



February 6, 2008

Dear Friend,

Eight years ago, at the age of 29, I ran for elected office for the first time. In that 2000 campaign for the Oakland City Council at-large seat, I was honored to receive the support of over 50,000 Oakland voters, earning 44% of the vote.

In the years since, I have continued my commitment to public service. I have worked as a policy advocate for a Bay Area nonprofit, an outreach consultant protecting Oakland residents from predatory loans and foreclosures, a bible teacher, and as an elected Director for the AC Transit Board. I have learned how to use policy-making to bring positive change to the real world, including new all-night transit service to cover BART routes while they are closed, installing large-scale solar power arrays, launching pilot programs in alternative fuels such as biodiesel, and successfully advocating for funding to protect essential public services.

Now, I am ready to bring my experience and talents to building a healthier future for Oakland. This is why I am announcing my candidacy for the Oakland City Council, at-large seat.

We face a moment of great opportunity in 2008 – an opportunity to choose new leaders who can provide a fresh perspective and guide our policies for the coming years. This is our chance to decide what we need to do next to **build an Oakland we can all be proud of**. Will we improve our public safety? Our economic vitality and job opportunities? Our public health and clean air? Will all of our communities be included? Will we creatively harness opportunities, such as green technology, and our local business, arts, community organizations and public service sectors, to build a stronger future?

I know that we can do better as a City, and I know, with the challenges we face, we *must* do better.

Public Safety: In order to achieve many of the other important goals for our city, and provide the basic building blocks for a thriving community, we must provide for public safety in Oakland. **In 2004, over 69% of Oakland voters approved Measure Y, which mandated, and funded, a program to provide a community policing officer for every neighborhood ‘beat’ in Oakland.** This promise has not yet been fulfilled. We must keep this promise, and improve our police recruitment strategy to achieve this vital goal.

Economic Opportunity: In the past, some believed that economic vitality and a healthy environment were in conflict. Luckily, this is not true. For example, the solar power installation I initiated both saved money and reduced pollution. By increasing our support for local businesses, improving our Port and infrastructure, making smart use of city funds, making our permit and approval process clearer,

and partnering with all stakeholders to revitalize Oakland's economy, we can provide more jobs at living wages, thriving commercial and entertainment venues, improve environmental health and increase economic opportunity.

"People often ask: I want to get greener, what should I do? New light bulbs? A hybrid? But actually, the greenest thing you can do is this: Choose the right leaders. It is so much more important to change your leaders than change your light bulbs. Why? Because leaders write the rules, set the standards and offer the tax incentives that drive market behavior across a whole city, state or country."

Thomas Friedman. The New York Times. October 21st, 2007.

Healthy Neighborhoods: Whether it is improving air quality in areas of Oakland with some of the highest asthma rates in the nation, increasing access to parks and recreation opportunities, preventing foreclosures, or sustaining and strengthening our neighborhood commercial districts and farmers' markets, I am committed to leading the implementation of practical solutions for a healthier community.

Oakland City Council elections will take place on June 3rd, 2008. Your early support is needed now to reach out to all of Oakland, since every Oakland voter has a chance to help choose the "at-large" council member – our only city-wide policy-making position.

We need your help to ensure victory in 2008, because Oakland cannot afford to wait years longer to begin to make the changes we need. **Please consider a contribution of \$600 (the maximum per person under Oakland law) to my campaign today.** Whatever support you can give, including financial and volunteer effort, will be appreciated and necessary to our success. (Reply envelope enclosed).

Thank you so much for your support. **Working together, we can build an Oakland we can all be proud of.**

Sincerely,



Rebecca Kaplan

P.S. In many ways, an election is a more complicated form of job application. I am seeking the job of Oakland's city-wide policy maker because I believe I am the person **best qualified** for it. I have enclosed a copy of my Resume and press clips.

*If I am not for myself, who will be for me?
If I am only for myself, what am I?
If not now, when?*

-- Rabbi Hillel