



Long Beach resident Jennifer Jennings is among the 20 Californians who have given most frequently to 2020 presidential contenders.
PHOTO BY IRIS SCHNEIDER/CALMATTERS

Small donations, major support

Presidential candidates rely on repeat contributions, often of a few bucks

Jennifer Jennings dons a veritable uniform these days. Whether she's picking up groceries, cruising through a fast-food drive-thru or headed to a car wash, she's always sporting Bernie-merch—sweatshirts, T-shirts, whatever.

But she doesn't just wear her support on her sleeves. She's also been making small online donations—hundreds of them—to the campaign of Bernie Sanders, the progressive senator from Vermont who continually assails the “billionaire class.”

“It has just become part of my life now. It's a dollar a day,” said Jennings, a safety manager at the Port of Long Beach. “I live paycheck to paycheck, and somehow I'm contributing this money because I'm making that choice, y'know? I'm making minimum credit card payments by their due date and that's all I'm willing to do,” she said. But when it comes to supporting Sanders, “I want to do my part. I want to participate.”

About this story:
It was produced by CalMatters.org.

“In January, our campaign raised an incredible \$25 million from more than 648,000 people,” Sanders' campaign tweeted Feb. 6. “Our average donation: just \$18.”

The donations the Federal Election Commission reports are “itemized” contributions that add up to more than \$200 a year. Small donors who give less than \$200 a year aren't listed in the data.

The GOP has set its sights on small donations, too. President Donald Trump's re-election campaign raked in more than \$12 million in itemized donations in 2019—more than any other candidate.

The most frequent Trump small donor—Gary Schneider of Mountain View—didn't respond to messages seeking comment. Schneider, a Lyft driver who has given more than 200 donations to the president's campaign, made some of them through the platform WinRed.

WinRed on the right, and ActBlue on the left, have sprung up as ways to streamline the process, making it more convenient and appealing to frequent small donors.

WinRed says it raised more than \$100 million in its first 190 days last year.

ActBlue, a platform used by nearly every Democratic presidential candidate, reported breaking records on New Year's Eve by receiving more than half a million contributions and raising more than \$20 million in a single day. Overall, donors made 35 million contributions through ActBlue last year, according to the organization, which says it processed over \$1 billion in donations.

Some donors give sporadically, whenever the spirit or the campaigns move them.

When Sacramento teacher Mariah Martin, 37, sees a Sanders email about his stance on education policies or another issue she's passionate about, she donates online.

“I give pretty much whenever I am inspired by something that Bernie says or there's something else happening where I feel like, ‘because of this, I should just go donate to Bernie,’ and that will make me feel better about whatever is happening in the news,” she said.

For many of these donors, a small contribution can be a big sacrifice. Barbara Whipperman, an 83-year-old retiree living in Richmond, splits her donations between Sanders and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren. Her donations, she says, are around \$5 each.

“Well, I don't have a lot of money,” she said. “I worry a little about my own long-term income.”

Whipperman, a retired administrative assistant for UC Berkeley, has taken a reverse mortgage on her house and typically spaces out her donations around her pension and Social Security checks. The in-home care she needs is a financial worry for her, and she says her checks don't really cover the expense.

Bob Bogardus, a 64-year-old self-proclaimed “geeky IT guy” in Carmel, has made more than 400 contributions to Sanders. He says he doesn't want to volunteer at a phone bank or knock on doors.

Instead he set up a daily donation of \$2.70—because \$27 was the average nationwide donation to Sanders in his 2016 presidential campaign.

“We have resources and it's fun,” he said. “We love Bernie and he makes everything fun, and we're really proud to participate in that way.”

—ELIZABETH CASTILLO

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CITY OF CHICO PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE



NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Chico Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing on Thursday, February 20, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, located at 421 Main Street, regarding the following project:

Accessory Dwelling Units - Code Amendments for Consistency with State Housing Laws: In the 2019 legislative season, six bills addressing the California housing crisis went into effect on January 1, 2020, affecting the development regulations for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs): AB 68, AB 881, SB 13, AB 587, AB 671 and AB 670. Signed in succession, these bills limit the ability of local jurisdictions to issue discretionary approvals, increase allowances and define standards for ADUs and JADUs. Local ordinances that do not conform to the new State laws shall be declared null and void. While the City currently has regulations in place to allow for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), further amendments to these regulations are required for consistency with recent State housing laws.

The majority of the ADU code amendments are to Section 19.76.130 Accessory Dwelling Units (formerly Second Dwelling Units), of Title 19 of the Chico Municipal Code (Land Use and Development Regulations). These amendments are also intended to advance and implement several important General Plan Housing Element Goals, Policies, and Actions that promote the development and affordability of housing. Staff is recommending that the Planning Commission conduct a public hearing to consider ordinance amendments to the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) provisions in Chapter 19.19 and Section 19.76.130 (Accessory Dwelling Units) in Title 19 of the Chico Municipal Code (Land Use and Development Regulations) and forward a recommendation to the City Council.

The proposed amendments to Title 19 of the Municipal Code are statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.17 (adoption of an ordinance by a city to implement the provisions of Section 65852.1 or Section 65852.2 of the Government Code).

Any person may appear and be heard at the public hearing. The Planning Commission may not have sufficient time to fully review materials presented at the public hearing. Interested parties are encouraged to provide written materials at least 8 days prior to the public hearing to allow distribution with the Planning Commission's agenda and thus, adequate time for the Planning Commission to review. All written materials submitted in advance of the public hearing must be submitted to the City of Chico Community Development Department, 411 Main Street, Second Floor, or mailed to P.O. Box 3420, Chico, CA 95927. Written materials should refer to the specific public hearing item listed above. Questions regarding this project may be directed to Principal Planner Bruce Ambo at (530) 879-6801 or bruce.ambo@chicoca.gov.

In accordance with Government Code Section 65009, if any person(s) challenges the action of the Planning Commission in court, said person(s) may be limited to raising only those issues that were raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the Planning Commission at, or prior to, the public hearing.