



Candidate Questionnaire

General Information

Candidate Name: Ben Savage

Office Sought: West Hollywood City Council

Proposed Ballot Designation: Actor / Producer
(Or Occupation Listing)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Campaign Team*

Provide the names and cell phone numbers for the following campaign team members:

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Elected Office

Do you currently, or have you ever held public office?

n/a

If yes, which public office(s) have you held and when did you do so?

Democrats for Israel Los Angeles
Candidate Questionnaire

Personal and Political Background

Current Occupation: Entertainment - Producer / Actor

Are you a registered Democrat? Yes

Have you ever been registered with another political party or selected “Decline to State” or “No Party Preference” for your voter registration party affiliation, and if so, for what period?

In less than 250 words, briefly summarize your personal background (work experience, education, community involvement, etc.).

I grew up in Los Angeles. I am an 18-year West Hollywood resident, a union member and a concerned citizen who believes it’s time to give a voice back to the residents, businesses and workers who make up this wonderful city.

What endorsements have you received from organizations and prominent individuals? (You may either use the space below or attach a separate list.)

Ours is a community-based campaign. We are receiving endorsements and support from many local West Hollywood businesses - including The Rainbow Room, Justin Queso’s, Anawalt Lumber, The Club, Tattoo Mania, SOL Cafe. Also hope to receive the endorsement of ICAN - The Israeli-American Civic Action Network.

In the past five years, have you:

- belonged to an organization that has taken action or formally expressed a viewpoint on Israel or related issues;

I have been a longtime member of the ICRF Board - Israel Cancer Research Foundation where I have planned fundraisers and events as well as helped promote the organization.

- participated in an organized activity, including a forum, on Israel or related issues; or while holding office, introduced or co-sponsored legislation (other than purely ceremonial, supportive measures) on Israel or related issues?

Most recently participated in the Combatting Antisemitism Summit hosted by ICAN at Kol Ami.

Policy Questions

Please describe your positions on the following issues. Please limit your responses to 250 words for each response. If you wish, one response may include up to 500 words.

1. Please describe your last trip to Israel and the Middle East, including the year of the trip and any group that arranged or sponsored the trip. If you have not yet been to Israel, when and to where do you plan on going in Israel, and the region generally, for your trip?

I am looking forward to visiting Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa.

2. Who do you speak with to develop your positions and views on Israel and the Middle East, including people overseas and local leaders in Southern California?

Family, friends, educators, rabbis and a host of community leaders.

3. Please describe your relationship, if any, with the Israeli-American and Jewish community in Los Angeles.

I have grown up in Los Angeles and have a network of close friends and scholars that are prominent in the Jewish community as well as strong advocates for Israel.

4. If elected, what committees and organizations would you try to be active in, and what policy areas would you try to affect that are relevant to Israel and the Middle East?

As a member of the City Council, I see a great opportunity to enhance West Hollywood's status as a world-class city. That includes fostering partnerships with Israeli cities to promote sustainable growth, best practices in water recycling and conservation, promoting travel and tourism, and cultural exchanges. Engaging in these areas will help to better connect West Hollywood residents with the Middle East and Israel.

5. Over the past decade, there has been a small but growing movement around the country to divest from Israel. These groups often use anti-Semitic language in their efforts, some target Jewish students on campuses and instead of discussing how to engage the democratic-process to challenge Israeli policies that may be objectionable, they try to delegitimize Israel or question its right to exist. In short, these are frequently attempts to influence state and local governments and their universities and pension boards not to invest in Israeli companies or companies that do business anywhere in Israel.

What is your view on the Israel boycott and divestment movement and what will you do about it?

In California, thanks to many leading pro-Israel Democrats in office, the BDS movement has not had the kind of success seen in other states.

First, former West Hollywood City Councilmember Paul Koretz led the effort to establish WHMC 3.08.020 prohibiting the City from contracting with any company adhering to the Arab League Boycott of Israel. As a member of the West Hollywood City Council, I will preserve and ensure enforcement of this ordinance.

Likewise, in 2016, Assemblymember Richard Bloom led the effort to get his anti-BDS legislation, AB 2844, passed and signed into law. Bloom's law applies to all forms of hate and discrimination targeting protected classes - ensuring that when it comes to Californians of Jewish and Israeli heritage, there isn't an exception that allows for the kind of discrimination perpetuated by the BDS movement.

As a member of the West Hollywood City Council, I will work to ensure that the City aligns with the State and supports this important law.

I will also make it my duty to educate people about the Jewish community and work to combat myths that perpetuate antisemitism.

6. The FBI's Uniform Crime Report for 2014 showed that there were more than 609 anti-Jewish hate crimes in the United States that year and even today, Jews were the most persecuted and targeted religious group in the country.

What steps would you take (for example, in the education and law enforcement arenas) to help prevent current and future anti-Jewish hatred and anti-Semitic activity in your jurisdiction?

Recently, I had the opportunity to participate in the Combating Antisemitism Summit sponsored by several West Hollywood Jewish organizations. I also attended and supported the City Council's adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism.

These are important first steps that I hope to build upon as a member of the West Hollywood City Council. I would explore the option of making the Combating Antisemitism Summit an annual event and encourage greater resident participation. Further, with the IHRA definition of antisemitism in place, we can now work to ensure the City's Diversity Equity and Inclusion programs, both internal and external, include antisemitism as a form of bias to understand and combat.

7. As a Democrat, what steps can we take to help fight anti-Semitism on both the left and the right?

California Democrats have historically led the way, preserving and strengthening the U.S.-Israel relationship and combating antisemitism. Leaders like Howard

Berman, Brad Sherman, Henry Waxman, and Dianne Feinstein among others, helped create the policy platforms that our community benefits from today. We need to work to ensure that the next generation of Democrats are prepared to preserve and strengthen this important legacy.

8. What other issues do you think are unique or important to the Jewish and pro-Israel community, and how do you propose to make a difference with these issues and keep in touch with the community?

It's important to figure out ways that our leaders and organizations can better cooperate in order to address the serious issues we face. As an elected official, I will make it my mission to help facilitate cooperation and engage with leaders and organizations from across the Jewish community.