

NAME: Syda K. Cogliati ELECTION: June 5, 2018 – Superior Court Judge



Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

June 5th 2018 General Election

1. *How long have you been a registered Democrat?* Since I was eligible to vote in 1988.
2. *Give three reasons why the PV Cesar Chavez Democratic Club should endorse your candidacy.*

My experience. I have worked for 23 years as a lawyer and have practiced in all areas of the law. I have conducted dozens of trials as a judge pro tem. I have worked in the courts, doing the work of a judge, for much of my career.

My strong Democratic values, which will guide my conduct and decisions. I strongly believe in fairness, equal justice, and equal opportunity for all. Through my work as a judge pro tem and as an appellate court attorney, I have put these values into action: I carefully consider the evidence and arguments of both sides, apply the correct legal principles, and explain my decision in a manner that promotes acceptance and respect for the judicial process.

My commitment to diversity. Our local judiciary needs to reflect the community, and we all can help make that happen. A community needs judges from different backgrounds, with different experiences, in order to foster trust in the judicial system.

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

Supporting Pajaro Valley residents was the first thing I did in my legal career, through an internship at the Legal Aid Society (now California Rural Legal Assistance) in Watsonville.

I have worked with the Watsonville High School mock trial team and helped those students develop essential skills for success. I plan to provide internship and educational opportunities at the court for high school and law students from the Pajaro Valley.

I plan to address disparities in the juvenile justice system, which disproportionately affect Latino youth, both from the bench and by working with other agencies and programs.

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

My broad experience includes practicing environmental law, working at the California Supreme Court, working at a domestic violence agency, working at the Court of Appeal, working at a civil firm, working as a solo practitioner, and teaching at Monterey College of Law. I have been a leader in the legal community as president of Women Lawyers of Santa Cruz County. I have developed collaborative skills by working on community boards,

including the PCS Diversity Committee and the Santa Cruz County Youth Soccer Club Board. I passed the State Bar Judicial Nominees Evaluation Commission's process, and in June 2016, California Women Lawyers rated me "Well Qualified" for the Superior Court.

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

Enhance community partnerships to address criminal justice issues, particularly repeat offenders, mental health and drug addiction issues, and racially disparate sentencing.

Explore ways to improve the experience and safety of people (including children) in family law cases, which are heard at the Watsonville courthouse, since family law cases often involve emotional volatility and domestic violence.

Improve court communication and the public's access to information to ensure that litigants and the community have a better understanding of the judicial system and individual cases.

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

I cannot directly address these issues as a judge. However, I can and will advocate for more trial court funding at the state level so we can add staff at the Watsonville courthouse.

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

I plan to increase public trust and confidence in the local judicial system by making informed and fair decisions in every case and running a courtroom where everyone is treated with respect.

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

I cannot directly address these issues as a judge. However, I understand those issues and their impacts on our community, which is important because housing and transportation struggles can be the underlying problems in criminal and family law cases.

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

South County residents value families, jobs, and community. I will consider how my decisions will impact people in those respects. For instance, when judges in criminal cases decide whether to detain someone in custody pending trial, the person cannot be with their family, cannot work, and cannot participate in programs. I will ensure that pretrial risk assessments include an individualized evaluation of those factors. If I am in family court, I will ensure that children and families are treated with great respect during a difficult time.

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

I would like to see more bilingual services (including different dialects), and more support options for women and children in the family law, dependency, and criminal courts.

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 chavezdemsgmail.com. Please Cc: cancino45@gmail.com and jtsarmiento831@gmail.com.

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