

Coastside Democrats Survey, Assembly District 23 Candidates

Lydia Kou

Please state how long you have been registered to vote as a Democrat. *

- Always been a registered Democrat
- Have been a registered Democrat for the last ten years
- Have been a registered Democrat for the last five years
- Just registered as a Democrat this election cycle

Why are you running to represent Assembly District 23? *

I am running to put an end to status quo politics and work for the people of District 23 and California. Sacramento has become the home of big donors, special interests, and career politicians. We're taxed to the hilt yet face seemingly insurmountable problems in housing, homelessness, transportation, and infrastructure. It is time to shake up Sacramento.

Sacramento politicians don't have your interests at heart, they work for big donors, special interests, and political party masters – not for the average Californian. As a Council Member and former Mayor of the City of Palo Alto, I see firsthand the broken promises and impossible demands from Sacramento and sending me to Sacramento will be a wake-up call for career politicians who have lost touch with the people of California.

What do you see as the major issues on the Coastside? *

Your infrastructure has been ignored for so long, you have:

- The work on Hwy 92 needs to be completed.
- Some of the Coastside's communities are without power ten days a year. The electric grid is not durable and has no backup capacity.
- Cellphone service is spotty on a good day and non-functional during storms, and Internet service has the same outage problem.
- Your sanitary systems need to be upgraded so it doesn't back up and spill raw sewage.
- Build various types of genuine affordable housing.
- Public Safety
- Emergency Preparedness including emergency ingress & egress
- Educational funding for public schools
- Addressing health and safety infrastructure as immediate priorities
- Unwise development in fire zones and sensitive coastal areas.

Quite frankly the Coastside is overdue for hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of infrastructure upgrades.

You've been underfunded and ignored for almost forty years, and you need to get some priority.

What will your top priorities be if you are elected? *

- 1) Changing the culture & movement of Sacramento's career politicians beholden to special interests & big donors who are enacting overreaching legislation & taking away local democracy.
 - 2) Demand fiscal responsibility. We are burdened with high taxes, bonds, utility costs, public transit bailouts, just to name a few. Sacramento politicians spend our tax dollars frivolously & inefficiently on almost everything. It's time to end bureaucratic waste.
 - 3) Public Safety is a basic right! Every person should feel safe anywhere. First things first, REFORM Proposition 47, <https://lydiakou.com/lydia-kou-theft-tax-is-costing-california-families-more-than-500-per-year/>, also known by the cynical name "The Safe Neighborhoods & Schools Act" - allows individuals to steal up to \$950 per theft & essentially never face any consequences. Safety officers deserve our support, but we must also hold them accountable to acting responsibly w/o prejudice in every situation.
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Please explain how your background and experience have prepared you for the office you are seeking. *

As a Council Member & former Mayor, I have worked to make Palo Alto better for its residents. As a leader in my neighborhood association Barron Park, I found presentations about City projects one-sided. I have worked to provide residents with more complete, balanced information and have opposed developments inappropriate for the city. I have served on Palo Alto's General Plan Update. My civic involvement began as a leader in Palo Alto's Emergency Preparedness program where I focused on implementation and on actively involving the larger community. I worked closely with City Staff and received multiple awards for my accomplishments.

I am a small business owner: previously a video rental shop owner/operator for over 10 years, then selling it. Now, I work with my husband in residential real estate sales, leasing, and property management.

My experience as a Council Member and former Mayor can be found here
<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/City-Clerk/City-Council/Lydia-Kou>

Have you ever run for political office, served on a political committee, or been identified publicly with a political organization, candidate, ballot measure or issue? If so, please provide the details of your involvement. *

Lydia Kou, Council Member & former Mayor of Palo Alto, was elected in 2016 and re-elected in 2020.
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