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**Angelica Scherp is running as a Democrat for the Democratic Party County Central Committee**

**Assembly District 66**

Thank you for reaching out to me and thank you for what you do. I am a member of several Democratic clubs and several chapters of a civic organization called Indivisible.

Currently:

* I am a Steering Committee Member and Action/Allyship Chair for Indivisible Beach Cities.
* I organize local protests for national organizations such as- MoveOn.Org, Change.org, Code Pink, #StopThe Bans, ACLU, Indivisible etc.
* I am a Co-Organizer of monthly lobby meetings with Congressman Ted Lieu (CA33), and visit other representatives such as Assemblyman Al Muratsuchi, State Senator Ben Allen, Congresswoman Maxine Waters, Senator Feinstein, and Senator Harris, to advocate on behalf of the constituents.
* I do voter-outreach for Democrats all over the nation to flip red districts blue.
* I develop and teach strategies on how to talk to right-wingers.

As a member of the County Central Committee from Assembly District 66,  I won’t make laws myself but I will be interviewing and endorsing candidates, therefore I will influence policies and platform for the LA County Democratic Party and the California Democratic Party.

Let me say that nobody is an expert on everything. When it comes to mental health issues or homelessness, I will make sure that I have experts and advocates who work in those fields on the table, people who have knowledge and experience in those fields, so that together we can make an informed decision. We don’t want to base our decisions on biases and opinions. Here are my answers to your questions:

1.    What is more important for improving mental health currently, more locked facilities or more peer services? Please explain.

I think locked services are needed only in extreme cases when the person is a danger to themselves and/or others. In most cases, peer services should be provided.

2.    What is your opinion on making it easier to conserve homeless people?

I think that state should conserve homeless people who have a severe mental illness or substance abuse disorder, and those who have been in and out of short-term psychiatric commitments.

But, other than that, a homeless person should not be conserved just because they are homeless. We have to make sure that we don’t criminalize poverty. There is only one solution to homelessness- it is housing, supported by wrap-around services.

3.    Should people be forced to take psych medications against their will?

It might be necessary to do that for ones who are a danger to themselves and/or others.

4.    Do you think that the number of people incarcerated with mental health issues is an issue? If so, how would you address it?

Yes, the number of people getting incarcerated with mental health issues is an issue. Their mental health condition only gets worse like this, not better. They are also more likely to get victimized in jail, and will have a harder time getting back into society, getting a job etc. once out of jail. It will probably raise their chances of becoming homeless too. To be incarcerated does not help the person, and it does not help the society to incarcerate them either.

I would address this issue by making treatment a priority. I would supply them with mental health services and support services for housing, employment etc. I would try to make sure that they are back on track.

5.    Currently it is possible to conserve someone in California on a limited conservatorship for life with the signature of one doctor. Should limited conservatorships be changed to require a doctor of the person’s choice or more than one doctor? Should limited conservatorships be reviewed on a regular basis, as LPS conservatorships are?

Certainly the person should have a say in their choice of a doctor and be able to change doctors. It also makes sense to review the arrangement on a regular basis to see how things are going. If there is something that is not working then, things should be adjusted and changed for the better.

6.    Adult Protective Services is not allowed to take a complaint from a conserved person as technically that person has to be represented by their conservator in all affairs. Should the law be changed to allow people on conservatorships or others to report abuse perpetrated by conservators?

Yes, if the current law does not allow people to report on their conservator, then the law should be changed. The person should have the right to report any abuse.

7.     What is your opinion on Peer Certification in California that would set standards for mental health and substance abuse peer workers allowing the workers to bill Medi-Cal?

I think peer workers are very critical to guiding others towards needed services. If the state is able to set standards for this, then the workers can bill Medi-Cal and the counties can tap into federal funds. Workers can also then qualify to get training and continued education in their areas.

8.    Self-help support groups are an essential tool to recovery in mental health and substance abuse as they reduce hospitalizations, medication needed, relapses, incarcerations and increase personal responsibility, healthy behaviors and employment. Would you require that each peer worker have knowledge of the dozens of free self-help support group programs in your district in order to be certified?

Yes, the peer workers should have the knowledge of various self-help groups in their area to be certified.

9.    Do you agree that hospitals and other facilities should be required to video tape with sound all incidents of use of seclusion and restraint for psychiatric reasons, and provide the person who was secluded or restrained with a copy of the tape, upon request, in order to reduce the over use and abuse of these techniques?

If a person is secluded and/or restrained then we need some oversight to protect the person from potential abuse. Video tape should be required to make sure there is no abuse.

10. How will you improve the employment services for people with mental health issues so that they are based on people’s skills and strengths rather than assuming the only jobs they can do are in food, janitorial, back office and landscaping?

We have to have ways to assess the skills, talent, and strength of a person so that we can match them to a job opportunity that they will thrive in. Job satisfaction will go a long way in having the person maintain mental stability and fulfillment in their lives.

11. There is an epidemic of depression at the moment. Loneliness is a major cause of depression and early death. Self-help support groups reduce loneliness. What steps will you take to reduce the number of people depressed?

I am open to research on what works in making people less depressed and I will implement that. From my own experience, I have found that nothing is better at curing my depression than to make someone else’s life better. There are many ways to volunteer in our community. It does two things- connect you to others who have come out to do the same, and it shows you that your life, your effort is useful, it has a purpose, and it makes a difference in the world. This brings meaning to my life.

12. Are you open to sober living and shared recovery housing as a way of increasing affordable housing in your district?

People complain about the homeless in their community and I tell them that if they don’t want homeless people in their community, then they have to allow affordable housing of all types in their community, this includes sober living and shared recovery housing. There is just no other way. And apparently we have the money to make all types of housing possible in California, just not the will.

13. What are you doing to end homelessness?

Beside voting and advocating for funding for homeless shelters and affordable housing, I do drives for food, clothes, toys etc. for the Harbor Interfaith Services. I was part of the Homeless Count 2020 last week, which is an important step because the count in 2019 tells us, for instance, that 2/3 of the homeless in greater LA area are homeless in the area that they use to live in. This shows that affordable housing really is the key to solving homelessness.

14. How do you plan to reduce the stigma and discrimination against mental health consumers in your district?

Education is the key. Whenever there is a lack of knowledge, that space is filled by stigma and discrimination. We have to educate everyone in society about what mental health issues are and how they can be addressed.

15. Do you have any other positions that will make life better for mental health consumers, clients, survivors and others in recovery?

Beside the wrap-around services supporting housing, healthcare, education, employment, I would introduce people to art- dancing, singing, theater, writing, painting etc. Art has been very therapeutic to many. Also, being in a natural place- a trail in a forest, planting a tree, working in a garden, or a walk on the beach also has a very healing effect.

16. Do you or anyone you know suffer from depression, anxiety, mood disorders, schizophrenia, addiction or other mental health diagnoses?

Yes, I know a few people who are bipolar, some who have debilitating anxiety, my father was an alcoholic, and I know many kids who are on autistic spectrum.

17. What is your party affiliation? Democrat. In fact, to vote for me, one has to be a democract living in Manhatten Beach, Hermosa, Redondo, Palos Verdes Estates, Rolling Hills Estates, Rolling Hills, Rancho Palos Verdes, Torrance, Gardena, Lomita, and West Carson.

18. Who have you received endorsements from?

I am endorsed by: Assemblyman Al Muratsuchi, Indivisible Beach Cities, Indivisible South Bay L.A., Kashmir American Humane Society, Kashmir Human Rights Foundation, Progressive Democratic Club, and Torrance Democratic Club.

Let me know if there is something I can do to advocate for your organization. And if you like my answers to the issues you have raised, please vote for me and spread my candidate information.

Best Regards,

Angelica Scherp

FB Page:<https://facebook.com/lacdp.centralcommittee>

Voter’s Edge: [Angelica Scherp | Voter’s Edge California](https://votersedge.org/ca/en/ballot/election/83-b6aab8/address/111%20aspen%20way/zip/90274-3409/contests/contest/19973/candidate/147419?&date=2020-03-03)

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