

California Democratic Party  
Disabilities Caucus  
*Last amended Nov 23, 2013*

Bylaws

## PREAMBLE

The California Democratic Party Disabilities Caucus exists by official recognition of the California Democratic Party (CDP) and is hereby enabled to adopt bylaws not inconsistent with the bylaws of the Democratic State Central Committee. Wherever in these bylaws an inconsistency with the Democratic State Central Committee appears these bylaws shall be deemed subordinate and the parent law shall prevail. The CDP Disabilities Caucus recognizes its obligations under the General Provisions of the By-Laws of the Democratic State Central Committee.

## **ARTICLE I NAME**

The name of this organization shall be California Democratic Party Disabilities Caucus.

## **ARTICLE II PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Disabilities Caucus is to provide persons with disabilities (as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990), any subsequent applicable state or Federal legislation defining disability and those within the Democratic Party to whom the rights of people with disabilities are of concern, a strong voice and representation within the party structure; to encourage persons with disabilities to participate fully as active Democrats at all levels of policy making and public service; to organize persons with disabilities into the Democratic Party, and assist them in participating in all Democratic Party activities.

## **ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP**

### A. QUALIFICATION

Membership shall be open to anyone who is a registered Democrat who are committed to serving the interests of people with disabilities in our society and who share identity of purpose which defines this caucus.

The Caucus does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic status or disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 or any other subsequent legislation defining disability

## B. MEETINGS

Any public meeting of the California Democratic Party Disabilities Caucus, its executive Board, or any elected or appointed committees or subcommittees shall be open to all members of the Democratic Party regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, religion, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, economic status, persons with disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 or any subsequent legislation defining disability.

## C. DUES and fund raising

The caucus shall neither raise nor disperse funds other than nominal dues and standard or routine costs of regular meetings which shall promptly be accounted for by rules promulgated by the finance Committee of the California Democratic Party. Dues shall be paid by members of this caucus at or before the annual convention of the California Democratic Party. Beginning in 2011, dues shall be: \$12.00 for Members; \$25.00 or more for Supporters; \$0 to \$ 5.00 for low income. If a member cannot pay the low income membership he/she shall be excused from doing so by sign the waiver form on the membership application.

Any Member who fails to pay dues shall be deemed suspended from membership in the caucus until dues are current, except that payment of dues shall not be obligatory for any member for whom it constitutes an economic hardship.

Members claiming an economic hardship shall fill out a request for waiver of dues. Waiver forms can be obtained from the Treasurer, and must be submitted annually to remain a member in good standing.

## **ARTICLE IV: CAUCUS OFFICERS AND AT-LARGE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

### A. OFFICERS

The Caucus officers shall be: Chair, Vice Chair, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, and Legislation Chair. The officers shall serve on the Executive Committee. Candidates for Chair and Vice Chair must be delegates to the State Central Committee, from opposite ends of the state and of opposite gender. The north/south dividing line shall be the northern boundaries of San Luis Obispo, Kern and San Bernardino counties.

## B. AT-LARGE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

There shall be four (4) At-Large Members of the Executive Committee.

## C. PARLIAMENTARIAN

Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the chair and not elected by the membership. Parliamentarian shall serve without vote on issues where asked to make a parliamentary ruling.

## **ARTICLE V: DUTIES OF CAUCUS OFFICERS AND AT-LARGE MEMBERS**

- A. The chair must be a member of the California Democratic Party State Central Committee and shall be the caucus representative to the Executive Board of the California Democratic Party. The Chair shall be presiding officer of the Caucus and its official voice in carrying out its policies consistent with these bylaws. The chair shall create and make committee appointments as needed. The Chair shall preside over all meetings of the Caucus. The Chair must be a member of the Executive Board of the Democratic State Central Committee.

The Chair will have the responsibility to appoint Members to fill vacancies that may from time to time exist on our Executive Committee due to resignations, or vacancies that occur when there are not sufficient nominees for an Officer position. Said appointments will be in effect until the next scheduled election. The chair shall have the responsibility to administer any on-line information pages or to appoint a web master to do so.

- B. The vice chair shall assist the Chair in the performance of the duties of the office and shall preside in the absence of the Chair. The Vice Chair will bear extensive responsibility for organization and outreach in his/her section of the state, and shall represent the Caucus in the absence of the Chair.
- C. The Recording Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept minutes of all meetings and present those minutes in written form. The recording secretary shall make available to members minutes in a format that is accessible to the individual member based on reasonable accommodation. The Recording Secretary will be responsible for all documents, shall assist the Chair and Vice Chair as needed, and shall preside at all meetings in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair.
- D. The Corresponding Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept a record of all members of this Caucus and all officers. The Corresponding Secretary shall be responsible for notification to all members of this caucus of meetings. Notification of members for all meetings shall be sent out 30 days prior to meeting date. The Corresponding Secretary shall take or cause to be taken the roll call at all

meetings and keep a record of all those in attendance, and shall assist the Chair and the Vice Chair in their duties as needed.

- E. The Treasurer shall take custody of all funds, directly or indirectly raised or received by the caucus, shall prepare and submit to the State Party a budget and quarterly financial statements, and shall turn over to the State Party all funds received and authorize all disbursements as instructed by this caucus. The Treasurer shall transmit a roster of current members to the State Party annually.
- F. The At-Large Members of the Executive Committee shall assist the Chair and Vice Chair, but also have the specific responsibility for outreach and recruitment into the Democratic Party and the Disability Caucus.
- G. It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to ensure that meetings, materials, and all caucus communications are accessible to all members regardless of their disability. Interpreters for our members who are deaf must be provided via the California State Party for our caucus meeting and all general sessions of our Conventions or Executive Board Meetings. Materials in alternative format must be available for caucus members. The Caucus will ensure reasonable accommodations for those with other disabilities. Request for all such accessible accommodations shall be made no later than 14 days prior to the meeting date.

#### **ARTICLE VI: ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND AT-LARGE MEMBERS**

- A. Elections shall be held in odd numbered years.
- B. All members in good standing who wish to run or re-run for an elected position on the Caucus Executive Board, as laid out elsewhere in these By Laws, shall declare their intention at the Fall E-board, either in person or via written communication to our Corresponding Secretary. Officers and at-large members shall be nominated at the Caucus meeting at the Annual Convention.
- C. Voting members of the Caucus may vote by mail or in person at the State Convention. No one may vote twice. Voting for caucus officers shall be by secret ballot.
- D. Voting By Mail; Ballots must be distributed to all members at least 45 days prior to the Convention. Those wishing to run or re-run as Elected Officers & At-Large Members shall be announced at the Fall Executive Meeting prior to the odd year State Convention. Voting by mail shall be done in accordance with the procedures delineated in Article X of these bylaws. Members in good standing may choose to vote in person beginning thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled Caucus time at the State Convention. They will fill in a unique ballot containing the same information as the one mailed. Both types of elections will be supervised by candidate-approved personnel.

- E. Special elections may be called by the Executive Committee provided that the general membership of the Caucus is notified six weeks in advance via e-mail or postal mail as they have previously instructed, and given at least 14 days to respond in favor of or in opposition to such special election.
- F. Vacancies;  
If the chair leaves the caucus suddenly under extenuating circumstances including death, the members who gather at the next Caucus meeting shall vote on whether to call a special election, as noted elsewhere in these By Laws, or allow the vice chair to be Acting Chair until the next scheduled election. Vacancies for other officer positions and board members shall be addressed using the same procedure.

### **ARTICLE VII: QUORUM**

- A. A quorum of the Officers of the Executive Committee shall be three of the seven members present.
- B. A quorum of the general membership shall be all those in attendance, but no action may be taken without a minimum of ten (10) members in attendance.

### **ARTICLE VIII: STANDING COMMITTEES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Caucus shall have the following Standing Committees:

- A. Membership.  
The Caucus Treasurer shall serve as the Membership Chair. The membership chair shall appoint a committee. The Chair and Corresponding Secretary shall be part of this committee. Collectively, this committee will be responsible for keeping in communication with current membership, encouraging their active participation in Caucus tasks and events, and continuous outreach to new members.
- b. Legislation Committee.  
The Vice Chair will oversee the work of the two legislation chairs, who, in turn, may assign committee members in coordination with the Chair. They will be charged with outreach to all elected officials and coordinating with a specific staffer in each legislator's office. They will monitor legislation pertaining to our constituency, and alert the membership to specific issues requiring their input. They will also work with the leadership to create legislation. Further, they will outreach to all major 501 ( c ) 3 organizations dealing with disability issues and get their input on legislation pending or a need for legislation.

- c. Voting and Elections.  
The chair and members of all committees shall be appointed by the Caucus Chair with input from all Members.
- d. The Parliamentarian shall serve as interpreter of State and Caucus Bylaws. When the Parliamentarian determines that neither the State nor Caucus Bylaws provide an answer to a question of procedure, the Parliamentarian shall rule in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order newly revised.
- e. All committees shall abide by bylaws as set forth in these bylaws. Other chairs, appointees and/or committees shall be established as needed.

### **ARTICLE IX: MEETINGS**

Meeting notification to members shall be sent out at least 30 days prior to meeting date.

All notices will be sent via email, fax, or postal mail depending upon the preference of the member. Those members who have email will receive notice via email in a manner consistent with CDP By-Laws for the use of email within the Democratic Organizations, including but not limited to, the requirement of the member to consent to notice via email. Those without email or fax will receive materials within thirty (30) days through the Postal Mail.

There shall be at least four (4) meetings of the membership annually, held in conjunction with meetings of the CDP Conventions or Executive Board Meetings of the Democratic State Central Committee.

Special meetings of the caucus or sections of the caucus may only be called by the Chair person. The Corresponding Secretary shall, within five days of receipt of request, send out written notices to caucus members no later than fifteen (15) days prior to such special meeting.

### **ARTICLE X: PROCEDURES**

a. Policy matters shall be decided upon at regularly scheduled or special meetings called in accordance with the rules set forth above, at which no fewer than ten members, except in those instances where the majority of members in attendance vote to submit the issue to the entire membership by mail ballot.

b. Balloting on policy issues shall be conducted by the Voting Committee, according to the procedures delineated in these bylaws. All such ballots shall have double return envelopes, so as to ensure the privacy of each vote while guaranteeing the accuracy. Ballots will be opened and counted by attendees chosen at random, by at least two designated members of the Election Committee.

c. In those instances in which a mail ballot is required other than for the purpose of elections, the Executive Committee shall, in cooperation with those Caucus members who had taken specific positions, prepare a statement of the motion in question, and a statement of both the pros and cons of the issue. This statement shall be mailed to all Caucus members, along with a ballot, no later than two (2) weeks after the meeting at which the issue was discussed. Members will have four (4) weeks after the date of mailing to return their marked ballots to the Election Committee.

d. All balloting shall be conducted in accordance with Article XII, Section 9 of the By-Laws of the Democratic State Central Committee

e. Ballots shall be mailed no later than 30 days prior to Annual State Convention. Balloting by mail, for elections, shall be conducted by the Elections Committee, according to the procedures delineated in these Bylaws. All such ballots shall have double return envelopes, so as to ensure the privacy. Ballots will be opened and counted by at least two people chosen at random. Observers representing candidates may be present at the counting.

#### **ARTICLE XI: ENDORSEMENTS**

This Caucus shall not endorse candidates for partisan or non-partisan office unless a candidate has received the official endorsement of the California Democratic Party, as provided by its by-laws. Furthermore, unless a candidate has received the official endorsement of the California Democratic Party, all motions of support, recommendation, or other expressions of approval, no matter how denominated, are deemed to be out of order at any meeting of the Caucus.

#### **ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS**

a. Proposed changes to these bylaws shall be distributed via postal mail and include a return labeled ballot, to all members at least four weeks prior to the time at which they are to be considered.

b. Approval of such By Law amendments requires the affirmative vote of two-thirds of those voting at a regularly-noticed meeting of this caucus or via the mailed in ballots. If representation requirements are not met, then voting must be by postal mail and/or e-mail in like manner to that specified elsewhere.

c. These amended bylaws were voted upon and agreed to at the November meeting of the CDP executive board in 2013.

By Laws of the California Democratic Party, and duly voted upon by the Disabilities Caucus are hereby signed: