



City Council Meeting, May 21, 2019 – Agenda Item 2.27

Honorable Mayor and San Jose City Council,

I am writing to you representing the South Bay Progressive Alliance, specifically for our Public Banking Action Team. We have been working on educating the public here in San Jose to the benefits of establishing local Public Banks.

SBPA is an alliance of 12 organizations representing Labor, Nurses, and community advocates.

We have been working hard over the last few months to help introduce **AB857, The Public Bank Bill** with Assemblymembers Chiu and Santiago and have the support of both Assemblymember Kalra and Senator Beall. We also have the support of 350 Silicon Valley, Divest Silicon Valley, Fossil Free California, the Green Party of Santa Clara County, San Jose Peace and Justice Center, NAACP San Jose, Low Income Self Help Center, Santa Clara County Single Payer Coalition, Code Pink San Jose, Somos Mayfair, Democratic Socialists of America Silicon Valley, Peninsula Peace and Justice Center, Mothers Out Front South Bay and the Pachamama Alliance South Bay.

We have **197 online petition signatures for Santa Clara County**, and **249 online signatures for San Jose**. We have also collected over **330 in-person signatures**.

We must stand with our community and hold high standards for who gets to manage our tax dollars. We know that big banks like Wells Fargo and JPMorgan engage in shady practices that hurt our community like wage theft and illegal foreclosures as well as gender and racial discrimination. These banks have been taking advantage of our friends, family, and neighbors for too long and have been using our San Jose tax dollars to make their profits.

For so long, we have been trying to hold these institutions accountable and they continue to decide not to play fair, we need to take the responsibility into our own hands.

Please help San Jose leverage the public deposits that hold our communities tax dollars for the benefit of our community by supporting AB 857, state legislation which would enable local governments to create their own public bank. It's our money and we need to make sure it is used to create growth here in San Jose. **A Public Bank will allow our city to create sound investments that will save money and invest the public deposits in fiscally, socially, and environmentally responsible activities.** Public banks can save taxpayer funds that are currently going to big banks to instead finance affordable housing, student loans, renewable energy, rebuilding after natural disasters, and local infrastructure including roads, parks, schools. In partnership with local banks and credit unions, a public bank could provide affordable loans and lines of credit to local small businesses, nonprofits and even help people get out from under the thumb of payday lenders.

Please **vote in favor of the recommendation** by the Rules and Open Government Committee to Adopt a support if amended position on AB 857 (Chiu and Santiago) on public banks.

Sincerely,
Jake Tonkel
SBPA Public Banking Action Team Chair