

Consent Calendar

Consent Calendar for the Rural Caucus to approve the following positions on three legislative measures and three resolutions. The three resolutions below are authored by Rural Caucus members.

Updated 5.21

Legislation:

Clean Affordable Drinking Water

The Rural Caucus is committed to helping solve California’s drinking water crisis this year by **supporting legislation** that provides a reliable, secure, sustainable fund for safe drinking water for all.

We oppose the concept of a “trust” (vs. a “fund”) as the amount of money needed is gargantuan – even \$1 billion dollars would yield just \$40 million a year in interest, far short of the \$150 million/year estimated for the ongoing costs of operations, maintenance and technical assistance to bring and keep the hundreds of failing drinking water systems up and down the state into compliance.

We contend the bill should provide for transparency and accountability. Our metric for accountability is demonstrably reducing the number of Californians burdened by unsafe water, county by county.

Water companies out of compliance as of 2/8/19
(Source: Water Quality Control Board)

County	Population
Alpine	350
Amador	18,404
Butte	407
Calaveras	180
Colusa	381
Eldorado	100
Fresno	68,124
Imperial	23,706
Inyo	85
Kern	216,392
Kings	28,213
Lake	3,327
Los Angeles	12,860
Madera	10,499
Marin	121
Mariposa	157

Merced	63,750
Mono	4,940
Monterey	2,398
Napa	924
Nevada	75
Placer	250
Plumas	2,182
Riverside	8,466
Sacramento	620
San Benito	23,831
San Bernardino	117,759
San Diego	2,915
San Joaquin	83,741
San Luis Obispo	2,035
San Mateo	668
Santa Barbara	250
Santa Clara	402
Santa Cruz	3,029
Siskiyou	40
Sonoma	801
Stanislaus	157,710
Tehama	1,705
Tulare	99,277
Tuolumne	3,600
Ventura	115,298
Yolo	314
Total	1,080,286

These are people, not statistics.

The Rural Caucus has identified three (out of five) bills for consideration – one from the Governor’s Office (Governor’s Budget Trailer Bill), one from the Senate (SB 200) and one from the Assembly (AB 217).

The main points of contention are over the funding mechanism and whether there should be forbearance given to agricultural producers in exchange for a tax on agriculture as a form of mitigation for contamination cause by nitrates, etc. It is likely that only one funding mechanism will emerge from negotiations; with the exception of the trust mentioned above, we're comfortable with the options being discussed.

The Rural Caucus recommends the Democratic Party push for negotiations to get underway in earnest with the goal of reaching an agreement on a bill to be included in the budget for the Governor to sign on July 1. In short, get it done.

Failing Water Systems Governance

The Rural Caucus recommends the Party **support** SB 414 (Caballero): Small Systems Water Authority Act of 2019, which provides a process for failing public water systems that serve less than 10,000 people or less than 3,000 service connections to come into compliance, or be absorbed into a new Small System Water Authority (Authority) created by the State Water Resources Control Board and the applicable Local Agency Formation Commission. The new Authority would work to competently operate currently non-compliant public water systems with either contiguous or non-contiguous boundaries. RCRC is in support.

VoIP and IP Regulations

The Rural Caucus recommends the Party **support** AB 1366 (Gonzalez) **if amended** to ensure enforceable, reliable and resilient access to 911, minimum standards for the reliability and quality of the State's communications grid - especially in times of emergency, consumer protection and maintain the State's universal service programs that support communities across the state, such as the deaf, disabled, poor, rural, schools and nonprofit entities – in the **Public Utilities Code**.

Resolutions

PG&E Resolution and Legislation

Whereas the public good must always be the first consideration of our government, and PG&E's actions threaten the public by causing 40 known fires and gas explosions, including the San Bruno gas explosion which PG&E is on probation for causing; all linked to irresponsible deferred maintenance and upkeep of their equipment; and noting that the PUC is considering breaking up PG&E as well as other measures against it; and

Whereas PG&E has filed for bankruptcy due to lawsuits resulting from their negligence and poor management which will disrupt the company's operations and place the public's well-being in great jeopardy; and PG&E has proposed rate increases for their customers and low interest loans and liability forgiveness from the taxpayers to cover their losses rather than first requiring their executives and shareholders, who profited from PG&E management decisions, to bear those losses as part of the understood risk of investing in any corporation; and

Whereas California has numerous municipal public utilities including LADWP and SMUD, and Nebraska has statewide public utilities, all of which can be used as models on how to run a non-profit public utility owned by the people, and California already runs "The State Fund", a public insurance company that competes on the open market successfully;

Therefore be it resolved that the California Democratic Party supports the state takeover of PG&E and directs the Chair to issue letters to our state legislators and office holders calling for the acquisition of PG&E by Eminent Domain or by purchase of PG&E at the lowest market value of the stock in the three years prior to said purchase to prevent the manipulation of the stock's price which would be unfair to the public, with any losses to be borne by the executives, and shareholders of record on the date of takeover, keeping the existing employees of PG&E and installing a new executive management team initially appointed by the governor and the leaders of the state Senate and Assembly, with all current union membership and employee benefits and pension commitments protected; and,

Therefore be it further resolved that the California Democratic Party calls for its Legislation Committee to draft legislation for submission to the State's Legislature to accomplish this aim that assures that the new company be operated as a not-for-profit entity for the benefit of the people with public safety, energy reliability, and sustainability as its primary goals.

Submitted by Lowell Young, Delegate AD 5
Co-authors: Lowell Young, Glenn Glazer, and Peter Leinau

[Resolution for Wildfire Evacuation Routes for Public Safety](#)

Whereas, the increased incidence of fast-moving wildfire is threatening hundreds of lives and homes throughout California, and the difficulty of escaping these wildfires has illuminated the lack of safe evacuation routes which have cost dozens of lives in recent wildfires, such as the Camp Fire in Paradise where people died in their cars trying to escape the flames;

Whereas, Counties are charged with maintaining vegetation, upkeep, extension, and building of hundreds of miles of County roads with insufficient funding, and do not have the resources to research right of ways for dozens of neighborhoods seeking to create or expand evacuation routes. Moreover, private road owners own more roads than Counties in many rural areas, and do not have incentive, funds, or desire to expand their roads to become evacuation routes, or understand the process of providing easements to allow for new evacuation routes, and Counties do not have authority or resources to assist with creating new or enhanced evacuation routes through or across private roads;

Whereas, all the firesafe clearing and house hardening done by private landowners, Counties, state and Federal agencies will not be enough to save lives of Californians if they continue to be trapped on roads with no secondary egress, no clear evacuation routes or no access to private roads that may have been gated, or otherwise blocked by private road owners;

Therefore, be it resolved that the California Democratic Party calls upon the state of California to commit to providing funds and tools to counties and cities to ensure that essential evacuation routes can be planned, built, arranged and completed, using both public and private roads, for

neighborhoods which would otherwise be isolated in a major wildfire, and that this include regulatory tools to move past entrenched private interests and resources to fund this as a separate and related priority with other wildfire prevention and mitigation priorities.

Submitted by Heidi Hall, AD-1 delegate and Nevada County Supervisor

Co-authors: Lowell Young, AD5 and Peter Leinau, AD5

Resolution for a Moratorium on All Glyphosate Use by California Public Agencies

WHEREAS glyphosate, the active ingredient in the herbicide Roundup, has been identified as a carcinogen by the state of California under Proposition 62, and scientific studies have linked it to non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, to liver and kidney damage in animals, navigation disruption in bees; and W

WHEREAS at least three recent California juries have found glyphosate a significant cause of the plaintiff's cancer, and have ordered manufacturers Bayer and Monsanto to pay more than \$100 million to the victims, while more than 11,000 similar lawsuits await trial across the United States; and

WHEREAS the California Department of Transportation – CalTrans – continues to spray glyphosate along state highways despite evidence of its danger, and refuses to honor the wishes of local communities opposed to that spraying, refuses to post warnings for the public, refuses to inform local communities when and where their highway shoulders will be sprayed, and refuses to use alternative means such as work crews and machinery;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the state of California declare a moratorium on all use of glyphosate by all federal, state and local agencies until an exhaustive independent study finds that it will not harm humans, animals and the environment.

Author: George Bates, Chair Trinity County DCC