MEMORANDUM

TO: All Interested Parties
FROM: Compliance Review Commission (CRC)
DATE: March 11, 2019 (amended on 03/12/19)
RE: DECISION OF THE COMPLIANCE REVIEW COMMISSION (CRC) RELATING TO A CHALLENGE FILED IN THE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT ELECTION MEETING (ADEM) IN ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 39

INTRODUCTION:

On February 1, 2019 Patty Lopez, a voter in the Assembly District Election Meeting (ADEM) in Assembly District 39, filed a challenge to the ADEM which occurred on January 26, 2019. Specifically, Ms. Lopez alleges that 95% of Democrats in the district didn’t know about the election, materials were only distributed in English, there was a lack of privacy during voting, and staff members and volunteers affiliated with elected officials were assisting voters. Finally, Ms. Lopez asserted that state rules governing the elections process must be used to verify that the voters actually live in the district and are eligible to vote.

DOCUMENTS INITIALLY RECEIVED AND REVIEWED:

Documents received and reviewed by the CRC associated with the challenge included the following:

1. Challenge by Ms. Lopez submitted on February 1, 2019.
2. Testimony submitted by Larry Gross, Shanna Ingalsbee, Chad Jones, and Dennise Mejia.
3. 2019 ADEM Procedures
4. CDP Bylaws

TIMELINESS:

According to CDP Bylaws, Article XII, Section 4:

“All challenges must be commenced by the filing of a written challenge with the Secretary of This Committee, with copies served on the Chair of This Committee, as well as the appointing person, and the chair of the relevant organization, where applicable no later than seven (7) calendar days after the alleged violation occurred. Upon a showing of good cause, sustained by unanimous vote, the Compliance Review Commission may waive this requirement.”

(All By-Law references are to the California Democratic Party Bylaws, as amended through November 2018, unless otherwise indicated.)
The challenge filed by Ms. Lopez was submitted on February 1, 2019. The ADEM in AD39 occurred on January 26, 2019. The submission was within 7-days of the alleged incident, thus the CRC finds the challenge timely.

**STANDING:**

According to Article XII, Section 3:

“Any party to a challenge must be adversely affected to bring the challenge.”

Ms. Lopez was a voter and will be represented by those elected in the ADEM in AD39. The CRC finds Ms. Lopez has standing, as she would be adversely affected.

**JURISDICTION**

Article XII, Section 2a states:

“The Compliance Review Commission shall have initial jurisdiction over all challenges and/or appeals arising under these Bylaws.”

The CRC has jurisdiction under Article II (Membership) and Article VI (Assembly District and Assembly District Election Meetings).

**FINDINGS:**

CDP Bylaws, Article XIII, Section 5 provides that the Party is responsible for publication of selection procedures:

“Section 5. FULL PUBLICATION OF SELECTION PROCEDURES
The Democratic Party shall publicize fully and in such a manner as to assure notice to all interested parties a full description of the legal and practical procedures for selection of Democratic Party Officers and representatives on all levels.”

CDP Bylaws Article VI, 1, h provides the Rules Committee is to promulgate procedures governing the Assembly District Election Meeting:

“h. The Rules Committee of This Committee shall promulgate procedures governing the conduct of the Election Meeting, including the election of 14 delegates to This Committee as set forth in Article II, Section 5, and one representative to the Executive Board, as set forth in Article VII, Section 2(c), which Rules shall include, for candidates for delegate and for candidates for Representative to the Executive Board, a filing fee of $30 (which may be waived due to hardship and such waiver shall be available as an option online and on all written forms), a filing period 30 days prior to the biennial Assembly District Election Meetings and call for the posting of eligible candidate names (to be updated no less than once per week.
starting with the opening of the filing period) on the Party's website, along with statements by the candidates, with the proviso that such statements be no longer 2400 characters and shall not mention the name of any other candidate. Statements shall be published as submitted; no additions, corrections, or other edits shall be made once submitted.”

The challenger alleged, “that 95% of Dems in district didn’t know about the election, materials were only distributed in English, there was a lack of privacy during voting, and staff members and volunteers were affiliated with elected officials were assisting.”

Over 40,000 people participated in the ADEMs in 2019. While this is a small fraction of the Democratic electorate, more people participated in 2019 than in 2017. The CRC recognizes that ADEMs is not widely known to those outside of the democratic activists community even though the State Party tries to promote it through the press and social media.

With regards to the materials being distributed only in English, the 2019 ADEM Procedures state,

In addition, Conveners are encouraged to provide support for languages other than English that are commonly spoken in their Assembly District.

The convener Chad Jones testified,

“I agree with her that voter information should have been provided in Spanish. On a conference call with CDP staff I asked that conveners be provided with a Spanish translation of the ballot instructions but none were received. However many volunteers, candidates, and voters were bilingual and assisted voters. After the ADEM I saw pictures on social media of a ballot from a different AD that had the instructions translated into different languages. Based on the font it looks like the translation was added to the ballot by the individual convener. I hope the CDP will put this on all ballots in the future.”

With regards to assisting voters, the convener Chad Jones states,

“I see no prohibition in the rules regarding assisting voters. In fact, I would hope that people requiring assistance would receive it. I helped register two people who could barely sign their own names. Should they be able to receive assistance or should they be denied the right to vote? It seems obvious that people supporting a particular slate would assist voters intending to vote those slates. While the bylaws were recently amended to address voter assistance at the convention, the procedure does not appear to apply to the ADEMs.”

The rules and procedures for the ADEMs do not prohibit assisting voters in completing their ballots or in dealing with language challenges created by voting materials and/or ballots not being translated into a wide variety of languages. As long as the voter welcomes the assistance, such conduct is fully consistent with our Party's rules and is not a basis for questioning or setting aside an election result.
Ms. Lopez also alleges, “we must follow the state rules on the elections process to verify that the voters actually live in our district and are eligible to vote.”

The 2019 ADEM Procedures provide that

\[
F. \text{ The Convener should oversee the check-in process. With regard to this process: 1) The voter registration check should only be performed for those participants who are themselves unsure or are challenged as to their eligibility. It is not proper to check all participants, especially when such a process would cause long lines in the check-in process. If, in the Convener’s opinion, one person or a group of persons is unduly delaying the registration process by frequent challenges, the Convener may cut off further challenges by that person or group of persons. Before taking this action, the Convener is encouraged, but not required, to call the CDP office for consultation.}
\]

The Procedures state that voter registration checks should only be performed for those that are unsure of the their eligibility or if their eligibility is challenged. If someone was suspected of being outside of the district then they should have been challenged onsite at the ADEM. Additionally, the sign-in sheets and ballots were available for inspection at the CDP Headquarters, which would have allowed the challengers to provide specific evidence that the participants were not Democrats or did not live in the district. The CDP staff is unaware of anyone reviewing the materials or requesting to review the materials.

In 2017, in a decision regarding a challenge in the ADEM in AD47, which applies to this case, the CRC found that:

“\[\text{In order to overturn an ADEM result, challengers must meet the standard which demonstrates in a quantifiable way that the conduct and/or actions complained of made a difference in the outcome that would not have been present absent that conduct and/or action. In the testimony submitted, there were a myriad of general allegations, however there was no specific quantifiable allegation, which would have resulted a different outcome. In the testimony submitted, there was none which proved that the actions of those involved were deliberately and purposefully biased, unfair or taken with ill intent. There was no evidence provided that an eligible person was not allowed to vote, was turned away from voting, or due to the circumstances left without voting.}\]

Accordingly, the CRC’s standards, as noted above, were not met in that there was no testimonial or documentary evidence that demonstrated in a quantifiable way that the conduct and/or actions complained of made a difference in the outcome that would not have been present absent that conduct and/or action.”

\**ORDER:**

Based upon the above facts and Bylaws of the CDP, the CRC makes the following Orders:

1) The CRC rejects the challenge, as the challengers failed to achieve the standard necessary to invalidate an ADEM result. The original voting results are affirmed.
2) The CRC will forward all testimony submitted to the CRC to the Rules Committee as they consider revising the ADEM Procedures for 2021.

Appeal of this order, if any, must be filed with the CDP Secretary, with copies to the Chair of the CDP State Central Committee, within twelve days of the date of this decision. (Article XII, section 6(a).) Thus, any appeal must be filed on or before March 23, 2019 with the Sacramento office of the California Democratic Party, and shall be an appeal to the next meeting of CDP Credentials Committee upon conclusion of the response period.

Please note that per CDP Bylaws, Article XII, Section 6b, the filing of an appeal shall not stay any decision of the CRC. Parties may additionally respond in person, if so desired, provided there has been a timely filing of an appeal and notice of intent to testify is provided in writing to the Lead Chair of the Credentials Committee by 5 PM on April 4, 2019, at the Sacramento office of the California Democratic Party. The Credentials Committee may accept such additional testimony, written or oral, considering the nature and import thereof, as well as the time available for its proper consideration, as it deems appropriate, in its discretion.

Accordingly, this decision is so ordered, and is in effect, unless, and until, a successful appeal is made, decided, and contrary orders made whether by the CRC, or by the Credentials Committee. CRC shall retain jurisdiction up until the time of an appeal, if any, is heard by the Credentials Committee.

Respectfully submitted by a 6-0 vote of the members of the CRC,

Coby King, Co-Chair, Rules Committee
Lara Larramendi, Co-Lead Chair, Credentials Committee
Garry S. Shay, Lead Chair, Rules Committee
Keith Umemoto, Co-Chair, Credentials Committee
Michael Wagaman, Lead Chair, Credentials Committee
Laurence Zakson, Co-Chair, Rules Committee