opportunities and a successful future. If I did those things, I'd be able to get out of the fields, and live a better life. Luckily for me, my grandpa was right.*

*I worry that the same is not true for my daughter and other young Californians. Our schools are failing. Our environment is under assault. We are beginning to see the first real signs of the impact of global warming. Buying a home is difficult, if not impossible for our young college graduates. The cost of a college degree is astronomical and only increasing. Crime is on the rise. Prisons are filling up. It seems like the California dream has become just that - a distant, unreachable dream.*

*California is quickly becoming a place where opportunity is scarce.*

*I want to help change that.*

*I want to ensure that Californians have the same opportunities to succeed that I did - that's why I'm running for Assembly. That's why I've served for 8 years on the San Benito County Board of Supervisors.*

8. How do you plan to address the critical housing and transportation issues we face in our community?

*There is no question that we face serious issues as a community. We must focus on creating affordable housing, so that local residents can buy a home and live near their workplace. I support first time home buyer incentive programs. I also support creating and expanding home buying programs for our state and local workers, teachers, and public safety officers. We need to help lift people out of poverty.*

*Transportation is a major issue facing our area. Our roads and infrastructure has clearly not kept pace with our rapidly growing population. We must do a better job of reaching out to state officials and working together regionally to find solutions to our pressing traffic and road safety problems.*

9. How do you plan to incorporate our South County values in your decision-making?

*I was raised in this district and have lived here all of my life except for the brief period I attended college. South County values are my values so I have no doubt they will play a part in my decision-making. I plan on forming community roundtables with local leaders. We will meet regularly so I can stay connected to local issues and provide updates regarding what is going on in Sacramento.*

10. How do you plan to strengthen the support services we provide in our community to address the growing community needs?

*During my time as a County Supervisor in San Benito, I led the effort to build a homeless resource center and shelter, and I also led the effort to create a new LGBTQ Center. I will continue to show this kind of leadership when elected to the State Assembly. I will fight for additional support services for our region. You can count on me.*

Please expand on your responses...but we will read no more than *two pages* of information.

**Responses will ONLY be accepted electronically via email.**

Questionnaires must be submitted to Raymon Cancino or Jenny Sarmiento, by March 16, 2018, to be considered for an endorsement. Please email to [chavezdems@gmail.com](mailto:chavezdems@gmail.com). Please Cc: [cancino45@gmail.com](mailto:cancino45@gmail.com) and [jtsarmiento831@gmail.com](mailto:jtsarmiento831@gmail.com).

**MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, MARCH 16TH TO RECEIVE CONSIDERATION AT OUR ENDORSEMENT MEETING**

**SALINAS  
LEADERS  
AGREE:**

**ROBERT RIVAS  
is our choice for  
State Assembly!**



**Simon Salinas**

Monterey County Supervisor  
Former Assemblymember



**Jane Parker**

Monterey County Supervisor



**Gloria De La Rosa**

Salinas City Councilmember



**Tony Barrera**

Salinas City Councilmember



**Patty Padilla**

Salinas Union High School  
District Trustee



**Jyl Lutes**

Salinas City Councilmember  
(ret.)



**Maria Orozco**

Mayor of Gonzales



**Aurelio Salazar**

Hartnell College Trustee



**Erica Padilla Chavez**

Hartnell College Trustee



**Laura Solorio**

Salinas Physician (ret.)



**Matt Huerta**

Affordable Housing Leader



**Maricela Cruz**

Alisal Union School District  
Trustee

**Robert Rivas will fight for the People of the Salinas Valley!**



# **SUPERVISOR ROBERT RIVAS**

## ***Democrat for Assembly***

Supervisor Robert Rivas lives in Hollister with his wife, Christen, and their one-year-old daughter, Melina. He has served on the San Benito County Board of Supervisors since 2010, and most recently served a term as Chairman.

Robert has deep roots in San Benito County. He was born and raised in Paicines, California, where his grandfather was a farmworker at Almaden Vineyards. Robert and his brother Rick grew up in farmworker housing, cared for by their single mother and beloved grandparents, who immigrated from Mexico to San Benito County in the early 1960s.

As a child, Robert watched his grandfather stand side by side with Cesar Chavez and the UFW as a leader in the fight to win equal rights and fair contracts for farmworkers. Robert's grandfather was known for his passionate advocacy on behalf of his fellow workers, but also for his ability to work with owners to negotiate contracts acceptable to both sides.

Robert's grandfather taught him the importance of service on behalf of the community. Through him, Robert learned that you could fight fiercely for your beliefs, while respecting those with whom you disagreed. Still, it seemed unlikely that Robert would become a community leader, at least not if doing so required public speaking. For much of his childhood he struggled to overcome a severe stutter that rendered him almost speechless. His mother spent all of her savings on speech therapy, and it was only after years of work that Robert was able to overcome the disability.

Robert's childhood experiences – growing up in a farmworker community, struggling to overcome a disability – gave him a direct understanding of the challenges faced by many in our community as they struggle to build better lives for themselves and their families.

Robert attended local public schools, first in San Juan Bautista and then, after the vineyard closed and his family moved, in Hollister. Inspired by his grandfather, Robert decided to pursue a career in public service. He graduated with a Bachelor's in Government from CSU-Sacramento in 2003, and later earned a Master's in Public Administration from San Jose State University. He moved quickly to put his ideals into practice. From 2003-2006, he served as a Field Representative for Assemblymember Simon Salinas, and from 2006-2008, he was the Field Director in Assemblymember Anna Caballero's district office. These positions allowed Rob to spend time in his community, getting to know the concerns of his neighbors and assisting Assemblymembers Salinas and Caballero as they advocated for their constituents in Sacramento. During this time, Robert also served as an EMT and paid call firefighter for the City of Hollister.

From 2008 to 2010, Robert worked as a Senior Clerk to the Monterey County Board of Supervisors, where he saw the impact that Supervisors can have in shaping the future of their county. He began to think seriously about running for office himself. In 2010, inspired by his grandfather's legacy and encouraged by community members who had gotten to know him during his years of work in local government, Robert declared his candidacy for San Benito County Supervisor.

Robert recognized that there was a need for fresh leadership on the Board. Still, the odds were long. His opponent was an eight-year incumbent who had never lost a race. As a first-time candidate, Robert earned few endorsements from established organizations. But he was determined to introduce himself to voters across the county, and he launched an aggressive door-to-door campaign. He spoke about the need for affordable housing, more jobs, and an urgent investment in crumbling local infrastructure. Voters responded to his energy and passion, and he won with over 70% of the vote. At the time of his election victory, Robert was the youngest County Supervisor in California.

During his nearly eight years of service on the Board of Supervisors, Robert has fought to create more affordable housing and worked with the business community to bring jobs to San Benito County. He has led efforts to repair local roads and reduce traffic congestion, and to build a flagship county library and a new county courthouse. He led contract negotiations with local firefighters to reduce costs and expand access for rural residents. He's stood up for transparency on the board. And he's become known for his fierce advocacy on behalf of the environment.

While serving as Supervisor, Robert has stayed active in the community. He is a professor at Gavilan College, where he teaches a political science course. He's served as an employment specialist and job training coordinator at San Benito High School, helping students prepare for their first jobs. Perhaps most importantly, he and his wife Christen are excited new parents to their one-year-old daughter, Melina.

**“I am proud to endorse Robert Rivas for State Assembly. I've worked with Robert and have seen first hand the passion, work ethic, and values he brings to public service. Robert is one of the best and brightest young leaders in California. He brings people together and delivers results. He has my full support.”**

**-Dolores Huerta  
Civil Rights Leader**

# Rivas

## for Assembly

### **Organizational Endorsements**

California Teachers Association  
California Nurses Association  
Equality California  
California Democratic Party  
Service Employees International Union

### **Statewide Leaders**

Dolores Huerta  
Civil Rights Leader

### **County Supervisors**

Simon Salinas  
Monterey County Supervisor  
Former Assemblymember

Jane Parker  
Monterey County Supervisor

Fernando Armenta  
Monterey County Supervisor (ret.)

Dave Potter  
Monterey County Supervisor (ret.)

Blanca Alvarado  
Santa Clara County Supervisor (ret.)

Anthony Botelho  
San Benito County Supervisor

Jerry Muenzer  
San Benito County Supervisor

### **County Supervisors (continued)**

Margie Barrios  
San Benito County Supervisor (ret.)

Mark Medina  
San Benito County Supervisor

Jaime De La Cruz  
San Benito County Supervisor

Pat Loe  
San Benito County Supervisor (ret.)

Mike Graves  
San Benito County Supervisor (ret.)

Henry Solorio  
San Benito County Supervisor (ret.)

John Leopold  
Santa Cruz County Supervisor

### **City Councilmembers and Mayors**

Maria Orozco  
Mayor of Gonzales

Rich Constantine  
Morgan Hill City Councilmember

Gloria De La Rosa  
Salinas City Councilmember

Tony Barrera  
Salinas City Councilmember

Jyl Lutes  
Salinas City Councilmember (ret.)

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## for Assembly

### City Councilmembers and Mayors

Janet Barnes  
Salinas City Councilmember (ret.)

Fred Ledesma  
Mayor of Soledad

Anna Velazquez  
Soledad City Councilmember

Alejandro Chavez  
Soledad City Councilmember

Chris Bourke  
Soledad City Councilmember

Yanely Martinez  
Greenfield City Council

Avelina Torres  
Greenfield City Council

Rebecca Garcia  
Watsonville City Councilmember

Jimmy Dutra  
Watsonville City Councilmember

Antonio Rivas  
Mayor of Watsonville (ret.)

Karson Klauer  
Hollister City Council

Jim Gillio  
Hollister City Council

Mickie Luna  
Hollister City Council

Fernando Gonzalez  
Mayor of Hollister (ret.)

Jim West  
Mayor of San Juan Bautista

John Freeman  
San Juan Bautista City Council

Dan DeVries  
San Juan Bautista City Council

Carlos Victoria  
King City – City Councilmember

Charlie Morales  
Gilroy City Council (ret.)

### School Board Members

Maricela Cruz  
Alisal Union School District Trustee

Guadalupe Guzman  
Alisal Union School District Trustee

Noemi M. Armenta  
Alisal Union School District Trustee

Guadalupe Ruiz Gilpas  
Alisal Union School District Trustee

Fernando Mercado  
Alisal Union School District Trustee



# Rivas

## for Assembly

### School Board Members

Aurelio Salazar  
Hartnell Community College Trustee

David Serena  
Hartnell Community College Trustee

Erica Padilla Chavez  
Hartnell Community College Trustee

Sonia Martinez-Heredia  
Greenfield Unified Board of Trustees

Patty Nehme  
San Benito High School District Trustee

Juan Robledo  
San Benito High School District Trustee

Jennifer Colby  
Aromas-San Juan Unified School Trustee

Drew McAlister  
Aromas-San Juan Unified School Trustee

### State Legislators

Senator Scott Weiner

Senator Kevin De Leon

Senator Bill Dodd

Assemblymember Mark Stone

Assemblymember Richard Bloom

Assemblymember Blanca Rubio

Assemblymember Miguel Santiago

Assemblymember Laura Friedman

Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin

Assemblymember Joe Coto (ret.)