

ELSA ORTIZ

Seeking Position For: AC Transit Director, Ward 3

- 1. If elected, what are your top priorities during your term? What would you like to accomplish and how would you go about doing so? Please be specific.**

My number one , and foremost, priority is to solve our current budget deficit that threatens the very existence of AC Transit. For the next 2 years, we need to make tough and compassionate decisions to ensure the viability of AC Transit for our riders and employees. This current fiscal year we have a growing \$17.5 million deficit as a result of our failed labor negotiations with ATU (the drivers' union); if we don't balance our books we will be facing financial collapse. When I was elected to the Board, I took an oath to be fiscally responsible, meaning I must protect this public agency for seniors, young people, the disabled and commuters.

Since our labor costs are 75% of our operational budget, we must reduce these expenditures because we can't continue to balance the books on the backs of our riders. We have begun to cut the fat out of this bloated agency by make structural changes in our operations and by eliminating the perks many of our executives and management staff had received from the previous administration.

- 2. How have you in the past and how will you in the future use your position to expand the presence and influence of Asian Pacific Americans in public policy and politics?**

As a woman and a member of a racial minority group, I believe it is of paramount importance that we have access to society's benefits. As a Chief of Staff for former State Senator Bill Lockyer, I monitored legislation promoting equal protection in employment and worked on legislation strengthening criminal laws against crimes committed against a person because of his, or her race or gender.

I will continue my efforts to make AC Transit contracts available to our diverse community as well as to ensure that there is no discrimination in hiring and in promoting minority employees.

- 3. What have you done that demonstrates your commitment to and effectiveness in promoting Asian Pacific American interests in the following areas (and if you have not contributed in these areas, please discuss any area(s) in which you have made a contribution):**

- **Education**
- **Health Care**

- **Civil Rights;** When we have proposed bus service cuts, increased fares, changed routes, or created new programs, I have made sure that we do a Title VI analysis to ensure that our actions don't impact disproportionately on minority or low-income people.
- **Business:** I have pushed for policies to ensure that women and disadvantaged businesses have access to our contracts for service and goods.