

CALIFORNIA DNC PRESS DEMOCRAT

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DNC WINTER MEETING IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

BY DNC MEMBER MARY ELLEN EARLY

The DNC held its Winter Meeting February 14-16 in Washington, D.C. The highlight of this meeting was a keynote address by Stacey Abrams of Georgia, the first African American female major-party gubernatorial nominee in the history of the United States, and first African-American woman to deliver a response to the State of the Union address.

A rising star in the Democratic Party, Stacey Abrams has declined to run for U.S. Senate in 2020, a move that would give a huge impetus to the Democratic Party's bid to win an electoral victory in Georgia.

Probably the most disappointing aspect of the Winter Meeting was the lack of speeches from (and receptions hosted by) any presidential candidates. Too many candidates to give equal time to each of them? Chairman Perez has already announced that the 2020 Democratic National Convention will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (one of the Democratic Party's much needed states), and that the first set of Democratic Party debates will take place June 26 & 27 in Miami. Rather than having an "adults table" and a "children's table" as the Republicans had in 2016, the chairman announced that there will be two nights of debates, with 20 candidates invited based on polling results and the amount of grass roots donations.

The Call for the 2020 Democratic National Convention was adopted on August 25, 2018 (at the DNC Summer Meeting in Chicago). California has been allotted a total of 495 delegates and 35 alternates,

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18 MONTHS TO GO

BY DNC MEMBERS KEITH UMEMOTO AND ALEX ROOKER

In 18 months, we'll know if we have a new President, if Rep. Pelosi will remain Speaker, which party will control the US Senate - thus judicial appointments - including the US Supreme Court, and the size of our Democratic majorities in State Legislatures.

So, the country's direction on the environment, education, health care, social services, civil rights, workers rights, criminal justice reform, fair elections, affordable housing, national security, jobs, wealth distribution, and a free press will either continue to regress or serve ALL AMERICANS.

Californian Democrats know well, as we remember how Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2006 got re-elected, winning 53 counties. He created a massive budget deficit by cutting vehicle fees - disproportionately favoring corporations, losing \$2 billion/year and slashing programs: education, health, safety and human services program funding.

If we let our guard down, there are enough House Democrats representing districts that

Trump won or have a Republican majority that could flip Congress backwards. In California, we have two districts where Republicans outnumber Democrats by 5 and 8 percentage points, and another two with a razor thin margin.

Last September, as Democrats thought we could retake the US Senate, conservatives and Republicans became re-energized with Trump's relentless campaigning to net a 2 seat pick-up.

Now that we are engaged in our leap-year ritual of electing a President, the DNC passed the Rules and Call for the 2020 Convention. State parties are developing their delegate selection plans. Integral to these plans are their diversity goals. States will hopefully achieve these goals having delegates representing people with disabilities, people of color, LGBTQ, women and youth. These

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CDP Acting Chair Alex Rooker is Treasurer of the Association of State Democratic Chairs and Vice Chair of the DNC Women's Caucus



Keith Umemoto is a Co-Chair of the CDP Credentials Committee

END FEDERAL PROHIBITION ON MARIJUANA

BY DNC MEMBER REP. BARBARA LEE



DNC Member Barbara Lee represents California's 13th District in Congress

We have never been closer to ending the archaic and counterproductive policy of federal marijuana prohibition than we are right now.

And it's well past time that we did.

More than 30 states have already decriminalized or legalized marijuana in some form. A recent poll conducted by the Center for American Progress found that American voter support for legalizing marijuana is at an all-time high, with 68 percent of respondents in favor of it. What's more: the poll shows a majority of voters in both major political parties and independents support legalizing marijuana. Another recent poll shows that 93 percent of Americans support the medical use of marijuana.

But more central to why ending the federal prohibition on marijuana is so important are the conse-

quences of leaving it in place. For decades, low-income communities and communities of color have been devastated by the failed "War on Drugs." Although data shows whites and blacks use marijuana at similar rates, a 2013 study by the ACLU found that African Americans are nearly four times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than their white peers. As a result, black and brown communities have been subjected to mass-criminalization and mass incarceration.

This is about more than legalizing pot. It's about racial justice and criminal justice reform — and doing right by the communities most impacted by the War on Drugs.

This year, I was proud to become the first woman and the first person of color to Co-Chair the bipartisan Cannabis Caucus. This caucus has been dedicated to addressing the unequal enforcement of our drug laws, federal over-

reach in state and local cannabis laws, and presenting a level playing field for communities of color in the cannabis industry.

To address these issues, I have worked with my colleagues across the aisle to introduce the Marijuana Justice Act, the REFER Act, and the RESPECT Resolution. The ultimate goal of this legislation is to provide restorative justice to the communities most impacted by the failed War on Drugs.

The Marijuana Justice Act would de-schedule marijuana on the Federal level and allow for restorative justice by ensuring profits from the legal cannabis industry go back into the communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the unequal enforcement of our drug laws. It will also allow for the expungement of marijuana offenses at the federal level.

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WHY NEW HAMPSHIRE AND IOWA?

BY DNC MEMBER BOB MULHOLLAND



DNC Member Bob Mulholland resides in Chico and can be reached at chicobob@msn.com

February 11, 2020 will mark New Hampshire's 100th anniversary of holding their first-in-the-nation presidential primary. On January 5, 1776, New Hampshire's Fifth Provincial Congress was the first of any legislative body in the thirteen original colonies to assert its independence from Great Britain. That was six months before our Founders signed the Declaration of Independence in my home city of Philadelphia. And the first one to sign the Declaration of Independence was New Hampshire's Delegate, Josiah Bartlett.

Through the 1828 presidential election, the presidential nominees were cho-

sen at "Congressional Caucuses," also known as "King Caucus." The New Hampshire Legislature in June 1831 voted to support the reelection of President Jackson and called for the first national convention to be held in May of 1832 in Baltimore. That is exactly what happened, where Jackson was nominated and subsequently won a second term.

So New Hampshire has played being first on many occasions. And any Democrat can pay a \$1,000 filing fee and appear on the 2/11/20 ballot. It was not 'till 1952 that the importance of the New Hampshire presidential primary was recognized.

In 1975, the former Governor of Georgia, Jimmy Carter, realized that the Iowa Caucuses could play a major role for him. It worked.

The Iowa Caucus will be on Monday night, February 3, 2020. And as long as Iowa remains as a Caucus, then the two step process of the Iowa Caucus first, followed by the New Hampshire Primary (usually 8 days later), will continue. Presidents Clinton, Bush Jr. and Obama all came in second in their first New Hampshire primaries.

"Why New Hampshire? The First-In-The-Nation Primary State" by NH SOS Bill Gardner and the late NH Governor Hugh Gregg is my source of information. I plan on being in NH on the final days as I have from 1992 on.

POVERTY AND THE DNC

BY DNC MEMBER SUSIE SHANNON

At the August 2018 DNC meeting in Chicago, the Democratic National Committee made history by unanimous vote to create a Council on Poverty. The purpose of the Council was twofold – to build political power for the 40.6 million people in the United States living at or below the poverty level, and to find a home in the Democratic Party for those in underserved communities.

While the Poverty Council was not scheduled on the official agenda at the following Feb. 2019 meeting in Washington D.C., grassroots activists chipped in to rent meeting space at the Marriot hotel and, with the help of elected officials, homeless and renter advocates and a few dedicated DNC and CDP members, the Poverty Council held its first meeting to a standing room only crowd. Among the speakers included Congress Members and California DNC members Hon. Maxine Waters and Hon. Barbara Lee; CA State Senator and DNC VP Maria Elena Durazo; Kamala Harris' Chief of Staff Rohini Kosoglu; Our Revolution President Nina Turner; Lynchburg, VA Mayor Treney Tweedy; Anti-poverty Coalition Director Joel Segal; the Lighthouse Homeless Services founders Finny Mathew and Martha Brown and client Michaya McMillan; Megan

Hustings, Director of National Coalition for the Homeless; Affordable Housing Developer James Fukuda; Barbara DiPietro and client Phyllis Davis of the National Healthcare for the Homeless Council; Cassidy Waskowicz of the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty; Disability Rights Attorney Derek Devermont; Vice President of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Menna Demessie; voting rights activist Andrea Miller; DNC Native American Caucus member Frank LaMere and Poverty Council Founder and CA DNC Member Susie Shannon. Several of the speakers were currently or formerly homeless and many others grew up living in poverty.

The Poverty Council has developed the following Four Point plan moving forward:

1. Petition news networks hosting the Democratic Primary debates to include a question specifically related to those living at or below poverty level.
2. Solicit presidential candidates to support Housing as a Human Right. As of the date of this submission, the following candidates have taken the pledge:

Sen. Bernie Sanders

Sen. Kamala Harris
Sen. Eliz. Warren
Mayor Julián Castro
Rep. Tulsi Gabbard
Andrew Yang

3. Support comprehensive legislative policy and utilize State Party networks to solicit congressional sponsors. Our legislative package includes:

Rep. Maxine Water's "Ending Homelessness Act of 2019" (HR 1856)

Rep. Barbara Lee's "End Diaper Need Act" of 2019 (HR 1846) and "Improving Access to Mental Health Act" (HR1533)

Sen. Kamala Harris' Safe Housing for Families Act (S 755)

Rep. Frederica Wilson's "Jobs for All Act" (HJR1000)
4. Homeless and Low-Income Community Voter Registration and Personal Stories Project

If you would like to be involved in any of our activities and are committed to building political power for those living at or below the poverty level, please text or call CA DNC Member Susie Shannon at cell: (213) 880-3065.



Susie Shannon is a DNC Member, advocate for homeless issues, and a former Regional Director of the California Democratic Party

IN MEMORIAM: HON. GREG PETTIS (1955-2019)

The California DNC delegation mourns the unexpected passing of Cathedral City Mayor Greg Pettis, who passed on January 15 of this year, following complications from weight loss surgery he underwent last fall.

Greg became a DNC member as a representative of Democratic Municipal Officials. In addition to working on behalf of Democrats in cities and counties across the nation, he was first elected in 1994 to the Cathedral City Council, was its longest serving

councilmember and first openly gay public servant.

A true progressive, Greg met Robert F. Kennedy three days before the senator's death, which inspired him to fight against bigotry and discrimination.

As Mayor Pro-Tem, he voted (as part of a 3-2 majority) to Make Cathedral City the Coachella Valley's first "Sanctuary City." He also attended rallies against Donald Trump's family separation policy and for Demo-

cratic candidates for state and federal office.

While his seat on the DNC was not the result of being elected by the California Democratic Party, Greg enthusiastically joined the rest of the delegation in participating in both DNC General meetings and Western States Caucus meetings. He was greatly loved and respected by his constituents in Cathedral City, as well as the rest of the California DNC delegation. He will truly be missed.



*Hon. Greg Pettis
1955-2019*

DNC WINTER MEETING

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for a total delegation of 530 (by far the largest), and a total of 18 standing committee members. For complete information, visit the DNC website: (www.democrats.org), and click on *2020 Presidential Campaign Resources*.

That being said, I would like to take this opportunity to mouth off regarding our current Constitutional Crisis.

I have just finished reading *the Mueller Report*, and it is clear to me that Trump has engaged in obstruction of justice, by attempting to stifle this report, get Robert

Mueller fired from his post, tamper with witnesses by urging them to lie for him (with the suggestion of pardons for those who remain loyal), continuously urging the previous Attorney General (Sessions) to unrecuse himself and to treat the current Attorney General (Barr) as his own personal lawyer, among other offenses. There was no "collusion," because the *Mueller Report*, does not use that term. Instead they use the term "conspiracy." While the *Mueller Report* states that they cannot prove conspiracy, they have not ruled it out.

I am looking forward to hearing Mueller testify before Congress and answer questions put to him by the House Judiciary Committee. I hope that this testimony will make it clear to the nation that Donald Trump deserves impeachment. Of course, timing is everything. While at present there don't seem to be enough Republicans in the U.S. Senate with the backbone to vote to convict Trump, Democrats should prolong the investigation long enough for the House to pass Articles of Impeachment before the 2020 General Election. I'd like to think that the American people will vote this con artist out of office in 2020.



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18 MONTHS TO GO

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delegates will hopefully coalesce behind our nominee to retake the White House.

However, we Democrats and our candidates must use this process to recruit thousands of new, energetic and diverse delegates and activists now through the Milwaukee convention and election day Nov. 3.

Nationally, four million Americans turn 18 annually and 700,000 become naturalized citizens. According to PEW Research, in 2012, 49% of the eligible voters were Baby Boomers. This figure drops to less than 40% in 2020., when Millennials will be 27% of eligible voters.

While this seems like a recipe to win in 2020, with the RNC and Trump out fundraising the DNC, purging voter rolls, engaging in systematic voter suppression of Democrats, Trump using his bully pulpit and allowing Putin to continue meddling in our elections, it will take all of us, together, to win.

END FEDERAL MARIJUANA PROHIBITION

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The Restricting Excessive of Federal Enforcement and Regulations Cannabis (REFER) Act is a bipartisan bill that will prevent federal agencies from using taxpayer funds to interfere in state and local cannabis laws. It would ban the use of federal funding by any agency to intrude in state and local governments that have updated their laws around cannabis use, possession, cultivation, and distribution.

And the Realizing Equitable and Sustainable Participation in Emerging Cannabis Trade (RESPECT) Resolution seeks to address the fact that communities of color have been largely shut out of benefitting from cannabis legalization. Current estimates show that less than 1% of the cannabis industry is owned or operated by people of color. The RESPECT Resolution encourages policy reforms to implement restorative justice, by expanding opportunities for

people of color in the legal cannabis industry.

We have never been closer to ending the federal prohibition on marijuana. With bold, progressive leadership, I have no doubt that we can get this over the finish line and tackle this issue once and for all.

NEXT DNC MEETING

The DNC Summer Meeting will be held August 22-24 of this year in San Francisco. Your DNC delegation is severely distressed that this meeting overlaps with the next CDP Executive Board meeting in San Jose. We have complained, only to be told that both the DNC and CDP have already signed contracts with the hotels hosting their meetings. It is hoped that in the future, the DNC will check with the Democratic Party in the host state to make sure there are no conflicts before they sign any contracts.

FROM THE EDITORS:

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Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Early
Otto Lee
Garry S. Shay

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