



**Imperial Beach
Democratic Club**
imperialbeachdemocrats.com

Imperial Beach Democratic Club
Board of Supervisors Candidate Consideration District 1 Survey
Revised 7/20/2023

General Information

(please use bold blue font when filling out the questionnaire)

Candidate: **Nora Vargas**

Phone: **619-339-3634**

Email: **nora@noravargas.com**

Campaign Manager: **Griselda Ramirez**

Phone: **310-908-9548**

Email: **teamnora@noravargas.com**

Please provide any website or social media information here:

Website: **noravargas.com**

Facebook: **<https://www.facebook.com/NoraVargasSD/>**

Twitter: n/a

- 1.) Have you been registered OTHER than a Democrat? [] YES [X] NO
- 2.) How long have you been registered as a Democrat?

I have been a registered democrat since I became a naturalized US citizen in the early 2000's and I have always supported democratic candidates and to this day, I make sure I am in constant communication and accessible to partly leadership. I participate in our local South Area kick offs, democratic party endorsed candidates campaign kick offs and that i work to make sure we get these candidates elected.

3.) How long have you been a resident of the district?

I have been a part of the district since I was 14 years old. I had the privilege of growing up here and I have always made it my duty to give back.

4.) Have you run for or been elected to public office previously?

[X] YES [] NO

If "YES", what office did you run for, or previously hold?

Current San Diego County Board of Supervisor, District 1

Previously Southwestern Community College board trustee

5.) Please share how much money your campaign has raised to date, and how much you expect to raise.

Thus far I have raised close to \$50,000. My goal for March 2024 is to have raised \$250,000.

6.) Please list your endorsements (or attach the list on a separate page).

- **The San Diego Democratic Party**
- **Democrats for Equality**
- **Labor Democratic**
- **South Area Caucus**
- **San Diego County Young Dems**
- **SD Carpenters Local 619**
- **Mayor Todd Gloria**
- **Mayor Paloma Aguirre**
- **Councilmember Marcus Bush**
- **Councilmembet Jose Preciado**
- **Congressman Juan Vargas**
- **Congressman Scott Peters**
- **CA Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara**
- **Councilmember Matt Leyva**
- **Liuna Local 89 San Diego**
- **UFCW Local 135**
- **La Voz Democrata**

Goals, Issues & Policy Objectives

1.) Why are you running for office?

I am running for re-election for San Diego County Board of Supervisors in District 1 because I understand that together we can build healthier and stronger communities and ensure that government works for all of us.

2.) Why are you seeking endorsement from the Imperial Beach Democratic Club?

I am Seeking the Imperial Beach Democratic Club Endorsement because I want to ensure that together we build healthier and stronger communities and ensure that government works for us all.

3.) List your top three policy agenda goals for your campaign:

One of the few first actions I prioritized as I took office was ensuring that we were working to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic, both in terms of keeping our community safe and supporting our small businesses and promoting economic prosperity. I focused on championing equity-minded policies that would bring transformational change and we succeeded in many areas. In total, we passed 62 equity-centered policies, attended hundreds of community meetings and round tables, many of them in this community-- and elevated issues that significantly impact our communities.

Another top priority for me was ensuring the well-being of our tenants and protecting our renters. This was because during the height of the pandemic, I heard firsthand the hardships families were going through trying to make ends meet and affording to stay in their homes.

As a County, we immediately worked to expand access to rental assistance and closed loopholes to stop unfair evictions. I'm proud to share our Housing and Community Development Department awarded \$244 MILLION Dollars in rent and utility assistance to over 23-thousand households. These were working families who could have ended up on the streets without this emergency assistance.

I lead the County in declaring homelessness a Public Health Crisis in San Diego County to allocate more resources and provide urgent relief. Also, championed CARE Court which will provide vital care and support. SD County will be the first in the State to receive \$5.6 million in funding.

Successfully allocated \$1.5 million in County resources to support SANDAG's Youth Opportunity Pass Pilot Program; Broke ground on the East Otay Mesa Port of Entry and also broke ground on Fire Station 38 in East Otay Mesa. Launched state-of-the-art water testing technology to detect pollution at county beaches and uplifted advocacy with CalEPA for additional funding. This also included joining the EPA, USIBWC, and government leaders from Mexico for the Minute 328 signing that included \$330 million investment from the U.S. and \$144 million from the Mexican government.

If re-elected my top priorities will be Jobs, housing, environmental health and preventing and addressing homelessness are amongst my top priorities. I will work with cities throughout our region to expand rental protections and continue to build

affordable housing. I plan to accomplish these goals while supporting local small businesses and working families, creating green jobs, and fighting for environmental justice.

4.) Imperial Beach is ever increasingly under greater threat of sea level rise, high-tide flooding, coastal erosion, and higher storm surge.

a) Do you believe the science that says climate change is real?

YES [] NO [] Requires further explanation:

b) Do you believe that climate change can be mitigated or reversed?

YES [] NO [] Requires further explanation:

c) If elected, how will you use your office to meet the climate-related challenges facing Imperial Beach? Please explain.

I will be introducing a board letter on August 29th to ask that the County assess IB's climate related risks and to look for climate related financing strategies. Our Office of Sustainability and Environmental Justice that I created in May 2021 will lead these efforts. I am directing these efforts to be community centered, so I will direct our County team to engage directly with the IB community. Sea level rise and storm surge make IB the priority for the County to do the first pilot for Climate Resiliency and adaptation.

5.) Will you affirm a commitment to environmental justice: no community should be subjected to environmental hazards due to race, economic standing, or immigration status?

YES [] NO [] Requires further explanation:

I am Supervisor on the board that is focused on elevating Environmental Justice. While the Climate related actions are being advanced at the state and local City levels, I have focused on Environmental Justice. In May 2021 I created the Office of Climate and EJ. In 2021 I also Chaired the SD Air Pollution Control District which launched its own Office of EJ. And, with my first vote as a CARB member at the State, we adopted the International Border into the AB 617 Air Protection Program. The SDAPCD will be launching air monitoring this month for the TJRV and begin collecting data on sewage related air pollutants.

6.) For decades, Imperial Beach has been plagued by an unrelenting sewage spill from south of the international border. The constant flow of millions of gallons of waste, including untreated sewage, trash, pesticides, and heavy metals, make our beaches toxic and inaccessible to our residents for extended periods of time. Additionally, the sustained pollution of the Tijuana River impacts our air quality, biological resources, and hurts our overall economy. If elected, what is your plan for the Tijuana River Valley? Please explain.

One of my first actions as Supervisor was to declare the pollution at the TJRV a public health crisis. Most recently, I introduced a local state of emergency urging for a state and federal state of emergency. These declarations are crucial for our region especially in calling attention to the local impact we have from an international pollution problem. As a public health agency for the region under my leadership the county of San Diego is stepping up. The County along with Mexico, federal, state, and other local agencies have a responsibility to address the issue head on. Ever since entering office I have leveraged local funding to bring additional state and federal funding for Smugglers Gulch Improvement Project, Brown Property restoration, Beach and Bay water testing program and dredging for our local communities impacted first hand. You have my commitment that I will continue to make this a top priority and work with all levels of government to urgently bring the funding we need to address this infrastructure issue.

7.) Will you affirm a commitment to housing justice: housing is a human right regardless of status and not for the marginalization of poorer residents into less desirable areas that frequently have higher pollution levels and other health risks?

YES [] NO [] Requires further explanation:

8.) Will you promote food safety, the “eat local” movement, small family farms, urban gardens, and healthy food alternatives?

YES [] NO [] Requires further explanation:

9.) Inflation has had an impact on our community. Imperial Beach has reached historically high numbers of residents who experience food insecurity, rising housing costs and utilities. The county has significant and substantial resources to assist with these needs. If elected, how will you fight for Imperial Beach? Please explain:

The rising costs of goods is impacting families in a very real way and as County Supervisor I fight each day to push policies that help break barriers down for the most vulnerable and create programs to continue being the safety net for our communities. Many of the people I represent are ever only a paycheck from homelessness and I work tirelessly to ensure that no child goes to bed hungry and no senior is left homeless in the County of San Diego. With this in mind, I have created programs like the Recovery Action Fund for Tomorrow

where we invested \$10 million to serve 2,250 people. One of my first actions as County Supervisor was to implement an eviction moratorium to ensure that families facing hardship during the COVID-19 pandemic were not displaced from their homes. I created the County's first Office of Economic Prosperity and Community Development to leverage Federal and state funding for our communities and remove barriers for small businesses to thrive. Imperial Beach is a jewel of South County, and I have advocated fervently for environmental justice and improved public health for residents of Imperial Beach. Clean and healthy beaches are one of my top priorities for Imperial Beach, because the zip code you live in should not determine your access to health. Under my leadership, we implemented rapid beach water testing to ensure the safety of our community. This testing showed us what community advocates had been warning about for years, and as a result we are advocating for increased resources to help heal Imperial Beach beaches and the businesses that depend on visitors. Overall, I am committed to advance policies that will increase economic, environmental, and social resiliency.