WALKING FOR WEIGHT LOSS: HOW MUCH YOU NEED AT EVERY AGE TO SHED 45 LBS

Age: 25 | 35 | 45 | 55 | 65
Goal Weight: 130 | 140 | 150 | 160 | 170
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Chris Duncan (Courtesy photo)

By ALISTAIR SCHALLHORN | Jschallhorn@dailynews.com | Orange County Register
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Ahead of the primary election, the Southern California News Group conducted a list of questions to poise to the candidates who wish to represent you. You can find the full questionnaire for each candidate below. Each candidate's answers are in their own words, and in some instances, to remain fair-spoken, edited for clarity and brevity.

Name: Chris Duncan

Current job title: Tuff and Cadence Of Tomorrow Square Rutton Bragas 630 LLP

Political party affiliation: Democratic

Incumbent: No

Other political positions held: Sun Clemente City Council Member; Mayor of San Clemente; U.S. Marine Corps Lawyer; Board Member, Orange County Fire Authority; Board Member, Orange County Assessment Appeals Board

City where you reside: San Clemente

Campaign website or social media: www.chrisduncan.com

HOW MUCH SHOULD I WALK
TO LOSE 45 LBS ACCORDING TO AN AGE
25 35 45 55 65
CALCULATE NOW

Do you believe balancing the state budget should rely more on spending cuts, new revenue streams or a combination? Tell us how you would propose tackling California's projected budget deficit. (Please answer in 200 words or less.)

A combination

California cannot cut its way to fiscal health without gutting services that families depend on, and it cannot raise its way out of structural problems without driving away businesses and workers.

My approach starts with accountability. We should eliminate ineffective corporate tax credits that cost billions without delivering measurable economic benefits. Every credit should be evaluated for results, and those that fail should be redirected to priorities that actually work. At the same time, we must protect the core services that working families rely on when times of crisis hit and crisis. And we should use the wealthiest Californians to pay their fair share, particularly as the federal government shifts costs onto states.

The right approach is balanced, disciplined, and grounded in evidence: ensure inefficiencies exist, consolidating duplicative programs, and demanding better outcomes from every dollar spent. Protect the core functions of public education, healthcare, public safety, or the safety net programs that keep families afloat.

Long-term, California needs to build a more resilient revenue base that is less dependent on capital gains volatility, so we can stop getting from surplus to deficit. We need to strengthen the economy by investing in housing, infrastructure, workforce development, and industries that create sustainable growth, while ensuring that economic growth benefits the broad base of California families without being taxed.

For you, what is non-starter when talking about budget cuts? Why? (Please answer in 200 words or less.)

Cutting public education funding below the Proposition 98 guarantee is a non-starter. Our schools are the foundation of everything: economic competitiveness, housing equity, upward mobility, strong communities. California already ranks by far last in per-pupil spending among comparable states, and further cuts would make it harder for a child born into poverty in corporate tax loopholes would be unconscionable.

Similarly, I will not support cuts to Medi-Cal or safety net programs at the exact moment the federal government is shifting costs onto states and creating a $1.5 billion hole in our budget. Californians depend on these programs, and the decision to remove them remains, from home healthcare aides to clinic staff, are already stretched thin. Cutting them funding would hurt the most vulnerable people in our state and create a crisis that costs more than it saves.

Public safety funding is also off the table. Our communities deserve well-staffed, well-trained, well-equipped first responders, and we owe our firefighters, paramedics, and EMT residents to feel safe while educating the heroes who keep them safe.

What are the top three most pressing issues facing the state, and what would you propose, as a state legislator, to address them? (Please answer in 200 words or less.)

First, the cost of living. Housing, childcare, healthcare, and everyday expenses are crushing working families. I will fight to expand affordable housing production with strong labor standards, protect tenants, invest in childcare, and hold utility companies accountable for rate increases that outpace inflation.

Second, defending California from federal overreach into our lives and bodies. The Trump administration is attacking healthcare funding, immigrant communities, reproductive freedom, and environmental protections in ways that directly harm Californians. I will fight for Individual Freedom, California needs independence, landed leadership that can stand up and lead available to protect residents from these assaults, from funding backstops to legal challenges to neighborhood protections.

Third, public safety and accountability. Wildfires and other climate disasters have ravaged communities and exposed gaps in emergency response. We need to protect lives, homes, and property crime, historical trafficking, and retail theft remain real concerns. I support smart investments in firefighting and fire mitigation, law enforcement and prevention, expanding mental health crisis response, and holding corporations responsible for their role in protecting, vulnerable children. So I underwrote federal immigration enforcement from inside out. My experience in DHS taught me that when the federal government abuses its authority, state and local legislators have a responsibility to stand up and fight back to protect their residents.

Local law enforcement should focus on the public safety of their residents, not acting as immigration enforcement agents. Families should feel safe reporting crimes and accessing services without fear of deportation. I support protecting sensitive locations like schools, hospitals, and courthouses from enforcement operations, expanding legal services for immigrant workers, and ensuring that state agencies do not share data with federal immigration authorities in ways that put families at risk. The state should work to stop ICE from operating in our communities, protect workers' rights, ensure access to legal services for immigrants, and ongoing people in hospitals, churches, and schools. The immigration system is broken and we can all agree on.

I will also oppose government returns to colonial, humane immigration policy, partnership models across United States California must be a Forward. That said, I respect the rule of law. I worked for 10 years as a Homeland Security Prosecutor to secure our border and keep Americans safe. I believe in a fair, compassionate, and orderly immigration system that is also enforceable. Immigration enforcement is a political reality, not a public policy.

Health care crisis — like in many other areas — are continuing to rise. What policies, specifically, would you support or like to champion that would lower premiums or out-of-pocket expenses? (Please answer in 200 words or less.)

I support the Affordable Care Act, which expanded access to care targets for hospitals and healthcare systems. Transparency and accountability are essential to reigning in prices. I would support requiring hospitals to publish clear, accessible information on costs and quality. Fight to regulate pharmaceutical pricing more aggressively at the state level, including supporting bulk purchasing through Medi-Cal and CalPERS to drive down drug costs, and holding pharmacy benefit managers accountable for opaque rebate practices that inflate consumer costs, which equals campaign artificial scarcity of mergers and acquisitions to the healthcare arena, particularly for private equity firms. For working families, I support expanding telehealth access and reducing barriers to care, including licensing requirements in Medi-Cal. I also support ensuring California keeps a single-payer system over time, because the administrative overhead of our current multi-payer system wastes billions that should be spent on actual care.

What would you support expanding state health care programs to ensure more residents — including those who are undocumented — have access to affordable or free healthcare? Would such an expansion? Or how would you propose the people who cannot afford health care still get the necessary care they need without expanding state programs? (Please answer in 200 words or less.)

California has already taken significant steps to expand Medi-Cal to all income-eligible residents, including undocumented adults. I support continuing that expansion where it is feasible, they end up in emergency rooms or for greater cost to taxpayers, and preventable conditions become expensive crises. Expanding coverage is both the right thing to do and the fiscally responsible choice.

Funding should come from a combination of sources: closing corporate tax loopholes, redirecting wasteful spending, and ensuring that high-income residents contribute fairly to public healthcare programs, and where necessary, setting the equilibrium of California to overtitude more. If the federal government cuts Medicaid funding through H.R. 1 or other measures, California should prepare to absorb some of the displaced coverage and be ready to offer the tools for quality care programs. I support strengthening community health centers and county safety net systems so that no one is turned away from basic care.

Housing costs are prohibitively high for many residents. What would you do to assist in present people living from renters to first-time buyers. What policies in progress should the state adopt to make housing more affordable for renters and homeowners? What do you propose the state do to incentivize housing development and expedite such projects? (Please answer in 200 words or less.)

Housing is the biggest cost burden for most families, and every income level. I support streamlining the permitting and inspection process to reduce timelines and costs for builders. I support expanding by-right approvals for projects that meet local zoning and affordability requirements, so developers spend less time and money fighting for approvals and more building.

For renters, I support strengthening tenant protections and lowering the pushback rent cap to prevent displacement. For homeowners and aspiring buyers, I support down payment assistance programs and first-time homebuyer incentives. I also support taxing vacant residential properties and corporate purchases by corporate investors that are driving up prices in the market.

On homelessness prevention specifically, keeping people housed is far cheaper than rehousing them after they lose their homes. I support expanding emergency rental assistance, rights-to-counsel programs for tenants facing evictions, and increasing funding for supportive services that helps maintain stable housing.

We should also expand workforce housing for teachers, nurses, and other important members of our communities.

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a law in 2023 authorizing state energy regulators to penalize oil companies making excessive profits. But the California Energy Commission put off enforcing the law last year, saying it needed more time to develop the rules. **With oil refineries refiring capacity, will they would clear clean operations. Their announcements prompted many to be concerned about soaring gas prices. What do you think of the state's approach to oil companies? Should the state be more or less aggressive in holding California's climate goals with protecting consumers from high gas prices at the pump? (Please answer in 200 words or less.)

I understand the Commission's concern about refiner closures, but I am skeptical of letting oil companies use the threat of shutdowns to avoid accountability for excessive profits. We should be prepared to enforce the law and let the market adjust. The state's climate goals make record profits while Californian pays some of the highest gas prices in the country. My opponent had done nothing to hold the Millionaires and big businesses who support his campaign accountable. I will support the state's efforts to enforce the law and hold gas companies responsible for taking advantage of the system. The process Newsom was designed to prevent exactly that kind of profiteering, and backing down under industry pressure undermines the law reform and legislation put in place.

That said, the transition away from fossil fuels must be managed carefully to protect workers and communities that depend on refinery employment and tax revenue. I support workers' rights, including the displacement of electric vehicle with strong incentives for low- and middle-income buyers, expanding public transit, and investing in charging infrastructure so that transportation electrification is real and accessible. I support that as refineries close, the transition is orderly, workers are protected with retraining and placement, and communities are cleaned up by the companies that profited from them. The goal is a California that keeps its climate leadership while working families can afford to live. But the transition has to be managed with working families in mind, not just corporate balance sheets.

In 2024, voters approved Proposition 36 to increase penalties for certain drug and retail theft crimes and make available a drug treatment option for some who plead guilty to nonviolent drug possession charges. Do you support Proposition 36? Do you believe Natural Health treatments be included in the budget? How would you ensure that money is used properly? (Please answer in 200 words or less.)

Yes, I do. I know federal prosecutors, I will fully fund Proposition 36, including the treatment pathway it created. A pathway without funded treatment at the end of it is simply prison with a different name, and it will not work. I support the full implementation of Proposition 36 as it is to protect our residents, and offer treatment as an alternative to incarceration, we must actually invest in the treatment infrastructure to make that work.

I would push for dedicated behavioral health funding in the budget, with strong accountability measures to ensure that money reaches the people it was intended for. Independent evaluations, transparent reporting, and regular audits are actually reducing recidivism and getting people into recovery. I also support expanding community-based mental health services, substance abuse treatment beds, and co-occurring disorder treatment so people can actually get the care they need before they reach crisis.

Having prosecuted violent crimes and drug offenses in DHS, I believe in accountability, and have a track record of getting criminals off our streets. But I also know that locking people up without addressing the underlying addiction and mental health crisis only sends the cycle through the system, which costs us taxpayers money. Treatment works when it is funded, efficient, and well-managed. I will ensure this system works, keep our communities safe, and save taxpayer's money in the process.

What role should the state play in ensuring hospitals and doctors are providing gender-affirming care to patients? Should the state be more or less aggressive in what it can play should other states adopt policies that restrict that care? (Please answer in 200 words or less.)

The state should ensure that gender-affirming care is available and that from discrimination. This is medically supported, evidence-based healthcare, and decisions about it belong in the exam room, not in the legislature. The state should be prepared to defend providers and patients from retaliation or legal threats for delivering this care. And I support ensuring that state-funded healthcare institutions provide the full scope of care, including gender-affirming services, so residents do not have to travel out of state just to get care. I will work with our legislature and state and maintenance on gender-affirming care, California has a responsibility to defend the vulnerable and offer families a choice. Legislators in other states are actually reducing women's rights in California the same from prosecution by other states.

Governments around the world are increasingly considering an age bar or other restrictions on social media use by minors. Should California do the same? What is your concerns, do you believe the state's approaches to regulation of social media and? Why or why not? And what specific legislation or safeguards would you propose as a state lawmaker? (Please answer in 200 words or less.)

Yes, I believe the state has a role in protecting children from the well-documented harms of social media, including addiction, bullying, and mental health crises. Parental consent requirements, or age-bar or platform health-excellent tools" The Amazon is collecting much-need for every parent. Social media companies have designed their platforms to be addictive and have shown little willingness to protect children on their own.

I support age verification requirements for social media platforms, restrictions on algorithmic targeting of minors, and data privacy protections that prevent companies from collecting and monetizing children's personal information. Laws support requirements that require parents with meaningful tools to manage their children's usage. But any regulation must be carefully drafted to avoid unintended consequences that harm legitimate speech, online communities and resources that provide essential support. The goal is to protect kids from exploitation and addiction, not to isolate them. I would support measures that focus on platform accountability and enforcement rather than blanket bans that could create more harm than good.

Artificial Intelligence has become a ubiquitous part of our lives, for public concern. Should the state enact stronger regulations governing what is AI should be used, and how it can be used? Do you believe AI will ultimately create more jobs or be unemployed. How specifically would you balance such concerns with the desire to have innovation and have California remain a leader in this quite important sector in 200 words or less?

I support AI innovation and safe innovation and regulation. They are not in conflict. The companies that build responsibly, transparent, and that AI systems will win in the long run, and strong guardrails give consumers and workers confidence in the technology.

I support requiring transparency in how AI systems make decisions that affect people's lives, housing, lending, healthcare, and criminal justice. I support prohibiting the use of AI to discriminate against protected classes, and requiring human oversight in high-stakes decisions. I support worker protections against being AI-managed or being replaced without notice or compensation, and ensuring workers have a voice in how AI is deployed in their workplaces. I also support strong data privacy protections and AI companies cannot take their systems and California's personal information without consent.

The key is to regulate the application of AI, not the research. California should remain the global hub for AI development, but we must ensure the technology is deployed in ways that benefit people rather than replacing them or undermining their rights.

Statistically, violent crime rates in California is on the decline, but still, residents are not feeling safe or at ease in their communities. How do you see your role in the state legislature, if elected, to address the issue? What specific legislation would you propose in their own neighborhoods? (Please answer in 200 words or less.)

The gap between statistics and perception is real, and it matters. People feel unsafe because crime is still happening in their neighborhoods, and no amount of statistics changes that for them. I know, and I cannot let the system is not working. They also are corrupt business and politicians getting away with things they know they would be prosecuted for. Those concerns are legitimate. As a Marine federal prosecutor, I know public safety and the rule of law matter.

I support fully funding law enforcement so departments can recruit, train, and retain qualified officers. I support holding them accountable through strong oversight and independent oversight. And I support ensuring Proposition 36 treatment programs are funded so the drug-crime cycle is actually broken.

But enforcement alone is not enough. It is not fair to our law enforcement officers to handle every crisis that society has failed to address upstream. We need to invest in the root causes that the state's investment in the upstream interventions that prevent crime in the first place: mental health crisis response teams, substance abuse treatment, youth intervention programs, and economic opportunity in underserved communities. I will work with our law enforcement and partner people have alternatives to dispatchers. We are at our state senator's in Irvine's local agencies have the resources and tools they need. And state programs accountable for results. I will bring the experience to coordinate on way out of problems that impact neighborhoods.

What's a hidden talent you have? (Please answer in 200 words or less.)

I know my way around a grill and make a mean Santa Maria-style tri-tip, usually served up with a side of Mexican rice and beans. It's a family tradition I learned from my dad. He was probably the toughest critics in the district, and I have earned their approval. Beyond the kitchen, I was once a tennis surfer, though I can now be found pushing my son Rico into many more water than I used to my take.

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