



Santa Barbara Women's Political Committee

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SBWPC Positions

THE SANTA BARBARA WOMEN'S POLITICAL COMMITTEE'S FEMINIST APPROACH TO PUBLIC POLICY

Inclusive, intersectional, progressive feminist values shape all our positions and drive our strategies. We acknowledge that Black women, Indigenous women and Women of Color have historically been disproportionately impacted by misogyny, sexism, racism and other systems of oppression.

Definitions:

"Feminism" - the doctrine advocating that social, political, racial, economic, and all other rights of women be equal to those of men
"Women" - those who self-identify as "woman"

"Progressive" - advocating progress, change, improvement, justice, transformation, or reform

"Black, Indigenous, and People of Color" - any person not considered white including people of African descent, Asian, Indigenous, Latino/Latina/LatinX, Middle Eastern, Pacific Islander and other communities of color
"Intersectional" - the complex cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups

"Non-binary" - having a gender identity not exclusively masculine or feminine

Our Values:

Human Rights

We believe in and promote basic human rights for all, locally and globally, including safety; bodily autonomy; freedom from violence; fair, equitable, and compassionate immigration policies; access to food, shelter and healthcare; reproductive self-determination; and a healthy and just environment.

Civil Rights

We believe in and promote full and equal rights for all. We advocate for legislation advancing equity in areas such as voting access, employment, finances, child custody, housing, healthcare, and public accommodation. We are committed to creating a society in which every person has access, voice, and power in the community.

Equal Opportunity

We believe in and promote equal opportunity in all spheres of society, such as housing, education, employment, policy-making, and the justice system. This requires eliminating institutional barriers to equality, including racist, sexist, misogynistic, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, religious, ageist, and all other discriminatory policies and practices.

Our Strategy:

Historically and currently, our diverse communities are predominantly represented by heterosexual and cisgender, white men. We are committed to achieving a truly representative government that reflects the diversity of the local, regional, and national constituencies.

We will achieve our vision of a feminist society by demanding political representation that truly reflects the diversity of our communities; by influencing legislation at all levels of policy-making; by collaborating with other progressive communities; and by promoting political engagement and participation by all people.

Anti-Racism

Intersectional feminism requires a commitment to be anti-racist. We must identify, confront and eliminate racism in all its forms – systemic, individual, interpersonal, institutional and structural — to achieve racial equity and justice. We must not only communicate anti-racist values, but hold our own organization, ourselves and other institutions accountable for past and present injustices toward Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. We believe that reparations and reconciliation are integral to achieving racial justice. SBWPC will work with coalitions, organizations, individuals, and elected officials to achieve these goals.

Our country was founded on the colonization of the stolen land of Indigenous people and built by the systematic enslavement, oppression and exploitation of African people under a white supremacist ideology. Structural and systemic racism informs present day policing, the criminal justice system and mass incarceration. We advocate for the demilitarization of law enforcement, and demand that law enforcement be held accountable for their misconduct and brutality.

The codification of white supremacy also results in unearned privileges and unequal distribution of power, wealth and opportunity. Examples of this include gentrification, limited land rights and self-determination of indigenous peoples, targeted policing and incarceration, inadequate rights for agricultural workers, and unequal representation of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in all spheres of civil society.

We are committed to the eradication of racism, racial and religious discrimination, xenophobia, and related violence in order to create genuine equity and equality of opportunity for all.

Childcare and Early Childhood Education

Families must have access to affordable, high-quality childcare and early childhood education. We support a universal childcare policy. The lack of affordable, quality childcare and early education disproportionately impacts women, who are often the primary caregivers. This results in reduced employment options and professional advancement, leading to family economic instability. A robust childcare policy also

requires that care providers, who are primarily women and disproportionately Women of Color, be paid a living wage.

Crimes Against Women

The crimes that have been perpetrated against women throughout the course of history must be stopped. These unconscionable crimes include interpersonal violence, stalking, human trafficking, sexual harassment, exploitation, molestation, incest, rape, battery, assault, genital mutilation, and murder. Crimes against women have at their root an intersection between sexism and other forms of oppression. Therefore, we oppose all forms of violence and prejudice which oppress women, transgender and gender non-conforming people, Black, Indigenous and People of Color and those who have been targets of ethnic, racial and other systems of oppression.

We recognize that survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence need a safe environment in which to speak out. We support funding for and implementation of comprehensive, culturally-competent intervention and educational programs to address crimes against women. We demand legislation which clarifies and broadens the definitions of crimes against women, positively impacts survivor rights, addresses gun regulations, assists in creating a more sensitive and survivor-responsive criminal justice system, and permanently enacts and implements the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

Educational Equity

All individuals have the right to a quality, accessible, equitable public education. The experiences, strengths, and needs of girls and women from diverse backgrounds, including race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, and ability, must be included and celebrated to promote excellence and equity for all students. All students must see themselves reflected and valued in teaching and learning. We support ethnic studies curricula for all students and the inclusion of contributions of Black, Indigenous and People of Color.

Education at all levels must be accessible, equitable, and free from bias, censorship and discrimination, including discrimination based on hair styles and religious/faith dress. We demand equitable and responsible funding for all levels of education. Students of color

experience institutional barriers resulting in the continuing achievement/opportunity gap. These barriers include insufficient public school resources, lowered academic expectations, and disproportionate discipline. We are committed to the elimination of obstacles that impede anyone from obtaining a quality public education, including systemic racism, sexism or income inequality. We oppose the use of public funds for non-public education.

The Environment

A feminist approach to public policy requires strong stewardship and nurturing of our environment. The right to a clean and safe environment is the right of all, regardless of race, ethnicity, or economic status.

People who have been targets of ethnic, racial and other systems of oppression have traditionally inhabited environments which have affected their health and well-being. We demand that environmental public policy be based on environmental justice for all peoples, protecting all communities from any form of environmental racism, discrimination, or bias.

There is an immediate need for strong, comprehensive, science-based measures to address global climate change, to reverse effects of and eliminate reliance on fossil fuels, and to protect open and public spaces that support wildlife habitat, local food production, and recreational opportunities for all.

Equal Rights (ERA) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Women are not explicitly accorded equal rights and protections in the United States Constitution. The United States is the only developed nation that has not ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979.

We demand the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and of CEDAW by the United States.

Gender Identity

We advocate for full equity and equality for all people of all gender identities. A fundamental component of that advocacy is a commitment to the respect, welfare, and inclusion of transgender and non-binary people in all spheres of life, including, but not limited to, healthcare, education, employment, and government.

We support policies and programs that ensure the safety of and community support for transgender and non-binary children, adults, and families. In particular, training of health care providers, educators, and law enforcement personnel is crucial in promoting and safeguarding health and safety.

Gun Violence

The Santa Barbara Women's Political Committee is a member of the Santa Barbara Coalition Against

Gun Violence, whose principles are as follows:

“People of all races, classes, ages, and sexual orientation and in all communities have the right to be free from gun violence in homes, schools, workplaces, and on the streets.

Gun violence must be addressed as a health, safety, social, and economic problem. It costs our nation thousands of lives and billions of dollars every year.

The unacceptable levels of gun violence require a public health approach to education and prevention, including addressing the easy availability of handguns, assault weapons, and ammunition.”

We are committed to furthering and strengthening these principles through legislation and advocacy at the local, state and national levels.

Healthcare

We support comprehensive, universal, and accessible healthcare for all regardless of race, gender, health status, ability, housing or language. We support local, state and national policies that provide full and equitable access to affordable, quality healthcare throughout the life cycle, including caregiving, educational, and preventive programs.

All people have the right to exercise full choice and control over their bodies in making all health and medical decisions, including all aspects of reproductive health and end-of-life planning.

We support actions to address and eliminate racism, sexism and all forms of discrimination in health-care and in medical research, planning, and practice. Elimination of structural racism and discrimination is central to public health.

Housing

All people have the right to affordable, accessible and fair housing free from all discrimination including that based on sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, medical condition, religion, race, ancestry, national origin, citizenship, disability, marital status, age, legal source of income, income level, and family definition/identification.

We support financial assistance and programs for families and individuals experiencing homelessness which address the need for emergency, transitional, and permanent housing. We also support mediation and other alternative dispute resolution methods to address unreasonable, no-fault evictions and rent increases. We support the development of affordable housing for all, with accessibility to schools, jobs, public services, and open spaces, which preserves community character and does not lead to urban gentrification and dislocation.

Immigration

We support comprehensive and compassionate immigration reform including a path to citizenship. We are committed to ensuring that no one is excluded from our nation based on ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, gender identification, refugee status, socioeconomic status, or religious beliefs or practices. We have a moral and legal imperative to welcome people seeking asylum, especially those fleeing violence or persecution.

We support the continuation, strengthening, and expansion of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). We oppose policies allowing local law enforcement officers to collaborate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, and the disproportionate targeting of immigrants' communities. Immigration policies must

ensure that immigrant communities are free from harassment, intimidation, family separation, inhumane and/or unlawful detainment, and discrimination, as well as receiving equal protection and due process under the law.

International Peace and Security

Our world calls for a feminist approach to global engagement and international relations in order to achieve worldwide peace and security. Women are disproportionately affected by war and political instability, which leads to increased rates of intimate partner violence, child abuse, murder, and suicide. Additionally, rape and sexual slavery are routinely used as tools of war. The majority of refugees are women and children.

Respect for the fundamental rights of women and support for their economic and social equality are crucial to the security of every nation.

We support the resolution of conflicts through diplomacy over military action. We believe that true security will be achieved by the development of just social systems and not by unrestrained military spending, which perpetuates the military-industrial complex.

Reproductive Justice

The right to decide whether and when to become a parent is a private and personal matter. It is a fundamental right of all people to have access to safe, accessible, affordable abortion and contraception, regardless of age, race, or economic circumstances.

Reproductive rights include access to timely, affordable, and comprehensive reproductive, prenatal, perinatal, and postnatal care. Reproductive justice requires that all people receive scientifically accurate, unbiased medical advice, education, and services so that they can make informed decisions free of coercion. It also requires that pregnant people be afforded the same rights, freedoms, and protections as all other people.

Sexual Orientation

There must be full equity and equality for all people regardless of sexual orientation. We are committed to the welfare and inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer people in all spheres of life, including, but not limited to, healthcare, education, employment, and government. We support policies and programs that ensure safety and health of all, regardless of sexual orientation.

Women in the Workplace

Women's financial independence, socioeconomic mobility, and personal dignity are imperative. Women of all races must have equitable and equal pay and protection in all aspects of employment. A living wage is crucial to ensuring a basic level of economic security. We support comprehensive, affordable, and quality benefits including access to healthcare coverage, retirement plans and family and medical leave, regardless of family composition or job category.

We support mandatory safety standards to ensure safe and secure working conditions for all, including historically unrepresented, marginalized and easily exploited workers such as caregivers and sex workers. A working environment free from discrimination and harassment is fundamental, requiring training and effective enforcement against sexual, racial and other harassment.

Women deserve equal opportunity to work and advance their careers. We support policies that foster women's career growth, leadership development, and full participation and representation in the workplace, as well as the fulfillment of affirmative action goals addressing women in the workplace. We promote policies such as flexible hours, telecommuting, job-sharing, child care assistance, and other support which allow all workers to participate fully in both their work and home environments.

Workers have the right to organize and to form unions free from employer harassment or retaliatory threats, especially for undervalued and/or essential jobs, held predominantly by women and People of Color.

(Approved 7-8-2020)