

**Santa Cruz for Bernie questionnaire for Justin Cummings
2020 Bernie Delegate to the Democratic National Convention (DNC)
Candidate Questionnaire - CA Congressional District 20**

(Just start typing after the >> cue)

1. Your full name: >> **Justin Cummings**
2. Your city and county of residence: >> **Santa Cruz (city and county)**
3. Length of residence in CD20: >> **August 2007 - October 2013; November 2015 - present**
4. Your occupation or avocation: >> **Mayor, City of Santa Cruz; Environmental Conservation Researcher**
5. Significant memberships and affiliations (political, labor union, public service, etc.): >> **Democratic Socialists of America (need to renew); Mayor, City of Santa Cruz; California Assembly District 29 Delegate**
6. Which of Bernie's policy proposals are you most passionate about? >> **Green new deal, Medicare for all, college for all, expanded social security, housing for all, eliminating medical debt, free childcare, increased taxation for the top 1%, Safe America for all, commitments to veterans**
7. Do you consider support for Medicare for All single-payer healthcare to be an essential conviction of a true progressive? >> **Yes**
8. During 2019-2020, approximately how many hours were you engaged in campaigning for Bernie in these activities?
 - door-to-door canvassing >>
 - phonebanking >>
 - tabling >>
 - other >> hours Describe campaign activity >> **I was one of a few elected officials who endorsed Bernie as a Vice Mayor very early in his 2020 campaign, which rolled over into my endorsement of Bernie as Mayor of Santa Cruz. I have promoted Bernie through online platforms like facebook. I have had to work an additional job while also serving as an elected and was not able to do much campaigning.**
9. Were you active in Bernie's 2016 campaign? >> **Somewhat**
If so, how? >> **In 2016, I promoted a lot of Bernie's campaign materials through posting on social media.**
10. In what other campaigns, organizations, or movements have you been active, and what role did you play? >> **2020 Schools and Communities First Campaign; Santa Cruz Movement for Housing Justice (2017 - 2018) Steering Committee Member; 2010-2013 Member of the Graduate Student Committee for Diversity Enhancement; 2010-2011 Ecology & Evolutionary Biology Dept Graduate Student Representative; 2005-06 Eastern Illinois University College of Sciences Student Advisory Board Student Dean; November 2005 Hurricane Katrina Relief Organizer and Volunteer; November 2005 School of the Americas Eastern Illinois University Protest Organizer; 2004-05 Eastern Illinois University College of Sciences Student Advisory Board, Biological Sciences Representative; 2002-06 EIU Fair Trade Coalition member; co-chair 2003**
11. If you were eligible to vote in the 2016 Primary, who did you vote for for President? >> **Bernie Sanders**
Who did you vote for in the 2016 General Election? >> **Hillary Clinton**
If not in California, in what state? >>
12. At the DNC, in addition to supporting Bernie's platform and voting for Bernie on the first ballot, what do you realistically hope to accomplish as a part of the delegation at the convention? >> **I hope to educate people that should the DNC wish to beat Donald Trump, they will likely only be able to do so by supporting Bernie Sanders. Should Biden move forward, he will need to fundamentally restructure his campaign and consider Bernie Sanders as a Vice President should he expect to have any chance of winning. He might also be able to gain some of the progressive votes by having Elizabeth Warren as Vice President, but he will struggle.**
13. If there is a second ballot at the DNC, who would you support for President? >> **Elizabeth Warren**
Who would you never support? >> **Michael Bloomberg**

14. Who do you fancy for Vice President? >> **Depends... If Joe Biden gets the nominee, then Bernie Sanders; If Bernie Sanders gets the nominee, then Elizabeth Warren**
Who would you never support? >> **Michael Bloomberg**

15. Do you do your political work primarily inside the Democratic Party or outside of it? >> **I work with a broad range of democrats in my community. Some of those people identify themselves as Democratic Socialists, while some may be more traditional democrats, but overall I would say that my political work is with people who identify as democrats and support democratic candidates.**

16. Do you think the U.S. needs a viable progressive third party? >> **Yes**

If Yes, what are you doing to build it? **As a Democratic Socialist, I feel that we are gaining momentum and need to continue to run candidates and prove that we are effective at getting elected and getting things done. The election in 2018 saw a surge in elected Democratic Socialists and as we continue to grow we may be able to demonstrate that we are a viable group. We were able to demonstrate that this year as we saw all of the democratic candidates drop out of the race to support Joe Biden and this is the second time we have witnessed the media consistently downplay how effective Bernie can be at beating Donald Trump and how he is a much superior candidate than the other democratic candidates. This demonstrates that there is a growing momentum and with more democratic socialists being elected the more momentum and potential to have a thriving Democratic Socialists Party.**

17. In your opinion, how electable is Joe Biden in November 2020?
(enter a number from 1 to 5, with 1=No Chance to 5=Slam Dunk) >> **3**

18. What do you think are Biden's assets? >> **He was vice president with Obama, he's a democrat, and I don't think he would be anywhere near as bad as Donald Trump.**

What do you think are Biden's liabilities? >> **He doesn't have progressive policies that will win over the young vote. He also keeps saying things like he would consider a republican VP, which completely undermines the democratic party.**

19. What differences if any do you think would result from a Biden administration compared to a second Trump administration? >> **Donald Trump really does not care about anyone except for himself. If he has another four years, it is likely that he will be able to make another appointment to the supreme court, we will continue to see child detention centers along our border, he will completely gut the EPA, and it is likely that he will try to start another war to maintain power. Our entire system will crumble and it will take decades to repair the mental manipulation that he and Fox News will have done on the mentalities of people throughout our country. In addition to that, by re-electing Donald Trump, it will destroy every healthy relationship we have with every country on this planet by demonstrating that we are so happy with how well he did his first four years that we were willing to have him elected again. We also must understand that our country needs to recover from COVID-19 and this will take true leadership, which Donald Trump has failed to demonstrate.**

20. Give an example of when you spoke truth to power. Who were the players, what were the stakes, and what did you do? >> **Currently I am in the "minority" on the City Council. On Tuesday May 26, 2020, my colleague and I brought forward an extension to our current residential and commercial tenant eviction protection ordinance asking that we extend the protection to August 15th. We heard testimony from undocumented residents and other members of the public who asked that we extend the protections. After public comment, many of my colleagues questioned the legality of extending the eviction protections and made the excuse that we would be the only city in the county to do so and that other jurisdictions were not going to extend their protections, so why should we. I made the point that, as the government, we asked our residents to shelter in place and asked our businesses to close their doors to protect the health and safety of our residents. We know that the Shelter in Place Order will likely be extended, many of our residents are still out of work, and that by letting an eviction protection lapse that we would be putting many of our residents at risk. After having our businesses and residents comply with our County Health Orders, it is our responsibility to protect our workers and business owners as they try to get back on their feet again. Although many were reluctant to extend the protections at first, after an extensive conversation, we were able to get our colleagues to agree to extending the eviction protections to June 30th. They initially had the votes to completely vote this down, but by speaking truth to power on this issue, we were able to find a compromise.**

21. Why should Bernie supporters vote for you to be their DNC Delegate? *(max 50 words)* >> **As a Bernie delegate, and Mayor of Santa Cruz, I hope to use my position and influence to help others understand that the ideas and policies that Bernie Sanders represents are what our country needs now more than ever. The only way we are going to be able to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic is by having a leader who is going to take a new approach and motivate the youth of our country. In addition to that, COVID-19 has made it clear how important it is that we provide workers with a living wage and health care. We have seen from the riots in Minnesota that we are sick of seeing police officers kill unarmed black people and we need a leader who will not promote this kind of behavior. We need a president who will protect our environment and fight against climate change. Finally we know that the only way we will be able to recover from this pandemic is by increasing the taxes the 1%, who have made billions of dollars during this pandemic, and that is something that neither Joe Biden, nor Donald Trump, will do.**