



Memorandum

To: Interested Parties
From: Clark Lee, Political Director
Date: December 2017
Re: California Democratic Party Endorsement Process General Rules Relating to Caucuses, Regions, Chartered Organizations, and Democratic County Central Committees

Introduction

The California Democratic Party (CDP) By-Laws and Rules prescribes several general rules relating to the CDP endorsement process pertaining to CDP Caucuses, Regions, Chartered Organizations, and Democratic County Central Committees. This memo includes the key points of those general rules as prescribed in the CDP By-Laws. For more endorsement-related information, please visit CDP Endorsements webpage at www.cadem.org/endorsements. Please visit CDP By-Laws webpage to access the By-Laws: www.cadem.org/our-party/by-laws.

Key Rules to Highlight

- **Only One Form of Endorsement** – The only form of CDP endorsement for partisan public office or statewide ballot measure position (proposition, initiative, referendum) or recall is an official endorsement as provided in CDP By-Laws. However, CDP Regions or Caucuses are not prevented from calling on CDP to take any action. (CDP By-Laws, Art. VIII. Sec. 1.a.)
- **One Voice** – The CDP, as an organization, speaks with one voice regarding the endorsement and the endorsement process, to assure the effectiveness of the endorsement process. Thus, the CDP official endorsement process is one that is implemented pursuant to the CDP By-Laws and Rules. Any other processes are out of order and unauthorized. (CDP By-Laws, Art. VIII. Sec. 1.d.)
- **CDP Caucuses and Regions** – CDP Caucuses and Regions are constituent parts of the CDP and have no power to issue endorsements of candidates for public office or take positions on state ballot propositions, initiatives, referendum, or recall. (CDP By-Laws, Art. VIII. Sec. 1.f.)
- **CDP Chartered Organizations** – CDP chartered organizations are specifically intended to be independent from the CDP. However, CDP chartered organizations, with the exception of the California Young Democrats and the California Democratic Council, are prohibited from endorsing any candidate for public office running against a CDP-endorsed candidate. Endorsing candidates other than CDP-endorsed candidates constitutes grounds for denial and revocation of charter. (CDP By-Laws, Art. VIII. Sec. 1.g.; Art. X. Sec. 3.(a).(5).)
- **Penalty for Independent, Unauthorized Endorsement** – Any CDP official unit or any Democratic County Central Committee that renders an unauthorized endorsement for partisan public office (or nonpartisan candidates whose endorsements become CDP endorsements) shall forfeit its right to representation to the CDP for 12 months from the time of the endorsement being issued or the remainder of the current Democratic State Central Committee (DSCC) term, whichever is longer. (CDP By-Laws, Art. VIII. Sec. 1.e.)
- **Prohibition on Endorsing Non-Democrats** – CDP in no way supports or endorses a candidate who is not a Democrat. (CDP By-Laws, Art. VIII. Sec. 1.h.)
- **Prohibition on Endorsing More Candidates Than to Be Elected** – CDP does not endorse more candidates for an office than the number to be elected for that office. (CDP By-Laws, Art. VIII. Sec. 1.i.)
- **Local Nonpartisan Offices** – Democratic County Central Committees are exclusively responsible for the endorsement of candidates for all local nonpartisan offices (that do not cross county lines). (CDP By-Laws, Art. VIII. Sec. 4.1.)
- **Other Nonpartisan Offices** – The CDP is responsible for the endorsement of candidates in other nonpartisan offices. (CDP By-Laws, Art. VIII. Sec. 4.f.)

Questions

Please contact Kasey Walukones (kasey@cadem.org) or Clark Lee (clark@cadem.org) / (916) 442-5707.

Note: The CDP Bylaws supersede any information provided by staff regarding the endorsement process. A current copy can be found on our website at www.cadem.org.