Candidate Name (as it appears on the ballot): Kevin McCarty

Office Seeking: California State Assembly Member

District (Senate and Assembly): District 7

Hometown: Sacramento

Candidate Campaign Website and Contact Information (optional):

1. In which ways have you supported the disability community in the past, and how do you plan to continue your support in the future? Answer: As a City Councilmember, I worked closely with our City staff to ensure the proper implementation of the City’s ADA requirements over the past several years. As an Assembly member, I will do my best to help people with disabilities become productive, tax contributing members of the California economy while assuring adequate supports and services to assist people with disabilities to learn, earn, and live fully integrated lives.

2. Do you support the right of a person with a disability to live independently in the community? If so, what would your approach be to ensure people can transition from nursing homes to living on their own? Answer: Absolutely. Everyone should have the opportunity to live independently and with proper supports in the community. This includes helping people with disabilities living in nursing homes to understand their options to transition out of the nursing home to community settings. And to build proper supports and services for them to safely sustain themselves once they’ve transitioned into the community.

3. How will you support students with disabilities to receive an equitable, quality education if you are elected?
Answer: I fully support the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act that guarantees students with disabilities the right to a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. I believe students with disabilities should be in non-segregated learning environments with the proper supports and related educational services.

I also believe in improving parental involvement in our schools for all students in an effort to support families and make our schools more "parent friendly." I am interested in working with our Superintendent of Public Instruction to strengthen family engagement in our schools.

Zero tolerance policies in our schools are succeeding in pushing disadvantaged students and students with disabilities out of our schools. Unfortunately, these students wind up on the streets and in the juvenile justice system. I am committed to working with my colleagues in the legislature, the Superintendent, and the Board of Education to find the balance between accountability and quality education. And I’ll work to ensure that students with disabilities are treated equally with their nondisabled students.

4. How would you propose to build the capacity of the In Home Supportive Services program to sustain opportunities for seniors and people with disabilities to live independently in their communities?
Answer: I am in strong support of Independent Living Centers which allow people with disabilities to live safely in their homes and communities. Over the years, budget cuts have eroded this program, and while I am not fully versed in all its nuances, I know there is a need to maximize federal funding and increase or at least sustain state funding. In addition, I would support disability community engagement in program oversight and enhancement.
5. What would you do to increase opportunities for people with disabilities to have access to affordable and accessible housing? Answer: I feel strongly about the need to create livable communities in which private homes, condos, and apartments meet universal design standards so that everyone, including aging parents and grandparents, can live successfully in the community.

In addition, I have worked extensively on good government reforms, and I believe that there needs to be greater monitoring and oversight of the CA Fair Housing Act around discrimination against people with disabilities.

6. What will you do to ensure that people with disabilities are part of the planning and oversight systems for upgrading public transportation systems in California? Answer: The economic recession and the necessary budget cuts significantly reduced Sacramento’s public regional transit system. As a member of the Regional Transit Authority, we have been working hard to restore the bus services particularly to low-income and working class neighborhoods. Public transportation is vital to these areas and to people with disabilities living independently in the community. In addition, we are working to improve the much needed Para transit services.

Again, oversight of these services is crucial and so is the need for representation from all levels of the public, especially those that utilize it the most.

7. What would you do to increase job training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities? Answer: Like other civil rights issues, there is still work to be done around discriminations of disability in the workplace. And education needs to be a component of that to break the stigmas and stereotypes around hiring people with disabilities.
I know that the unemployment rate of people with disabilities is about twice that of the nondisabled population. I will work to create more job opportunities for work performed in integrated, competitive employment settings at minimum and/or livable wages.

8. What would you do to protect the rights of people with disabilities to have access to elections and cast an independent and private vote? Answer: Again, I see this as a civil rights issue. In the past, I have had experience with groups using scare tactics to deny people their right to vote. I also know that polling places are still held in buildings with no or limited accessibility for people with disabilities. This is an issue that I would work to address in the Assembly with monitoring, oversight and enforcement.

9. What will you do to ensure that upcoming changes in healthcare delivery for people with disabilities will maintain the integrity and consistency of care on which they have relied? Answer: Quality of healthcare is an important issue in everyone’s life, and particularly for those with disabilities and chronic medical conditions. Your quality of life is severely hindered if you don’t have access to primary healthcare or healthcare specialists.

I would also like to see HMOs work directly in consultation with the disability community to address their physical and programmatic accessibility issues.

10. In your view, do you think CA is spending too much, too little or just the right amount of its resources to support people with disabilities? Please explain. Answer: There are clearly not enough resources to go around to meet the needs of all Californians. As I mentioned previously, budget funding for people with disabilities has been slashed, but as California continues to improve economically the opportunity to refund these
programs is a must. As an underdog myself growing up, I will continue to fight for our disadvantaged, disenfranchised, and disabled communities.