

# CALIFORNIA DNC PRESS DEMOCRAT

NOVEMBER 2017

PAGE 1

## JESS DURFEE ELECTED NEW WESTERN CAUCUS CHAIR

BY MELAHAT RAFIEI, DNC MEMBER

It couldn't have been more typical for Democrats! After more than a decade of outstanding service, Aleita Huguenin announced that she was not going to seek another term as Chair of the Western States Caucus. Aleita did amazing work and we owe her all the thanks we can give her for extraordinary service.

So the race was on, and the frontrunners emerged in typical Democratic fashion - loud, sometimes contentious and always lively. In the end, after a 4.5 hour meeting, the results came down to a coin toss.

Candidates for Chair included Luis Heredia and California's Jess Durfee. Luis is a delegate from Arizona who ran a strong campaign. California came together to do their best for Jess, who has served our delegation above and beyond the call of duty. The candidates addressed the issues that face us, from redistricting to rebuilding trust and confidence within the Party and among the voters. The need to retake the statehouses and invest in our state parties was also a key issue.

Although Jess entered the race just 6 days before the vote took place, he campaigned hard and earned support from delegates throughout the region. In the end, victory came down to a mutually agreed-upon coin toss.

I've respected Jess from the moment I met him. Even before being elected to the DNC, Jess was

*Continued on Page 4*



*California DNC Members at October 2017 Meeting in Las Vegas*

## DNC RBC Addresses Gender Balance of Officers

BY KEITH UMEMOTO AND ALEX ROOKER, DNC MEMBERS

The DNC Rules and Bylaws Committee (RBC) met during the DNC's Fall 2017 meeting in Las Vegas to address a discrepancy on the gender balance of its officers and other issues.

The DNC adhered to its bylaws at its February 2017 as it relates to identified officers in the bylaws, where the National Chair and Chair of the Association of State Democratic Chairs (ASDC) were exempted in factoring for gender equity. Of those elected, 3 women and 4 men were elected in codified positions.

But if one were to calculate the National Chair and ASDC Chair into the balance, 3 women and 6 men were elected DNC officers. The RBC sought to mitigate this gender discrepancy by proposing amendments to the bylaws.

Thus with the exception of the National Chair, the RBC proposed that all the codified officers: five Vice Chairs (now including the ASDC Chair), Treasurer, Secretary,

and Finance Chair "shall be equally divided as practicable according to gender" for the next DNC officer elections. These amendments were approved by the full DNC.

The discussion that ensued regarding new DNC officer positions (e.g., Deputy Chair Keith Ellison and Assistant Treasurer Lorna Johnson), and whether they should be counted in determining gender parity, culminated in the RBC approving a resolution to the Chair to establish gender balance in all its officers.

Finally, Umemoto, stated in his exiting remarks that the chair of the newly established Native American Caucus (previously a Council), should be explicitly identified as a member of the DNC Executive Committee like all other caucus chairs, by amending the bylaws and preventing any future chair from summarily eliminating any caucuses.



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



*Keith Umemoto is Co-Chair of the Credentials Committee of the California Democratic Party*

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

BY GARRY S. SHAY, DNC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER



Garry S. Shay, member of the DNC Executive Committee and Lead Chair, CDP Rules Committee, manages a list serve which can be joined at [DemocraticNewsGroup-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:DemocraticNewsGroup-subscribe@yahoo.com). For an unabridged version of this Executive Committee report, e-mail him at [GSS1@aol.com](mailto:GSS1@aol.com)

After a moment of silence was observed for the victims of the tragic shootings in Las Vegas, Nevada Democratic Party Chair William McCurdy related Republican attempts to recall three Democratic women state senators, the results of which will impact redistricting. Chair Tom Perez noted a six figure DNC investment in this fight.

Chair's Report: Mr. Perez noted the constituency work of Councils and Caucuses in voter organizing and engagement, and the DNC Native American Council becoming a caucus.

Chair Perez also reported on the DNC trip to Puerto Rico, providing assistance in disaster relief, bringing a plane load of supplies to the victims of this tragedy, reminding us that Puerto Ricans are American Citizens.

Other officer reports include the following:

Finance Chair Henry Munoz III seeks greater transparency in financial matters. Finance Staff has

grown from three to thirty.

Treasurer Bill Derrough compared Democratic vs. Republican fundraising. We are now in a better position vis-a-vis income to debt. A Democratic Grassroots Victory Fund has been formed with all fifty states and DC participating.

Assistant Treasurer Lorna Johnson, discussed investments in State Parties, local elections and diversity in hiring vendors.

Vice Chair Michael Blake reported on efforts to elect Democrats to State Legislatures, that 2/3rds of staff hires are millennials and engaging them through media targeting programs.

Vice Chair Karen Carter Peterson reported on Civic Engagement and Voter Protection focusing on long term efforts and 11 different local campaigns so far this year.

Vice Chair Maria Elena Durazo worked with Labor on multiple issues, further noting the increase in Union representation on the DNC and the impact of repeal of DACA on union workers, making them undocumented.

Deputy Chair Keith Ellison reported on "Resistance

Summer" with 1.1 million voter contacts by 125 organizers in 45 States. Relationships were built with 200 other organizations during 2,000+ events nationwide. The next phase "Rise and Organize," will build for the long term.

Associate Chair Jaime Harrison reported on field efforts to engage Rural Voters and their need to hear the Party discuss our values. Organizing efforts include "Democrats Care" a program to help people obtain Affordable Care Act coverage.

Vice Chair Ken Martin (President of the Association of State Democratic Chairs) discussed investment in state parties, calling it the 50 State Program on Steroids.

Vice Chair Grace Meng has helped improve outreach to, and expansion of, the base by engaging people in our call to action. The Surrogate Speaker's Program and the officers have traveled to 43 States and Puerto Rico. Over 40 Surrogates have been engaged.

Secretary Jason Rae reported on member training and mentorship programs, social media actions that could be taken, and updates to members.

## TIME FOR DEMOCRATS TO TALK TURKEY

BY BOB MULHOLLAND, DNC MEMBER



Bob Mulholland resides in Chico and can be reached at [chicobob@msn.com](mailto:chicobob@msn.com) and @chico.bob

If you think we should have turkey served at our Convention dinners, let Chair Eric Bauman know. Starting on March 3, 2020, all California "Primaries," unless the Legislature changes their mind again, will be in March. We had early presidential Primaries in 1996, 2000, 2004 and in 2008. The Legislative candidates made so many complaints, about the 8 months to the General, they passed a bill in 2011, with Senator Alex Padilla voting yes and they lobbied Governor Brown to sign it, which he did, and the 2012, 2014 and 2016 California pri-

maries were in June. This year Secretary of State Padilla sponsored a bill to move the Primaries back to March. The Legislature passed it and Secretary Padilla then lobbied Governor Brown to sign it, which he did. Confused now?

Our State Endorsing Convention in San Diego (February 23-25), next year will be our last Endorsing Convention in an election year. Due to the Communist Only-Two system, we now hold Conventions before the filing period ends. The 3/3/20 filing period (Legislative & local), will be from 11/12/19 till 12/6/19, so

our Convention will most likely be the weekend before Thanksgiving - let Eric Bauman know, if turkey would be best. And the Regional Endorsing Caucuses will be held before Halloween. Could decorate the Caucus sites with pumpkins.

By moving our Presidential Primary to March, we will lose 70-100 National Convention Bonus delegates, mostly at the CD level, that we got for holding our Primaries in June.

Also, everyone should check with your County Elections officials about polling sites in 2018. Secretary Padilla also pushed through a bill that allows some counties to close 90% of their polling sites next year and the rest of the counties can shut them down in 2020.

## DNC RURAL COUNCIL REPORT

BY JESS DURFEE, DNC MEMBER

The DNC Rural Council is seeing a new burst of membership and participation. The Fall DNC Rural Council meeting, with over 75 members present, representing nearly every state, opened their meeting with officer elections. Betty Richie (TX) was re-elected Council chair, Jess Durfee (CA) was elected Vice Chair and Kylie Oversen (WI) was elected Secretary.

Three excellent speakers followed the officer elections

— all focused on how to talk to rural voters about the values of the Democratic Party that are in alignment with the needs of rural communities and voters: Joe Maxwell, former Lt Governor of Missouri, now President and CEO of Family Farm Action; Jamie Harrison, DNC Deputy Vice Chair (and former South Carolina Democratic Party Chair); and Ken Martin (MN), DNC Vice Chair and President of the Associa-

tion of State Democratic Party Chairs.

Following a brief introduction of the topic by Council Vice Chair, Jess Durfee, Boyd Richie, former Chair of the Texas Democratic Party, led a discussion about the need for expansion of broad band access in rural communities.

Before adjourning, Council Chair Richie issued a challenge to every state to form a rural caucus or committee within their respective state party organizations.



Jess Durfee is the Chair of the DNC Western States Caucus

## DNC RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

BY SUSIE SHANNON, DNC MEMBER

At the October DNC meeting in Las Vegas, several resolutions which represented policy changes in many areas passed unanimously. While all of the resolutions cannot be listed for lack of space, the following represent those submitted by one or more California representatives:

- 1) Resolution Promoting People-Powered politics at the DNC by Encouraging Grassroots Donors and by Rejecting Corporate Donors that conflict with our DNC Platform **submitted by Christine Pelosi.**
- 2) Resolution expressing the Support of the Democratic Party for Hotel Workers and the use of Union Hotels **submitted by Susie Shannon.**
- 3) Resolution Safeguarding Voting Rights and Protecting the Integrity of Our Elections **submitted by Susie Shannon and Christine Pelosi.**
- 4) Resolution Expressing Support of the Democratic Party for a Housing First model to Combat Homelessness **submitted by Susie Shannon, Eric Bauman,**
- 5) Resolution Supporting the Removal of Confederate Monuments from the U.S. Capital **submitted by Congresswoman Barbara Lee.**
- 6) Resolution Opposing the Trump Administration Ban on Transgender Military Personnel **submitted by Susie Shannon, Eric Bauman and Rachel Rose Luckey.**
- 7) Resolution in Support of Restricting First Use of Nuclear Weapons **submitted by Congresswoman Barbara Lee.**
- 8) Resolution supporting Automatic Voter Registration **submitted by Christine Pelosi and Travis Nelson (OR).**
- 9) Resolution to establish the DNC Interfaith Council **submitted by Michael Kapp, Jason Rae (WI) and others.**
- 10) Resolution on Executive Order 9066 – 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – NEVER AGAIN submitted by **Keith Umemoto, and co-sponsored by Otto Lee, Steven Ala-**

**ri, Mary Ellen Early, Laurence, Zakson, Garry S. Shay, Melahat Rafiei, Alice Huffman, Aleita Huguenin, Becca Doten, Susie Shannon, Bob Mulholland, Eric C. Bauman, Christine Pelosi, Jess Durfee, Alice Germond, Michael Kapp and others.** This resolution calls for the DNC to remember Executive Order 9066 as a grave racial injustice against 120,000 Japanese-Americans and that the and that the U.S. will never again allow this injustice on any race, gender, sexual orientation, age, natural origin, or people with disabilities.

- 11) Resolution Reaffirming the DNC's Commitment to Hurricane Relief for Texas, Louisiana, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands, and Fire Relief for California **submitted by Christine Pelosi, Sandra Lowe, Tom Perez (Chair) and others.**

For the full text of Christine Pelosi's Walk our Talk Resolution, please see Page 3 of the July 2017 DNC Press Democrat, which can be found at:

<https://www.cadem.org/our-party/dnc-members>



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



Christine Pelosi can be found at [ChristinePelosi.com](http://ChristinePelosi.com) and [PelosiBootCamp.com](http://PelosiBootCamp.com)

**PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE MELD AT DNC LGBT CAUCUS MEETING**

BY LAURENCE ZAKSON, DNC MEMBER

At the 2012 Democratic National Convention, the LGBT Caucus meetings were so large that the overflow crowds filled the hallways outside the room. At the 2016 National Convention, standing room crowds filled both the back of the room and all three aisles. It wasn't always that way. As longtime DNC LGBT Caucus members like to say, it wasn't that long ago that the LGBT Caucus could have held its meeting in a phone booth. This growth is a reflection of our Party's embrace of LGBT equal rights as a core value. That, in turn, is the result of hard work by Caucus members, including our own Garry Shay, who (when he was on the Rules Committee) demanded that our affirmative action goals include the LGBT community and the late Rick Stafford, for whom the Caucus had a tribute at its recent meeting.

At this Fall meeting, the LGBT Caucus leadership made increased participation by lesbians, bi women and trans activists a key goal. The fact that we have not had the success we should have in including lesbians, bi women and trans activists in our state and local Party leadership is not due to the absence



(left to right) Laurence Zakson, DNC Secretary Jason Rae, Laurences's husband Dr. Peter Kreysa

of openness or willingness, but a lack of knowing how and where to contact members of our community and how to

speak to them and their unique issues in a way that makes our Party feel welcoming. If you are aware of Pride events in

**DNC CHAIR MAKES APPOINTMENTS**

BY MARY ELLEN EARLY, DNC MEMBER

DNC Chair Tom Perez announced his appointments at the October 2017 meeting in Las Vegas, and they were approved unanimously. At-Large appointments of Californians were: Laphonza Butler, Maria Echaveste and Kerman Maddox (all re-appointments), Lorna Johnson, Amy Wakeland and Roz Wyman (new appointments). Welcome back, Roz!

Executive Committee members from California are Chair's appointees Lorna Johnson and Amy Wakeland. This is in addition to those Californians elected by the Western States Caucus: Jess Durfee (Caucus Chair), Garry Shay and Christine Pelosi.

Appointments to Standing Committees include Californians Christine Pelosi (Resolutions), Michael Kapp (Credentials) and Alexandra Gallardo Rooker (Rules and By-laws).

The biggest Caucus news is the transition of the Native American

Council to full Caucus Status. DNC rules demand that Caucus members share the immutable traits of those they represent, unlike the CDP, where most caucuses are open to anyone who wishes to support their issues. After the election of new state chairs and vice chairs, as well as At-Large appointments by the Chair, our First Americans finally had enough DNC members to qualify as a caucus. Thanks to all of those DNC members, especially in the West, who signed the petition to form the new caucus.

Congratulations to other members of the California delegation elected as Caucus/Council officers: Keith Umemoto (Western States VC Male), Alex Rooker (Women's Caucus VC), Otto Lee (AAPI VC), Andrew Lachman (Small Business Council Chair), Christine Pelosi (Veteran and Military Families Council Co-Chair), Jess Durfee (Rural Council VC), Michael Kapp, VC Youth Council) and Maria Elena Durazo (Labor Council Chair).

your area, please make certain to let the CDP and me know, and we'll make sure they get added to the national database.

The DNC meeting coincided with Las Vegas Pride. This year, in the shadow of the mass shootings, it was a little smaller and more cautious than last year. Led by NV Democratic Party Chair William McCurdy II, those participating included DNC Secretary Jason Rae and his husband Phillip Bailey, DNC LGBT Caucus Chair Earl Fowlkes, my spouse, Dr. Peter Kreysa, and me.

When we were introduced by the MCs, Democrats rocked the house in a showing of Democratic Pride!

**FROM THE EDITORS:**

The California DNC Press Democrat is published by members of the California DNC Delegation, and is not funded by the California Democratic Party. Opinions expressed by the authors of this newsletter's articles are not necessarily those of the California Delegation, the DNC or the California Democratic Party.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Early  
Otto Lee  
Garry S. Shay

**Thank you to our sponsors:**

Steven K. Alari, Eric C. Bauman, Becca Doten, Jess Durfee, Mary Ellen Early, Alice Huffman, Aleita Huguenin, Michael Kapp, Andrew Lachman, Hon. Barbara Lee, Otto Lee, Bob Mulholland, Christine Pelosi, John A. Pérez, Alex Rooker, Garry S. Shay, Keith Umemoto, Laurence Zakson

Printing:

Independent Printers

Proofreading:

Burt B. Belant

**Want an electronic copy?**

**Visit the CADEM web site under Our Party/DNC Members**

**JESS DURFEE**

*Continued from Page 1*

serving Democrats far beyond the boundaries of San Diego County.

It may have hinged on a coin toss, but every Democrat in our caucus got lucky when it gave us Jess Durfee's leadership!

*Melahat Rafiei resides in Orange County and can be reached at Melahat@PSCcampaigns.com*