

Santa Monica Democratic Club

2026 Rent Control Board Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you for your interest in the Santa Monica Democratic Club endorsement. Candidates seeking the endorsement of our Club must complete and return the following questionnaire. Only registered Democrats are eligible for our consideration. Submitting this questionnaire constitutes acknowledgment that its contents are now part of the public record and may be reproduced and distributed by the Santa Monica Democratic Club.

Please send the completed questionnaire to smdemocrats@gmail.com by 11:59pm on June 8, 2026. Interview appointment times with our Executive Committee will be scheduled on a first come first served basis for the weekend of June 20/21 as the questionnaires are returned.

None of these questions shall be construed as litmus tests. There are no questions that must be answered a certain way to be considered for our endorsement.

General Information

Candidate Name: Bradley Ewing

Email Address: bradleyewing@gmail.com

Candidate's Current Occupation: Software Engineer

Candidate's Employer: TextNow

Campaign Contact Person (if other than candidate): n/a

1. What qualifications do you bring to this office?

I have been a rent controlled tenant in Santa Monica for over 10 years and have first-hand experience deep diving into local and state tenant law to assert my rights against my landlord. Over the last 6 months, I have been a volunteer for the Santa Monicans for Renters Rights (SMRR) Tenant Hotline, assisting dozens of local tenants on issues ranging from their FCC's OTARD right to a satellite dish to 3-day eviction notices. I was co-chair of Santa Monica Forward for 3 years, and organized dozens of young professionals and parents struggling with the high cost of living to get civically engaged. Additionally, I have been involved in community service since I was a youth in the Boy Scouts of America, contributing to myriad volunteer projects focused on environmental conservation and community beautification of local public schools and houses of worship.

2. Why are you running?

I'm running for the Board because the rent control law has kept me housed and I want to live in a city that is socioeconomically diverse. Every Santa Monica renter, from long time residents to newcomers, deserves the right to stable and affordable housing. Moreover, too many renters in Santa Monica find themselves in an unequal relationship with their landlords.

My landlord moved to impose a steep, banked Maximum Allowable Rent (MAR) increase on an elderly neighbor that would have priced her out of her home and ignored plumbing maintenance requests that caused loss of base amenities and habitability concerns in my

home. My knowledge of tenant and housing law helped me organize my neighbors to know and assert our rights. I intend to take that same energy and fight on behalf of all Santa Monica renters.

3. What are the top issues of your campaign, and how do they differ from other candidates in this race? How do you plan to address those issues once elected?

I am focused on the 3 P's of Housing Affordability.

Protect incumbent renters, with a goal to expand tenant protections to all renters in the city. Fund and expand programs like the Santa Monica Renter Aid program to provide financial assistance to Santa Monicans facing eviction and expand the Right to Counsel program. Additionally, work to provide protection for renters in single family homes or duplexes that have a protection gap in existing law today.

Preserve existing rent controlled and deed-restricted affordable housing, and address the existing gaps in demolition law. I am also interested in modernizing the existing rent control database to make it easier to query the MAR history for a given building and evaluate the efficacy of new tenant and housing laws. The vast majority of Santa Monica's rental housing was built before the passage of the ADA which creates difficulties for some seniors as they age in place. I am interested in pursuing ways to work with owners and tenants to make existing housing physically accessible to those with disabilities where possible.

Produce more homes at all income levels so that those who work or go to school here can afford homes here. I want to be clear about why this belongs in a Rent Control Board platform: building new homes can relieve displacement pressure that bears down on existing rent controlled units, and production must be balanced against the first two P's so that new development does not displace current renters. It also points toward Costa Hawkins reform: today's market rate buildings can become tomorrow's rent controlled housing.

What sets me apart from other candidates is the technical lens I'd bring. The RCB runs on data, such as the MAR database, and much of that is hard to query. I'd love to see it modernized so that staff or the public can pull the full rent history of any building easily, and so that the Board and City Council can measure whether new tenant and housing laws are working effectively. I've been iterating on a [proof of concept](#) for the kinds of data visualizations I'd like to see the board provide.

4. Please list all endorsements received to date (individual and organizational).

Caroline Torosis, SM Mayor
Gleam Davis, Former SM Mayor
Ted Winterer, Former SM Mayor
Dan Hall, SM Councilmember
Natalya Zernitskaya, SM Councilmember

Laurie Lieberman, School Board Member and former RCB Attorney

5. How long have you lived in Santa Monica? Where else have you lived?

I have lived in Santa Monica since February 2016. I grew up in Santa Clarita, and went to college in Virginia at the College of William and Mary from 2012-2015.

6. Will you pledge to serve on the Rent Control Board for your entire four year term?

Yes

7. What is your history of watching, attending, or speaking at Santa Monica Rent Control Board meetings? (If incumbent, prior to your own service.)

I have watched Rent Control Board meetings virtually the past two years, and attended several in person this year.

Campaign Finance

1. How much money have you raised for your campaign to date?

0

2. How much do you intend to raise by Election Day 2026?

\$5k

3. Candidates for local office often choose not to take campaign contributions from particular types of organizations or industries who are out of step with their own values. Are there any such sources from which you would decline donations? If so, which?

I will decline donations from:

- Any corporation or corporate PACs.
- Any landlords or landlord PACs.
- Any oil, gas, and coal industry executives, lobbyists, or PACs.

Party / Activism

1. How long have you been a registered Democrat? Have you ever been registered as a member of another political party, or as Decline To State? If so, which party and why?

I have been a Democrat since the day I turned 18.

2. What is your experience with political activism? Have you ever volunteered or worked for a political campaign other than your own, and if so, in what capacity were you involved?

- 2008: Participated in No on 8 protests.
- 2012: Canvassed and phone banked for the Barack Obama campaign in Virginia.

- 2013: Phone banked for Monty Mason for delegate.
- 2014: Organized students to vote for Senator Mark Warner.
- 2022: Supported Caroline Torosis, Jesse Zwick and Natalya Zernitskaya campaigns for council.
- 2024: Supported Dan Hall, Ellis Raskin, Barry Snell and Natalya Zernitskaya campaigns for city council. Canvassed on behalf of the SMDC.

3. Which political candidates and/or ballot measures have you endorsed or supported publicly in the past? Please list as many as possible, *especially where you endorsed during a contested primary.*

2008: Barack Obama for President, No on 8

2012: Barack Obama for President, Mark Warner for Senate

2013: Monty Mason for Delegate

2014: Mark Warner for Senate

2015: Monty Mason for Delegate

2016: Hillary Clinton for President. Kamala Harris for Senate. No on LV. Yes on 62 (Abolish the Death Penalty).

2018: No on SM. No on TL. Yes on SMS. Yes on 10 (Costa Hawkins repeal)

2020: Warren for President. Yes on 15. Yes on 17. Yes on 18. Yes on 19. Yes on 21 (Costa Hawkins repeal). No on 22. Yes on SM. Yes on AB.

2022: Caroline Torosis, Jesse Zwick and Natalya Zernitskaya for Council. Yes on 1. Yes on RC. Yes on CS. Yes on GS. No on DT. Yes on HMP. Yes on EM. Yes on SMC.

2024: Kamala Harris for President. Dan Hall, Ellis Raskin, Barry Snell and Natalya Zernitskaya for Council. Schiff for Senate. Yes on 32 (Increase Minimum Wage). Yes on 33 (Costa Hawkins Repeal). Yes on 5. Yes on 6. Yes on F. Yes on K.

2025: Yes on 50

4. Have you ever signed for or publicly supported efforts to recall a public official from office? If so, please list the name(s) of the officials and why you felt they should be recalled.

No. I have a very high bar for recalls and believe they should be reserved for cases of serious misconduct.

5. Please list any organizations with which you are a member, including any leadership position you have held in each organization.

Santa Monica Forward (co-chair 2023-2026)

Santa Monica Democratic Club

Santa Monicans for Renters Rights

6. Please confirm that you have read the latest version of the California Democratic Party Platform, as found below. List any items in the CDP Platform with which you disagree.
<https://cadem.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/CDP-Platform-2026-FINAL-Platform-Adopted-2.22.26.pdf>

Confirmed

Tenant Protections & Rent Control

1. What do you see as the mission or purpose of the Rent Control Law in the Charter, both at its founding and in its present form?

To provide stability to renters so that they and their families are able to stay in Santa Monica and live out their lives. Families should be able to raise their kids from birth to adulthood, and our seniors should be able to age in place with dignity and security.

2. What are the biggest challenges to keeping tenants in their homes in Santa Monica?

Several pressures push tenants out of their homes. The most acute is affordability for renters on fixed incomes, whose allowable rent increases can outpace Social Security or pension income. Development pressure is another, as is the permanent loss of units through demolition, Ellis Act withdrawals and owner move-ins. Much of our rent controlled housing also predates the ADA, which makes it hard for seniors and disabled tenants to remain as they age.

3. In light of the Justice for Renters Act failing to pass, and similar recent efforts to reform state housing laws falling short, how should the Rent Control Board operate effectively within the constraints of laws such as Costa-Hawkins and the Ellis Act? Should further attempts to repeal/reform these laws be pursued?

I believe the best path forward is piecemeal reform in the legislature. Aisha Wahab's SB 466 (2023), which proposed a rolling date for rent control eligibility, is a blueprint for how we can begin to grow the number of rent controlled homes again. Rick Zbur's AB 1620 (2023), which amended Costa-Hawkins so tenants with mobility-related disabilities can transfer to an available accessible unit at their existing rent, is another model. The Board should operate effectively within the constraints of Costa-Hawkins and the Ellis Act while supporting targeted reforms like these.

4. What types of legislation or other factors do you believe may threaten the stability of Rent Control housing in Santa Monica?

The biggest threat to rent control is the Supreme Court of the United States. For years, landlords have tried to get the Supreme Court to declare rent regulations an unconstitutional taking under the 5th Amendment, and Thomas and Gorsuch have openly invited a challenge. A catastrophic ruling could weaken or invalidate rent stabilization programs nationwide, including ours. That's why it matters who sits on the Court, why I supported Prop 50, and why I believe Democrats have to fight to protect these protections at every level.

5. Which communities in Santa Monica are most at risk of housing instability or displacement, and how would you use your position on the Rent Control Board to address these challenges?

Renters on a fixed income are the most at risk, especially if their MAR increases exceed Social Security or pension payments. I support expanding solutions like the Preserving Our Diversity (POD) and Santa Monica Renter Aid programs to help bridge that gap.

6. How do you think Santa Monica should address situations where tenants face eviction over small rental debt.

Expand the Santa Monica Renter Aid program and give tenants additional time to pay off small rental debts.

7. Do you believe tenants in rent controlled units should have the right to add additional family members to their household without facing eviction? Why or why not?

Yes, so long as the additional family members would not create a habitability concern. Tenants should be allowed to grow their families, add a partner, or take in an aging relative without worrying about eviction.

8. Did you support SB 79 before it included any protections for existing rent-controlled housing and its tenants? Why or why not? Do you believe the anti-displacement provisions of SB 79 as adopted go far enough? Why or why not? Do you believe Santa Monica ought to implement greater protections for existing rent-controlled units and their tenants than SB 79 provides? Why or why not?

I supported SB 79 from the start when it was still an intent bill; I believe that building additional housing around transit is an environmentally friendly way to address the housing shortage.

The first substantial draft introduced in the March 5, 2025 amendments, which included the operative zoning standards, was also the first to carry anti-displacement protections for existing tenants by requiring any development to comply with the anti-displacement standard of the Housing Crisis Act of 2019 (SB330), now codified at Government Code Section 66300.6. The protections were further strengthened to go beyond these standards in the final version of the bill.

That said, I don't think the protections go far enough. The clearest gap is the lack of demolition protections for tenants in rent controlled duplexes. Santa Monica should implement further protections to go beyond what SB 79 provides, and closing the duplex gap is a place we could start.

I'd also draw a distinction between being an activist and being an elected official. As a leader of an organization, I represent the will of its membership while holding my own opinions; furthermore, as an activist, I can support a bill on balance while pushing to improve it. An elected Rent Control Board member is chartered with clear duties to protect renters and preserve the rent controlled housing stock. The Board was correct to follow the charter and hold the bill to a higher standard.

Policy Implementation

9. The Rent Control Board often serves a quasi-judicial role in hearing petitions and interpreting regulations. How would you approach making fair, consistent decisions in cases where tenants and landlords present competing claims?

I will prepare by reading the staff reports before each meeting and attentively listen to tenants and landlords as they make their case. I'd decide each case on the facts presented in the record, applying the same standards whether the sympathetic party is the tenant or owner.

10. Based on the first few years of implementation, how do you assess Measure GS? Are there any adjustments or clarifications you believe should be considered? If so, what and why?

I am not interested in any adjustments or clarifications at this time. Measure GS has only been in effect for a few years, so we should be cautious drawing strong conclusions from a short window that has coincided with rising interest rates, federal tariffs impacting construction costs, and an immigration enforcement crackdown tightening the construction labor market. I am disappointed that the revenue raised so far has fallen short of the original projections, but there are several forces slowing real estate transfers all at once.

What matters to me is that two things happen together: the housing pipelines continue to move so we actually produce more affordable homes, and that GS revenue keeps flowing to what the voters intended: our schools, tenant protections and restoring the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The city's recent offsite affordable housing production program is an encouraging example: by restructuring the production of affordable units, stalled projects have been able to pencil, break ground and facilitate the construction of thousands of new homes, hundreds of them deed-restricted affordable to lower incomes. The offsite program ensures that GS payments are still provided, so revenue that would have otherwise sat frozen is generated.

Ballot Measures

1. Do you support the California Billionaire Tax Act, which would impose a one-time emergency 5% tax on those worth more than \$1B? Why or why not?

No. Billionaires are not paying their fair share, but a one-time wealth tax is the wrong instrument: its base is mobile. Faced with a 5% levy, the ultra-wealthy can change their residency permanently and contest assessment and collection of the tax for years, so the state risks a one-year bump followed by a structurally smaller tax base. The better path is well-designed taxes on bases that can't simply relocate or litigate their way out.

2. Do you support the state ballot measure which would require voters to present government-issued identification when casting ballots? Why or why not?

No, I do not believe we should be adding barriers to vote.

3. Do you support the proposed state taxpayer initiative which would limit the ability of local governments to raise revenue through certain taxes and fees including real estate transfer taxes? Why or why not?

No. It would undo Measure GS and jeopardize municipal finances up and down the state.

4. Do you support the proposed parcel tax to fund SMMUSD? Why or why not?

Yes. The measure secures dedicated, voter-protected school funding to replace roughly \$12 million a year, about 73 teachers' salaries and benefits, that the city has provided through the Master Facilities Use Agreement. With the city in declared fiscal distress, a dedicated school tax protects our students and relieves the General Fund of a subsidy it can no longer sustain.

5. Do you support the proposed ballot measure which would set aside 25% of the airport land for 3000 units of affordable housing, in addition to the remainder which would become a Great Park? Why or why not?

No. My priority is closing the airport first; that has to come before any land-use plan. I have concerns that the measure is too rigid and overly prescriptive to actually get housing built, and that it is premature to dial in those details before a comprehensive environmental remediation report. Additionally, I believe that locking in a detailed plan now risks the FAA reneging on the consent decree that governs the airport's closure.

Additional Questions

1. Should the Rent Control Board have the authority to place measures directly on the ballot without City Council approval? Why or why not?

No, I think RCB ballot measures should be approved by the City Council. The RCB and City Council should have a collaborative relationship, but Council approval serves as an additional layer of oversight.

2. Should term limits for the Rent Control Board be changed? Why or why not?

Yes, it should be changed to 3 terms to align with the city council limits. There has been a lot of turnover on the RCB, and extending to a third term will allow more tenured commissioners to stick around longer, or for experienced, termed-out commissioners to serve an additional term.

3. If elected, how would you attempt to interact with the Santa Monica Democratic Club and other political organizations to ensure community buy-in on new proposals?

Regularly attend meetings and periodically present to the club and other community

organizations on latest updates.

4. What is the most important topic that was left off of this questionnaire?

How do we address the Rent Control Agency's structural deficit?

5. Please describe whether and how you used generative AI tools in preparing your responses. If elected, how would you use these tools in governance, if at all?

I used Claude to proofread and check for any inaccuracies in my first draft. If elected, I would use it as a supplemental search tool and for bespoke data analysis software. I will follow the city's responsible AI use instructions and always fact check with additional sources. AI is a tool, not a replacement for critical thinking and traditional research methods. Any code or software I create for governance purposes will be uploaded to a public repository (e.g. GitHub) for transparency and accountability, while taking great care to ensure that no personal identifying information is ever exposed.