

NAKASEC Action Fund is sending a 2019 Virginia Statewide Candidates Survey to all candidates in districts with a significant Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) voter population of over 5% that we have identified in competitive races. We hope you will spend a few minutes reviewing and completing the attached questionnaire, and return it to us by COB Friday, August 23rd. You may email your completed questionnaire to Helen Li at [hli@NakasecActionFund.org](mailto:hli@NakasecActionFund.org) or fill out the Google Form [here](#).

This survey is your opportunity to communicate in your own words what your views are on critical topics to the AAPI electorate. There are 155,000+ AAPI voters in Virginia and we will make sure that they get this information to educate and engage them in the November 2019 general election to promote more civic engagement within the AAPI community.

Formed in 2005, NAKASEC Action Fund (NAKASEC AF) engages in policy and legislative advocacy to protect and strengthen the nation's laws and policies regarding civil, immigrant and human rights. Our sister organization, NAKASEC, a 501(c)(3) organization, maintains a strong presence in Asian American & Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities throughout the nation, including in Virginia.

We appreciate your time and look forward to reviewing your responses.

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**Name: Suhas Subramanyam**

### **Affordable Housing**

**1. How will you ensure that all revitalization efforts benefit and include long-time local communities, especially communities of color and non-English speaking communities? How will you ensure that revitalization efforts do not come at the expense of displacing these communities?**

I will work with local government officials to ensure that ample affordable housing is built with every new development in the district and that communities are well-informed about new developments and have the ability to provide input. I would also support measures that make it easier for people to qualify for affordable housing benefits such as Section 8.

**2. What is your position on rent control in Virginia? What are your plans to protect tenants from evictions and rent hikes?**

I am in favor of reasonable rent controls in areas determined to be most in need of affordable housing options. We need more transparency in the rent-hike process at a local level, and I would work with my partners at the local government level to ensure that landlords are following protocols for rent hikes, if they must do it at all.

## **Immigration**

**3. What are your views on driver licenses or driver privilege cards for all individuals who are age eligible and able to pass a driving exam, regardless of immigration status? How would you implement these types of licenses?**

I believe that every driver should have access to licenses or privilege cards, regardless of immigration status. These licenses should come from the state, and anyone who needs one should be protected from deportation or detention when they request one.

**4. What is your position on in-state tuition for all youth who graduate from Virginia high schools, regardless of immigration status?**

I believe that anyone who graduates from a Virginia high school should have access to in-state tuition at state colleges and universities, regardless of their immigration status.

**5. What are your views on granting localities and their sheriff's departments more discretion in the processing of immigrants in jails and juvenile detention?**

Allowing localities free rein over processing immigrants in jails has resulted in inhumane treatment of immigrant families in some cases. We need to ensure that localities and their sheriff's departments are treating immigrant families humanely at the state and local level.

## **Climate Change + Transportation**

**6. What are your views on new fossil fuel infrastructure in Virginia?**

I don't believe we should continue to invest in fossil fuel infrastructure without adequately investing in renewable energy infrastructure and resources as well. Climate change is one of our generation's greatest crises and need to work aggressively to address it.

**7. What are your top priorities for increasing environmentally friendly public transportation to reduce the number of single-occupancy vehicles and how do you propose to fund these priorities?**

We must continue to invest in mass transit options like Metro and commuter buses. For all funding that goes toward roads and highways, we should have a certain proportion also allocated towards funding mass transit projects.

**8. How will you ensure that all workers are able to commute to work in a way that is fair and equitable?**

I am in favor of programs that allow recipients of SNAP benefits to ride public transit for free. As we expand mass transit options, we should ensure that rates are kept reasonable so everyone has access to them.

## **Healthcare**

**9. Virginia recently passed Medicaid expansion. However, there are still many residents of Virginia who do not have health insurance. If elected, what are your top priorities to further expand healthcare access?**

We need to do away with restrictive work requirements that prevent many people from signing up for the Medicaid benefits they need. We also need to protect those with pre-existing conditions on the state level, and work to lower prescription drug prices. We also need to address the cost of care by examining medical fraud, waste, and abuse, and by pushing our colleagues at the federal level to introduce a public option, or else consider introducing one at the state level.

**10. What are your views on allowing legal permanent residents who have lawfully resided in the U.S. for more than five years to become eligible for Medicaid, if they meet all other eligibility requirements?**

I would be in favor of this measure.

**11. What are your views on expanding Virginia's FAMIS program to undocumented children?**

I am in favor of providing healthcare coverage to all children, regardless of immigration status.

## **Education**

**12. What are your plans for addressing the increasing costs of college in Virginia?**

I am in favor of increasing state subsidies for four-year college and retaining the cap on tuition increases at in-state colleges and universities. I also would like to expand access to debt forgiveness programs in Virginia.

**13. Virginia is currently investing in a "Tech-Talent Pipeline" for STEM education in both K-12 and in state college programs. However, we recognize that students and youth should also be supported in their educational pursuits outside of STEM. What is your plan for supporting students who choose non-STEM interests both in K-12 and in college programs?**

We must expand funding for arts programs, and encourage children to pursue their interests wherever they may lie. I prefer the term “STEAM-H” which includes arts and humanities when we think about what types of investments should be made in K-12 and in-state college programs.

**13. What are your views on universal childcare and universal pre-K?**

We need to provide funding at the state level for early education programs so that our children are fully prepared for future schooling. Research shows that early childhood education is crucial to a child’s development, and I am in favor of expanding those opportunities for all of Virginia’s children.

**14. What are your views on free meal programs in our public schools?**

Since many students rely on school meals for the majority of their daily nutrition, I support keeping and expanding existing free meal programs and public schools.

**Racial Equity**

**15. The scandals surrounding state leadership in early 2019 illuminated the long way that Virginia has to go especially in the realm of anti-black racism and sexual violence. If elected, what are the top policies or initiatives that you will champion to promote a more just and equitable Virginia?**

We need to start by ensuring that all people, regardless of their race, gender, or who they love, are treated equally under the law. That means extending protections for LGBTQ+ individuals, protecting women’s access to health and their reproductive rights, and comprehensive criminal justice reform that decriminalizing non-violent drug offenses that disproportionately impact communities of color.