



Rural Caucus Minutes
Meeting Date: Saturday November 19, 2022
Location: Via Zoom

- I. Meeting Called to Order at 8:01 AM by Chair Joy Sterling
- II. Acknowledgment of Tribal Lands- By Emma Harper, CDP Director of Party Operations
- III. Pledge of Allegiance by Mike Nichols
- IV. Caucus Chair's Remarks by Joy Sterling
 - a. Mentioned there are still over 1 million ballots to count in CA, but we are better off than Georgia in which to vote in the runoff election, you would have had to have registered by November 7th. To vote in the general election the deadline for registration was Oct 11th which is an impossible deadline. The Chair went on to mention that the fact that we have two congressional elections still not called in our rural area, is a privilege and something we should be proud of that we take seriously that every vote deserves to be counted. This past election cycle really confirmed Democracy and shows where we need to devote our efforts in the future before the next election.
- V. Rep Jared Huffman (CA-02) Report from COP 27, his take on midterms and a word about Nancy Pelosi
 - a. Rep. Huffman thanked the rural caucus for their leadership and continued support for the democratic cause. Rep. Huffman shared a few words on the leadership of Rep. Nancy Pelosi as she decides to step down from leadership within the house.
 - b. Midterms-Rep Huffman said he was a bit relieved since we were all subjected to doom loops on media which he is sure didn't help turnout, but that Dobs probably assisted in turnout as well. We had one of the best turnouts in a presidential off year for the party in the power. We have done a lot of work in the party and still have more to do in the following years.
 - c. COP 27- Is still going on and not sure what success we will see yet. Rep. Huffman mentioned that the US needs to do much better in this upcoming decade to set in motion this plan to get to net 0 by mid-century. Need to show to the developing world that the US is helping provide the financing to actually get the benefits of clean energy since its very hard for many countries to get clean energy financing. Then we need to take into consideration that the developing world is taking on many of the consequences of fossil fuels while being asked by developed countries to skip fossil fuels while in their development phase despite having access to fossil fuels easily. US needs to

be empathetic to that situation since the US is really part of the reason for this growing climate crisis.

- i. Chair Joy asked Rep. Huffman on what the rural caucus could engage on to help with climate crisis for example the farm bill. Rep. Huffman did mention that agriculture does in deed contribute to the global climate crisis, but could also provide solutions to the climate issue. The government has done a bit in the last couple of farm bills to help, but its not enough. Rep. Huffman mentioned that we should use the next farm bill to begin to scale up these climate solutions but not sure if it will be possible with this new government.
- ii. Glenn Glazer asked who made the decision on where to have the COP 27. Rep. Huffman said that it was in part the UN that made the decision since in order to address climate crisis will need to take on the issue of developing nations and so then the question comes down to which developing nation has the capacity to host something like COP 27. Rep. Huffman is not happy that it was in Egypt and will be in UAE next year, but he told US has to show up and speak out without compromising their values on human rights.

VI. Midterm Recap

a. Regional Chair Remarks

- i. Elizabeth Betancourt, Northern Regional Chair- spoke about the interesting outcomes in the Northern Region. She was impressed with Siskiyou County and their work since they were able to change their county purple. Siskiyou County was able to elect three strong woman candidates for school board against 3 patriots' candidates. The county also supported Prop 1 at over 50%. In Shasta County Prop 1 lost at 40%. Shasta County only had one democratic candidate win. Shasta County came out learning that they need to work on more candidate training in the next election. Sierra County also supported Prop 1 at 50%.
- ii. Phil Grosse, Northern Coastal Regional Chair- reported that things went well in the north coast and used the Governor's race as a yard stick for judging how well democrats did in the region. Phil reported that Governor Newsome won by over 69% to 31% so it is a pretty liberal area with some exceptions. In US Congress had Rep. Mike Thompson and Rep. Huffman reelected to Congress. He mentioned that he sees Del Marty and Trinity as an opportunity for growth for the party in the next year.
- iii. Renee Zeimer, Bay Area Regional Chair- Let the committee know that in the bay area they retained their full democratic statewide officer team. In the contra costa area they have John Garamendi back, Josh Harder, Mark Desaulnier, Buffy Wix, Tim Grayson, and Rebecca Bard Khan all won on their congressional and legislative races which is all good news. However, Renee warned the committee that the GOP is coming for school boards and they saw it in their area where they had two slates of Trump Supporters run for school districts seats. Thankfully Democratic clubs and local elected stepped up to push back and call them out and because of that it was picked up by media. Luckily most were

defeated, but some maga republicans won due to too many Democrats in the race dividing the vote.

- iv. Dean Rewerts, North Central Regional Chair- Focused his report on Yuba County where the major push was for the election. Dean reported that despite the area's efforts, Yuba was unable to take any of the Congressional districts or Assembly districts in the area. Herman Jones race in CD 3 is still too close to call. Every ballot measure was defeated in his district and no local democrats won in any of the local races. The good news for the district is that they did a lot of recruiting of Democrats in local area and signing them up for the local clubs and central committee. The region is looking forward to the next election and hoping to do even better than prior elections.
- v. Susan Rowe, South Central Regional Chair + Vice Chair- Susan informed the committee that Senator Anna Caballero. The area did have a lot of participates in every down ticket races and those races are looking very close with every race being down or up by 20 votes. The campaign of "Democrats Deliver" was very well received in the district and helped many of the democratic elections. She let the committee know there are not many outstanding votes, but those that are there are very close still.

- b. Overview of Statewide Rural Outcomes from DCCC Representative Rhodesia Ransom
 - i. Rhodesia Ransom our newly elected DCCC Representative from the Central Valley and fellow Rural member. The first ever Rural/Central Valley Representative. She attended her first DCCC meeting and rural caucus meeting and got involved in the campaign, "Rural Strong." In DCCC there is a real commitment to not forget about the rural areas and really engage with the area. One of the things the DCCC have found is that in non-partisan races, rural communities do not want to talk about party until they engage with candidates and really learn about their values. Take aways from the meeting were that people in rural communities tend to respond best to conversations with candidates about things that matter to them. Going to continue to work hard to get rural democratic candidates elected in these communities. Lessons learned that in future going to talk less party and more on the rural issues to win democratic races.

VII. New Water Year Discussion

- a. Joaquin Escoville, head of the water board- spoke with committee about what is going on with policy on drinking water with the drought accelerating what are a lot of discussions that really started occurring about a decade ago. Joaquin let the committee know that the State Water Resources Control Board is a 5 member board that along with 9 regional water quality control boards, regulate water quality in the State. It is 10 years now since water was declared a human right in California. In 2019 we went from about 1. 6 million Californians without access to clean water, but now it is about 900,000 which is a 40% reduction in 3 years. The next focus the board needs to focus on is what to adapt to climate change and need to use federal investigate dollars to work on it. In addition Joaquin mentioned the board needs to find solutions for people who are still on

well systems that are currently drying up now. To find the most recent update on water access can go to https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/2022.html. To see how much funding received for water projects can go to https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/conservation_portal/conservation_reporting.html.

VIII. Broadband Update

- a. Jeff Tyrell-Broadband Activist spoke to the rural caucus to give update to the committee on the current process of broadband rollout. As of convention, about 77% is in progress with regard to the preconstruction of broadband rollout. In May 2020 the California Department of Technology has completed the 10,000 mile broadband map. Part of the federal funds for broadband included digital literacy programs/adoption programs. <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/8c0249a9de8d404a9b49966fb824b728> This link shows the percentage of eligible applicants that have utilized the digital literacy programs.

IX. Preview of State Legislative Session by Senator Mike McGuire

- a. Senator Mike McGuire spoke to the committee about an update on State. He informed the committee that CA continues to lead the nation on climate action by passing the largest climate budget in American history with 54 billion dollars that will be invested into green and our energy grid to be able to move forward on our most vulnerable communities when it comes to extreme heat and drought. It will also invest in wildfire resiliency, prevention and response. The state also adopted new bills that adopted more ambitious reduction targets and put setbacks on oil wells in vulnerable communities making it so that we can no longer build oil wells within 3,000 feet of a neighborhood, school, grocery store, or hospital. In addition the State made education funding important by adding 7.9 billion dollars in K-12 public education moving CA from last to now the top 20 in the nation. The state is also focusing on affordable housing in rural areas by investing another 6 billion into housing projects.

X. For the Good of the Order

- a. Andrew Lochman- updated the committee as part of his role in DCCC wanted to give the committee an update on rural races at the national level. He informed the committee that democrats flipped both legislatures in Michigan to Democrat and in Pennsylvania. Democrats flipped one of the houses as well including Michigan. The DCCC developed some tools for with respect to outreach for small business especially rural business on what the administration has done for them. In addition, the administration spent 65 billion on rural/urban broadband and funded 5 billion for water storage. He spoke about the benefits of the inflation reduction act and rescue plan to help rural communities. It is Andrew's hope that the party will develop infographics and talking points to show rural communities who is the party that stands for them.

XI. Meeting Adjourned at 10: 05 PM by Chair Joy Sterling