

Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights Questionnaire for State Senate District 24



Name: Brian Goldsmith
Email address: brian@briangoldsmith2026.com
Please email completed Questionnaire to smrrinfo@gmail.com

Your Candidacy

Why do you believe Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights ("SMRR") should support you for State Senate from District 24?

I am running because California is home to millions of families barely making it or forced to consider leaving. Sky high housing prices and the nation's worst homelessness. A middle class income no longer provides a middle class life. Trump is weaponizing the federal government against our state—cutting off funding for essential services, attacking immigrants, threatening our democracy and our economy.

Our people are inventing the future, yet too much of our government seems stuck in the past. Billions of wasted taxpayer dollars. Bad customer service. Failing to protect public safety and public health. Blocking rather than building the things we need. Making life more expensive, not more affordable. Now that Trump is president again, and with the enormous challenges we face, I'm running to get things done. I will work with anyone, across the political spectrum, to deliver better results.

I am building a broad coalition in this campaign; I've earned the support of environmentalists, the major entertainment and public safety unions, activists and elected officials from all across the district, and all of my former opponents who have weighed in since the primary. I am seeking your support because I respect your activism and effectiveness, and I believe that I will be a good partner to you if I am fortunate enough to be elected.

[For Brian Goldsmith only] Your candidacy is being supported by the California Apartment Association, an organization that generally takes positions contrary to SMRR positions. For example, the California Apartment Association opposed AB 1157 (which would have lowered the cap on rent increases under Statewide rent control, expanded its coverage of single-family residences, and eliminated its sunset date), and opposed SB 466 (which sought to amend Costa Hawkins to allow the imposition of local rent control on multi-family housing after 15 years from the initial certificate of

occupancy).

a. Have you ever publicly taken a position contrary to a position taken by California Apartment Association? If so, when, where and what position(s)?

I support policies that I believe are right for our state and our district—and nobody tells me how to vote. For example, I committed to voting to renew the Tenant Protection Act when it comes up in 2029 and I don't know whether CAA will support that.

b. Are there any positions of the California Apartment Association which you would not support if elected to the State Senate?

I have not gone back and studied every bill that they have supported and opposed. But, as an example, I know that they opposed reducing the requirement for a security deposit from two months to one month, and I would have supported that law.

[For Jon Erickson only] Your candidacy is being supported by California YIMBY, an organization that often takes positions contrary to SMRR positions. For example, California YIMBY supported the original version of SB 79 (which did not contain anti-displacement and anti-demolition protections for renters and rent-controlled housing stock), and supported AB 736 (which sought to gut the funding for homelessness prevention and affordable housing creation provided by voter approved citizen initiatives Santa Monica Measure GS and Los Angeles Measure ULA, without providing any replacement funding).

a. Have you ever publicly taken a position contrary to a position taken by California YIMBY? If so, when, where and what position(s)?

b. Are there any positions of California YIMBY which you would not support if elected to the State Senate?

Tenant Protection Act (TPA)

If elected, would you vote to extend the TPA (AB 1482), currently scheduled to sunset as of January 1, 2030 (see Civil Code § 1947.12(o))? Explain.

Yes, I would. I agree that tenants should have these critical protections. I agree that “just cause” should be required to terminate a tenancy, as written in the law. I agree with limiting annual rent increases to no more than 5% + local CPI.

If elected, would you vote to amend the TPA to lower the maximum annual rent increase from the current 5% plus the increase in the Consumer Price Index (subject to a 10% cap) (see Civil Code § 1947.12(a)(1), (g)(1), (g)(3))? Explain.

I would consider it but have not studied all the consequences and can’t commit to a particular number at this point.

If elected, would you vote to amend the TPA to place some limit on the size of a vacancy increase authorized under the TPA, rather than the full vacancy decontrol currently authorized by Costa Hawkins (see Civil Code § 1947.12(b))? Explain.

Again, I would consider this, but don’t believe it is responsible to take a specific position without studying this further and weighing all the consequences.

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Costa Hawkins

If elected, would you vote to amend Costa Hawkins to allow local governments generally to impose rent control on multi-family housing that was issued its certificate of occupancy more than 15 years ago (as is true under the TPA, see Civil Code § 1947.12(d)(4))? Explain.

I support Costa Hawkins, which is now more than 30 years old. I believe that we should look back at all major laws and assess how they are working. I would be open to modernizing this law, but I’m not going to prejudge what changes I’d support without studying what has worked and the changing needs of the district and my constituents.

Legislators must choose their priorities and leading an effort to amend Costa Hawkins is unlikely

to be one of mine. However, I would prioritize trying to dramatically increase the number of affordable and middle class housing units that we build and provide.

If elected, would you vote to amend Costa Hawkins to allow local governments to impose rent control on separately alienable housing (i.e., single-family homes, condominiums, townhouses, etc.) when owned by a corporation (including an LLC with a corporation as a member) or a Real Estate Investment Trust (as is true under the TPA, see Civil Code § 1947.12(d)(5))? Explain.

Again, I would be open to considering amendments to this law, but I am unlikely to lead this effort and am not going to prejudge what changes I would support without studying what has worked and the changing needs of the district and my constituents.

If elected, would you vote to amend Costa Hawkins to allow local governments to place some limit on the size of a vacancy increase, rather than the full vacancy decontrol currently authorized? Explain.

This answer is the same as the one above. I would assess each proposal as it comes—just as I insisted on reading SB 79 before deciding to oppose it.

SB 79 and Other State-Mandated Upzoning

If elected, would you vote to amend SB 79 to incorporate the same more comprehensive exclusions for sites that contain or contained in the past 10 years rent controlled and other rental housing as the Legislature previously has included in AB 2011/2443 (Wicks) (streamlining and upzoning of commercial boulevards) and SB 35/423 (Weiner) (streamlining in jurisdictions not meeting RHNA housing targets) (see Government Code §§ 65912.121(h)(1)-(2), 65913.4(a)(7)(A)-(B))? Explain.

I did not support SB 79 because I believe that it is not in the interest of the 24th district, and I believe that local communities and residents should have more control over housing policy—especially when municipalities have spent so much time and effort on housing elements seeking to balance environmental, emergency management, infrastructure, and other concerns. While I would be open to supporting efforts to amend the law, I’m not going to prejudge without closer study.

If elected, would you insist as a condition of your support that any future State mandated upzoning incorporate the same more comprehensive exclusions for sites that contain or contained in the past 10 years rent controlled and other rental housing as the Legislature previously has included in AB 2011/2443 (Wicks) (streamlining and upzoning of commercial boulevards) and SB 35/423 (Weiner)

(streamlining in jurisdictions not meeting RHNA housing targets) (see Government Code §§ 65912.121(h)(1)-(2), 65913.4(a)(7)(A)-(B))? If not, what protections against the temporary displacement of renters, the permanent displacement of renters, and the destruction of naturally occurring affordable housing for lower income, moderate income, and middle income renter households would you insist upon as a condition of your support? Explain.

I generally am opposed to further State mandated upzoning—in part because of the adverse potential consequences on low and middle income renters. While I will study each bill as it comes, I would not support proposals that do not meet my standard for protecting SD 24 residents, protecting the environment, and protecting the ability of our first responders to do their jobs. I also do not believe in additional unfunded mandates from Sacramento.

AB 1740 And Trailer Bill Issues

If elected, would you vote against legislation that provides exemptions to the Coastal Act for housing development? For commercial development? Explain

I generally am opposed to weakening coastal protections unless there is a very clear problem that requires a surgical and environmentally sensitive solution. I am running to be a champion for coastal protection and have concerns about expanding development in sensitive areas that often lack the infrastructure to support it.

Local Taxation

If elected, would you vote against any measure or bill seeking to override voter approved citizen initiatives Santa Monica Measure GS and Los Angeles Measure ULA? Explain. If your answer is other than an unqualified commitment to vote against any such measure, would you vote against any such measure that did not provide an alternative, permanent, ongoing source of funds to make up for any funds lost by Santa Monica and the City of Los Angeles due to any State override of Measures GS and ULA? Explain.

I believe in respecting the will of voters when it comes to citizen initiatives and generally would oppose efforts to override them. That said, I am concerned about the effect of Measure ULA on new housing starts in Los Angeles and would be open to collaboratively working with stakeholders on modifications.

State Funding for Emergency / Ongoing Assistance to At-Risk Renters

Would you vote to increase State funding for emergency and/or ongoing assistance to at-risk renters? Explain.

Yes. It is cheaper—as well as far more humane—to provide rental assistance to prevent someone from becoming unhoused than to rescue someone from homelessness.

State Funding for Affordable Housing / Social Housing Creation

Would you vote to increase State funding for affordable housing production, including, but not limited to, creating revolving bond or other funding for social housing programs? Explain.

One of my top priorities is to build more affordable and middle class housing. The question should not be whether to build, but where and how. I would be supportive of more State funding to support that goal and very interested in a new mechanism to replace redevelopment authority, which was canceled without any alternative in place.

State Land for Affordable Housing / Social Housing Creation

Would you champion or vote for State land to be dedicated to creating affordable housing or social housing (e.g., the Santa Monica DMV site at Cloverfield & Colorado)?

Yes. I am a strong proponent of using government-owned land (that is not environmentally sensitive) for affordable and middle class housing construction. I believe that we should audit state and county-held land and prioritize construction where it makes sense.