



2018 Candidate Questionnaire - Senate

Candidate Name: **Kevin De Leon**

Campaign Address: **3530 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 1250 Los Angeles
CA 90005**

E-mail Address: **info@kevindeleon.com**

Office for which you are running: **United States Senate**

Date of Election: **June 2018**

Campaign Manager: **Jennifer Barraza**

Phone: **818-850-6462**

Progressive Democrats of America (PDA) was founded in 2004 to transform the Democratic Party and our country. We seek to build a party and government controlled by citizens, not corporate elites - with policies that serve the broad public interest, not just private interests. As a grassroots PAC, PDA operates inside the Democratic Party, and outside in movements for peace and justice.

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The Congressional Progressive Caucus

Do you pledge, if elected to this office, to immediately join the Congressional Progressive Caucus?

YES

Lobbyist

Do you pledge, if elected to this office, to NOT become a paid lobbyist for 5 years after you leave Congress?

YES

PDA Issues

PDA focuses on fundamental issues of concern to voters. The questions are grouped, but all issues are equally important. Your answers to the questions below will be used to help determine whether to endorse you in the race for the nomination for this office.

Notice to Candidate: The questions below refer to legislation introduced by bill number in the 115th Congress. By checking YES as your answer, you pledge that, if elected, you will co-sponsor the reintroduced version of these bills in the 116th Congress.

Presidential Fitness

Do you support, and would you pledge to author and introduce legislation in the Senate identical to current House of Representative bills as shown below:

H.R. 1987 To establish the Oversight Commission on Presidential Capacity, and for other purposes.

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Sponsor: Rep. Jamie Raskin

YES

Healthcare:

60 million Americans have no reliable access to health care and millions more have inadequate or overly expensive coverage. Despite spending twice as much as other developed nations on health care, our system performs poorly. Private U.S. insurance gatekeepers soak up one-third of expenditures. Pharmaceutical interests overcharge Americans by avoiding price competition.

S. 1804 Medicare For All Act of 2017
Sponsor: Sen. Bernie Sanders

YES

S. 2011 Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Act of 2017
Sponsor: Sen. Bernie Sanders

YES

S. 41 Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act of 2017
Sponsor: Sen. Amy Klobuchar

YES

S. 771 Improving Access to Affordable Prescription Drugs
Sponsor: Sen. Al Franken

YES

S. 337 Family Act
Sponsor: Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand

YES

War and Peace

Terrorism should be treated as a crime, not as a pretext for war and global military expansion. Nuclear weapons are too dangerous to serve the

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strategic interests of any country and must be abolished. Initiatives to promote peace, disarmament, and the rule of international law will allow the US military budget to return to the 1998 peacetime level. We must bring our troops home to their families and redirect wasteful military spending to reinvest in America.

S. 532 Stop Arming Terrorists Act
Sponsor: Sen. Rand Paul

YES

S. 2016 To prevent an unconstitutional strike against North Korea
Sponsor: Sen. Ed Markey

YES

S. 200 To prohibit the conduct of a first-use nuclear strike absent a declaration of war by Congress
Sponsor: Sen. Ed Markey

YES

S. 2047 Preventing Preemptive War in North Korea Act of 2017
Sponsor: Sen. Patrick Murphy

YES

S. 1723 Strengthening Veterans Health Care Act of 2017
Sponsor: Sen. Bernie Sanders

YES

Do you support, and would you pledge to author and introduce legislation in the Senate identical to the current House of Representative bills as shown below:

H.R. 1229 Repeal of the Authorization for Use of Military Force
Sponsor: Rep. Barbara Lee

YES

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Do you support, and would you pledge to author and introduce legislation in the Senate identical to the current House of Representative bill as shown below:

H.R. 1111 Department of Peacebuilding Act of 2017
Sponsor: Rep. Barbara Lee

YES

Global Warming/The Environment

Environmental degradation and global warming threaten human civilization. Science conclusively demonstrates that global warming results from human activity. Greed and corporate power dominate US policy imposing a nearsighted focus on short term profits instead of serving the welfare of future generations of Americans.

S. 987 100 By '50 Act
Sponsor: Sen. Jeff Merkley

YES

Do you support, and would you pledge, to author and introduce, legislation in the Senate identical to the current House of Representative bill as shown below:

H.R. 3671 Off Fossil Fuels for a Better Future Act (OFF Act)
Sponsor: Rep. Tulsi Gabbard

YES

H.R. 2014 Tax Pollution Not Profits Act
Sponsor: Rep. John Delaney

YES

H.R. 3314 100 by '50 Act
Sponsor: Rep. Jared Polis

YES

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H.R. 2242 Keep it in the Ground Act
Sponsor: Rep. Jared Huffman

YES

Election Integrity:

Big-money domination threatens our election system. Incumbents are unfairly insulated by district gerrymandering. Voters face political and racial obstacles to voting and getting their votes counted. Digital voting systems and internet voting are vulnerable to error and manipulation and defy verification. Only an auditable paper ballot can protect our right to vote.

S. 1588 Democracy Restoration Act
Sponsor: Sen. Ben Cardin

YES

Do you support, and would you pledge to author and introduce, legislation in the Senate identical to the current House of Representative bill as shown below:

H.R. 12 Voter Empowerment Act of 2017
Sponsor: Rep. John Lewis

YES

HR 2840 Automatic Voter Registration Act
Sponsor: Rep. David Cicilline

YES

HJ Res. 74 Constitutional Right to Vote
Sponsor: Rep. Mark Pocan

YES

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HR 1044 Same Day Registration Act of 2017
Sponsor: Rep. Keith Ellison

YES

HR 607 The Voter Access Protection Act of 2017
Sponsor: Rep. Keith Ellison

YES

Economic and Social Justice:

The enormous wealth disparity between the top 1% and the rest of America is an unsustainable economic and social injustice. Will you work for an economic recovery that employs all those willing and able, that houses all those needing shelter, and that imposes the cost based on the ability to pay.

S. 805 Inclusive Prosperity Act of 2017
Sponsor: Sen. Bernie Sanders

YES

S. 427 Social Security Expansion Act
Sponsor: Sen. Bernie Sanders

YES

S. 2159 ME TOO Congress Act
Sponsor: Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand

YES

S. 2019 Fair Employment Protection Act of 2017
Sponsor: Sen. Tammy Baldwin

YES

S. 1076 Keep Our Pension Promises Act
Sponsor: Sen. Bernie Sanders

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YES

S. 1590 Employ Young Americans Act
Sponsor: Sen. Bernie Sanders

YES

S. 2095 Assault Weapons Ban of 2017
Sponsor: Sen. Dianne Feinstein

YES

S. 2165 The Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands Equitable Rebuild Act
Sponsor: Sen. Bernie Sanders

YES

EMERGENCY AID FOR NATURAL DISASTERS

The climate change-intensified natural disasters of 2017 have laid bare the federal government's current response as both politicized and racist. How would you identify and legislatively fix underlying structural flaws in federal disaster relief and preparedness funding to ensure more timely, equitable, a effective federal responses to future events? (No more than 250 words).

The devastation in Puerto Rico was and continues to be heartbreaking. This isn't because the disaster was unpredictable. Once Hurricane Maria took form, all of the National Hurricane Center's advisories in the days preceding landfall projected Maria would hit Puerto Rico. It wasn't until days after Maria made landfall that the federal government sent the USNS Comfort, a naval hospital ship, to the island. Natural disaster responses should be considered matters of national security and managed under the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. Our Nation must respond to all disasters with consistent resolve and urgency. Providing basic services such as housing, electricity, access to clean water and medical care to Americans in crisis should NEVER be a partisan decision. With Katrina and Maria structural racism became clearly evident and we must collectively work to openly address and eliminate barriers to protect and serve all our people equitably. Congressional oversight of FEMA should demand transparency and accountability and ensure our response to natural disasters follow best practices. Additionally, Congress should fully fund and support research efforts to prepare for future climate events.

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Corporate Rule

Big corporations and banks dominant our political process, spending billions to lobby for programs against the public interest, and to privatize public services for profit. This erodes the middle class, destroys vital services, increases poverty, and undermines our nation. Congress must work to return our government to the people, improve services, stand up to corporate lobbyists, and stop the privatization of public services. We need a constitutional amendment to establish that corporations are not people and that money does not equal speech.

S.J. Res 8 A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections.

Sponsor: Sen. Tom Udall

YES

Mass Criminalization

The United States houses 25% of the world's inmates despite having only 5% of the world's population. The prison industrial complex has a vested interest in keeping people locked up. The growth of private, for-profit prisons has placed incarceration beyond public view. The administration of justice system is prejudiced against the poor and minorities.

S. 411 End Racial and Religious Profiling Act of 2017

Sponsor: Sen. Ben Cardin

YES

S. 1127 Justice Safety Valve Act of 2017

Sponsor: Sen. Rand Paul

YES

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Do you support, and would you pledge to author and introduce, legislation in the Senate identical to the current House of Representative bill as shown below:

H.R. 65 Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support and Education of 2017

Sponsor: Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee

YES

Equality Issues

The belief in equality is a part of the founding documents of our nation and an important part of our national identity. Equality still has not been achieved by most groups in this country. We hope and expect that our endorsed Candidates will sponsor, co-sponsor, and/or support legislation that furthers the reach of equality to any and all groups seeking equal status.

S.J. Res 5 Removing the deadline for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment 2017

Sponsor: Sen. Ben Cardin

YES

S. 819 Paycheck Fairness Act of 2017

Sponsor: Sen. Patti Murray

YES

Education

Education in the USA is unaffordable for the majority of Americans. The securitization of student debt has placed our students at the mercy of corporate predators. Minorities are denied equal access to education. We work to make our education system accessible and affordable to all.

If elected to this office, do you pledge to cosponsor the following legislation as an original cosponsor, or within 2 weeks of its introduction?

S. 806 College for All Act

Sponsor: Sen. Bernie Sanders

YES

Immigration

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We strongly support Comprehensive Immigration Reform that promotes fairness, equality, labor rights, family unification, integration, a program for legal residency and a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants.

S. 1615 DREAM Act of 2017
Sponsor: Sen. Lindsay Graham

YES

S. 349 A bill to clarify the rights of all persons who are held or detained at a port of entry or at any detention facility overseen by U.S. Customs and Border Protection or U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.
Sponsor: **Sen. Kamala Harris**

YES

Do you support, and would you pledge to author and introduce legislation in the Senate identical to current House of Representative bills as shown below:

H.R. 1036 American Families United Act of 2017
Sponsor: Rep. Beto O'Rourke

YES

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General

Please provide us with information in the sections provided below, some information about your campaign: (Your campaign plan with some *detail*, Your capacity to raise the necessary capital to fund the campaign; grassroots support; your campaign staff in place):

My lead campaign consultant is Courtni Pugh of Hilltop Public Affairs; my fundraiser is Melahat Rafiei of Progressive Solutions Consulting; my Pollster is Jonathan Brown of Sextant Consulting, my media consultant is Bill Hyers and my campaign manager is Jennifer Barraza. I'm supported by SEIU, National Nurses United, Teamsters, IBEW, ILWU, dozens of democratic clubs and over a hundred local, regional and state elected officials. I will not accept contributions from Fossil fuels, Big Pharma; Defense contractors or Private prisons. I have raised nearly \$1.1 million. Unlike my opponent, I can not loan myself \$5 million so I will rely on people power and run an insurgent campaign. My primary donors are individuals from up and down the state of California. Democracy for America has been the single largest donor organization via their membership. My first critical step is narrowing the field from 32 to 2. There are ten minor republicans in the race and with Latinos making up an estimated 18-20% of the June electorate, I am well positioned to be in the top 2. There has never been a Latino US Senator from California. Incumbent Senator Dianne Feinstein is universally known. However, every major public research poll indicates only 41% of the people are willing to re-elect her. I am better on the campaign stump and feel confident that in candidate debates clearly, differences will shine through between Feinstein and me.



Signature of Candidate

April 4, 2018

Date

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Biography

Kevin de León is one of California's most accomplished elected officials. His bold agenda to increase economic opportunity for all Californians is a testament to his effectiveness and progressive values.

During his time as President pro Tempore of the California State Senate, Kevin de León (D-Los Angeles) led the 40-member Senate to historic accomplishments to improve the lives of Californians, the state's environment, and economy for decades to come.

The progress made on critical issues confronting California stands in stark contrast to the gridlock in the U.S. Congress. Senator De Leon has focused on rebuilding the state's infrastructure, improving public education, health-care access, fighting climate change, building a clean-energy economy and equity for women, immigrants, and low-wage workers

In many ways, Senator De León embodies the promise of America. From a childhood of poverty to community activism to the upper echelon of the California Legislature, his respect for and commitment to working families and the betterment of all Californians has never diminished.

Senator De León is the son of a single, immigrant mother, who supported her family in the San Diego barrio of Logan Heights working as a house-keeper and other pick-up jobs. He was the first in his family to graduate from high school and college. He attended U.C. Santa Barbara and graduated from Pitzer College at the Claremont Colleges with honors. He is a Rodel Fellow at the Aspen Institute and a guest lecturer at the University of Southern California. He has one daughter.

Before entering politics, Kevin was a community organizer, taught English as a Second Language and U.S. Citizenship, and advocated for public schools.

Working for the National Education Association and the California Teachers Association, Kevin worked to improve funding for schools in low-income neighborhoods, modernize school facilities and expand health insurance for children. He fought schemes to take funds from public schools through taxpayer-funded vouchers and academic censorship in public schools.

Senator De León was elected by his colleagues to lead the Senate in 2014, making him the first Latino to hold that position in over a century. Before that, Kevin served four years in the Assembly before his election to the Senate in 2010.

Leader on the Environment and Clean Energy

Senator De León solidified California's reputation as a recognized global leader in the battle against climate change and for the development of a clean energy economy. He led the California delegation to the U.N. Climate Talks in Peru and Morocco and accompanied Governor Brown to Paris in 2015 to showcase California's landmark accomplishments.

He played a central role in crafting the bipartisan deal this year to extend California's cap-and-trade program with \$1 billion of the generated revenue dedicated to tackling diesel pollution and bolstering electrification of our transportation and vehicles.

Continuing steady progress in energy efficiency, Senator De León put California on a path to 50 percent renewable energy by 2030 – the largest state in the nation to do so – with an eye toward becoming 100 percent renewable by 2045.

California is the nation's clean-energy leader and has created over 500,000 clean energy jobs – 10 times more than there are coal jobs in the entire country.

His policymaking created rebates to make electric cars more accessible to working families with the goal of placing one million low-emission vehicles on the roads. Additionally, he passed requirements that California spend at least 25 percent of cap-and-trade revenue to benefit heavily polluted, low-income communities.

In 2012, Senator De León co-chaired the successful Proposition 39 campaign closing a corporate-tax loophole and creating a \$2.5 billion revenue fund for energy-efficiency upgrades in schools.

Kevin's first legislative measure secured park funds for communities lacking parks and green space, resulting in 126 new park projects across the state, the most extensive initiative of its kind in the nation.

Transportation, Housing, and Infrastructure

This year, Senator De León was instrumental in shepherding an additional \$5.4 billion a year investment in road, freeway, bridge and transit projects over the next decade. The result will be lower commute times, safer roads and job creation. Senator De León also successfully passed SB 5, giving Californians the opportunity to make long-overdue investments in our parks and flood-control infrastructure with a \$4 billion general obligation bond measure on the June 2018 ballot.

At a time when homeownership in California is at its lowest point since the 1940s, Senator De León led the Senate in moving legislation to fund new housing development, streamline approval processes, strengthen existing laws, and create more local accountability to build new housing and increase homeownership across the Golden State. Focusing on the most vulnerable, like returning veterans and the homeless, the Senate passed landmark measures to help those with the fewest options when it comes to housing.

In 2016, Senator De León championed the "No Place Like Home" initiative, an innovative and ambitious proposal to address homelessness in Califor-

nia by securing \$2 billion in bond financing for construction and rehabilitation of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless Californians suffering from mental illness.

Immigrant Protection

Senator De León led the fight against President Trump's efforts to commandeer local law enforcement for his anti-immigrant agenda. This year, he passed SB 54, the California Values Act, which prohibits state and local law enforcement agencies, including school police and security departments, from using local resources to perform the job of the federal government.

With President Trump's decision to rescind the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival program, Senator De León was instrumental in negotiating a \$30 million investment to assist the nearly 250,000 Dreamers in California with legal services as well as safety net funding.

In 2013, he brokered a compromise with Governor Jerry Brown to pass a law that allowed undocumented immigrants to obtain drivers licenses, access insurance, and step out of the shadow economy to make our roads safer for everyone.

Before joining the Legislature, Senator De León taught citizenship courses to immigrants and led opposition to the 1994 Proposition 187, a voter-approved statewide initiative that denied government services to undocumented immigrants.

Voice for the Working Class

Senator De León was the Senate's lead negotiator to secure a \$15 minimum wage for all California workers. He authored legislation to confront wage theft in cities across California, and he overcame powerful opposition from Wall Street to pass SB 1234, which created the Secure Choice retirement-savings program for California's private-sector, low-income workers. Secure Choice was the first automatic IRA policy of its kind in the

nation and will help millions of Californians achieve retirement security when fully implemented.

Senator De León also negotiated expansion of California's Film and Television Tax Credit Program, replacing the program's lottery system with a process quantifying job creation and economic benefits to the state's economy resulting in tens of thousands of new jobs for Californians.

Women's Advocate

When Planned Parenthood advocated this year for an increase in higher Medi-Cal reimbursement rates for reproductive health care, Senator De León carried their fight into budget negotiations and secured \$50 million from Proposition 56 tobacco tax revenue.

Guided by a belief in a woman's right to control her health care, Senator De León has been a stalwart defender for preserving federal funding for family planning as a Republican-led Congress continues to target Planned Parenthood for defunding.

Senator De León's unwavering advocacy for access and choice has been recognized by Planned Parenthood with a consistent 100 percent voting record and numerous awards, with special recognition in 2014 for legislative leadership.

In 2014, his bill to prevent sexual assault on college campuses was the first law in the nation to require affirmative consent, earning him the recognition from *Marie Claire* last year as one of the "ten biggest supporters of women's rights in U.S. government." *Ms. Magazine* selected his "yes means yes" measure as the most significant legislative victory on behalf of women for 2014.

Also in 2015, he empowered women in the workforce with state budget funding for thousands more slots for subsidized child care.

Public Safety

For nearly a decade, Senator De León led the State's fight for sensible gun violence prevention laws. In 2016, he led the charge to enact the most stringent gun violence prevention policies in a generation, including his groundbreaking SB 1235 requiring background checks for anyone who buys or sells ammunition.

Negotiating the Budget

During his tenure as Senate leader, budgets were delivered on time, provided protective reserves, paid down debt, provided relief funding for the drought, and wisely invested in children and working families. He secured critical education investments, pushing for new dollars for childcare and higher education. Under his leadership, California has added over 20,000 additional slots for California students at the University of California and the California State University.