

Joyce Newstat and Susan Lowenberg  
Beth Gerstein  
Eli Gilad  
Heidi Goldstein  
Noah Lebowitz and Tracy Hollander  
Pam Springer  
Susan Wengraf, Berkeley City Council Member

July 23, 2018

Jovanka Beckles, Candidate  
Jovanka Beckles for Assembly District 15  
2540 Macdonald Avenue  
Richmond, CA 94804

CC: Marty Schenker, President, Board of Directors  
Abigail Michaelson Porth, Executive Director  
Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC)  
121 Steuart Street, #301  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Seth Brysk, Executive Director  
Linda Horodas, Board Chair  
Anti-Defamation League (ADL), Central Pacific  
720 Market St., #8  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dan Kalb, Council Member  
City of Oakland  
1 Frank Ogawa Plaza, 2/F  
Oakland, CA 94612

Judy Appel, Vice President  
Berkeley School Board  
2020 Bonar Street  
Berkeley, CA 94702

Andy Katz, Director  
East Bay Municipal Utility District Administration  
375 11th Street  
Oakland, CA 94607

Dear Ms. Beckles,

It has come to our attention that a disturbing video containing anti-Semitic rhetoric was made in support of your campaign for California Assembly, District 15. In May of 2018, Blue America PAC created and posted a video promoting your candidacy with the tagline, "Big Shekels Can't Hide our Beckles Pride." The video is an attempt to promote your campaign as a 'pure' choice and your opponent, Buffy Wicks, as a monied and corrupt one -- backed by 'big shekels'. We are deeply disappointed to see that your campaign has not only failed to denounce the video, but you promoted and shared its derogatory content on your official campaign Facebook and Twitter accounts.

In May of 2018, Blue America PAC - which endorsed and is raising money for your campaign, Jovanka Beckles for Assembly District 15 - posted online and on social media a video advertisement with the following message: "Big Shekels can't hide our Beckles Pride... because cash is king in the halls of the Assembly." The ad goes on: "It's easy campaigning for a pure crusader/ and talking the talk: without 'fear of favor'/ it's hard to walk the walk when whipped by lyn' tamers." The earlier reference to 'big shekels' is even more problematic following these allusions to religious rhetoric. In addition, the ad ran a banner with the headline "Beat Buffy's Big Bucks" followed by "Vote Jovanka Beckles."

We were shocked to see that your campaign retweeted the video from both your candidate page and the page of your campaign's treasurer (Ruscal Cayangyang) on Twitter. Moreover, we were also dismayed to see that you posted an article written by the head of the Blue America PAC - which prominently features the "Big Shekels" video on the top - to your Facebook page with the following statement: "Everyone should read Blue America's expert analysis of my race for California Assembly District 15." The article, posted to the website 'Crooks and Liars,' introduces the video with the following caption: "To help you laugh through your tears at this corrupt game of top-down class warfare, watch the video above, which we encourage you to share (and to adapt freely)."

As active members of the Jewish community, we are disgusted at the use of derogatory words and anti-Semitic language in this video. We all know too well that using the term 'big shekels' as it relates to money and political power is a vile and not-so-subtle reference to the old trope and view that Jewish people control power through money. It is patently anti-Semitic. The controversial use of this language was pointed out to Blue America PAC on Twitter, and their reply proved they were both comfortable with the language and unwilling to address the

anti-semitic concerns. Blue America PAC not only left it up on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and in their articles, but they even ran a funded political advertisement with the content on Facebook. The video and accompanying article also remain posted on your campaign's social media platforms.

Both you and Blue America PAC were alerted to the issues of this video via Twitter. Twitter user @realBenShapero (not be confused with agitator Ben Shapiro) replied to a tweet that you were on with the following message: "I still haven't heard if she apologized for the anti-Semitic dog whistle using shekels to denounce big money." We are saddened to see that you did not take the opportunity to denounce the anti-Semitism used in the video; moreover, the content remains shared on your Facebook and Twitter pages at the time of this letter.

Especially in times like these, we need to be united as a community against hatred and bigotry. As members of the Jewish community, this is particularly painful, AND it is everyone's responsibility to speak out against this kind of hate. We cannot overlook or tolerate the implication that Ms. Wicks and the legislators of Sacramento are controlled by 'shekels' or 'Jewish money'. While President Trump may have been elected despite using anti-Semitic, racist and sexist comments to deride an opponent, Californians must have higher standards for their political discourse.

We are asking you, your campaign, and the electeds and community members supporting you, to disavow this anti-Semitic statement immediately. We believe that you as the candidate and your campaign should also publicly apologize for promoting it on social media.

We have attached to this letter screenshots of the offending postings and article.

Sincerely,

Joyce Newstat and Susan Lowenberg

Beth Gerstein

Eli Gilad

Heidi Goldstein

Noah Lebowitz and Tracy Hollander

Pam Springer

Susan Wengraf, Berkeley City Council Member

## New Anti-Berner Model Test In California's 15th Assembly District Election

By **Howie Klein**

5/13/18 7:00am



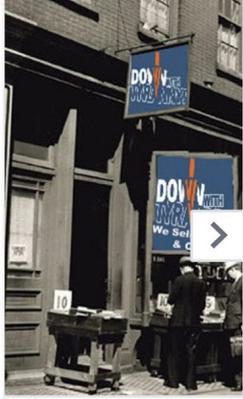

**Jovanka Beckles**  
 May 11 · 🌐

Everyone should read Howie Klein of Blue America and his expert analysis of my race for California Assembly District 15. It is so important that our Corporate Free agenda wins. They have have all the money from outside, but we have all The People inside.

<http://downwithtyranny.blogspot.com/.../new-anti-berner-model...>



**DownWithTyranny!: New Anti-Berner Model Test In California's 15th Assembly District**



**DownWithTyranny!: New An Test In California's 15th Ass**

**Ruscal Cayangyang** @ruscalcayang Follow

"@JovankaBeckles is the AD15 candidate whose election would bring to state government, and to national visibility, a uniquely successful local Progressive political model. Jovanka is a working-class veteran of the nation's most Progressive city council..."



**New Anti-Berner Model Test In California's 15th Assembly District Election**  
This race in the most Progressive Assembly district in the country is a battleground for the war that has been waging within the Democratic Party since 2016. If the D...  
crooksandliars.com



**TeddyorBiff** @TeddyorBiff · May 14

Replying to @ruscalcayang @JovankaBeckles

I know "shekels" rhymes with Beckles but I'm not sure that it's a great idea to make a pun suggesting that you wouldn't be bought out by "Jewish money", which is what shekels are. Unless that is what you are trying to say. Some of the people influencing USA are Jewish, some not.



**Benjamin Shapero** @realBenShapero · May 14

Replying to @ruscalcayang @NorCal4Bernie @JovankaBeckles

The slogan's use of "big shekels" is a disgusting retread of classic anti Semitic lies straight out of the Protocols. Every decent person should denounce Beckles. Progressive doesn't have to mean anti Semitic.



**Retweeted 9 times**

**Ruscal Cayangyang** @ruscalcayang · May 14  
"@JovankaBeckles is the AD15 candidate whose election would bring to state government, and to national visibility, a uniquely successful local Progressive political model. Jovanka is a working-class veteran of the nation's most Progressive city council..."  
[tinyurl.com/y8znglqj](http://tinyurl.com/y8znglqj)  
rocky mtn. region, US

**David Hildebrand** @David4SenateCA  
FMR U.S. Senate Candidate (CA), FMR Staging Location Director at Sacramento for Bernie, Legislative Analyst, and Progressive Activist trying to live #NotMeUs

**Jovanka Beckles** @JovankaBeckles  
Councilmember, #RichmondCA Down for the people @OurRevolution-endorsed candidate for #AD15 This is how I #OccupyElectedOffice #Woke

which is what shekels are. Unless that is what you are trying to say. Some of the people influencing U\$A are Jewish, some not.

**Benjamin Shapero** @realBenShapero · May 14  
Replying to @ruscalcayang @NorCal4Bernie @JovankaBeckles

**Jovanka Beckles** @JovankaBeckles | Follows you

Tweets 8,432 | Following 2,152 | Followers 3,175 | Likes 7,308 | Lists 7 | Moments 1

Jovanka Beckles Retweeted

**Ruscal Cayangyang** @ruscalcayang · May 14  
"@JovankaBeckles is the AD15 candidate whose election would bring to state government, and to national visibility, a uniquely successful local Progressive political model. Jovanka is a working-class veteran of the nation's most Progressive city council..."



**New Anti-Berner Model Test In California's 15th Assembly District Ele...**  
This race in the most Progressive Assembly district in the country is a battleground for the war that has been waging within the Democratic Pa...  
[crooksandliars.com](http://crooksandliars.com)

**Fast Rav DSA** @DSAFastRav · May 13

● Inactive  
May 23, 2018 - Jun 4, 2018

This ad ran without a "Paid for by" label. ⓘ

 **Blue America**  
Sponsored

VOTE Jovanka Beckles for CA AD-15 by June 5



DCCC Is Trying to Crush the Grassroots!  
By trying To BUY this race!  
GOO.GL [Learn More](#)

[See Ad Performance](#)



**Blue America**  
@Blue\_\_America

[Follow](#) ▾

I added a video to a @YouTube playlist  
[youtu.be/xZcGBliRcdM?](https://youtu.be/xZcGBliRcdM?) a Big Shekels Cant Hide Our Beckles' Pride!



**Big Shekels Cant Hide Our Beckles' Pride!-- VOTE Jovanka ...**  
"Their Big Shekels Can't Hide; Our Beckles Pride": Jovanka Beckles beat Chevron's dirty money in Richmond & will make us proud in Sacramento. For details see...  
[youtube.com](https://youtube.com)

2:54 PM - 11 May 2018

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**Jennifer (Jenni) Liles** @odanu · May 11 ▾

Replying to @Blue\_\_America @YouTube  
why are you posting an anti-Semitic video?

🗨️ 1 🔄 ❤️ ✉️



**Jennifer (Jenni) Liles** @odanu · May 11

Replying to @Blue\_\_America @YouTube  
why are you posting an anti-Semitic video?

1 0 0 0



**Blue America** @Blue\_\_America · May 12

Is mentioning "Shekels" Anti-Semitic?  
How about opposition to Chevron and peers' interventions in local, state & national politics?  
Please discuss after viewing the entire video.  
We welcome contributions of shekels to help spread this message more widely:

	<p><b>I just gave!</b> Join us! Contribute today. <a href="https://secure.actblue.com">secure.actblue.com</a></p>
--	---

1 0 0 0



**Jennifer (Jenni) Liles** @odanu · May 12

Yes. It's a subtle reference to an old Trope that Jewish people are behind all the dirty money. And it's vile.

1 0 1 0



**Jennifer (Jenni) Liles** @odanu · May 12

And yes, I watched the video. Why dilute your point with gratuitous anti-Semitism?

0 0 0 0



**Steven Tavares**

@eastbaycitizen

Following

I know some East Bay insiders who think there's no way @JovankaBeckles beats @BuffyWicks in #AD15. I think it's going to be a tough race.

4:15 PM - 14 Jun 2018

3 Retweets 8 Likes



2 3 8 0

Tweet your reply



**Steven Tavares** @eastbaycitizen · Jun 14

Here's the theme of the day again: Mainstream media is going to go out of her way to make Beckles sound like a fool. I give it six weeks before Wicks' campaign starts feeding Matier & Ross a steady diet of anti-Beckles items.

0 1 6 0



**Benjamin Shapero** @realBenShapero · Jun 14

Replying to @eastbaycitizen @BuffyWicks and 2 others

She's done a good job of that already. I still haven't heard if she apologized for the anti-Semitic dog whistle using shekels to denounce big money.

0 0 0 0