

## RURAL CAUCUS

\* Are you a member of the Rural Caucus? Have you been a past member?

I believe I was a member of the rural caucus at one point, but I am not sure.

What caucuses have you joined in the past?

I believe I have been a member of a majority of the caucuses in the past. After I became co-chair of Credentials my time was spent working the table so I have not attended caucuses in a few years now and cannot recall which ones I had signed up for.

\* Have you ever attended a Rural Caucus meeting (not as a candidate)?

Yes.

\* Have you ever lived in a rural area in California?

No. However, I did live in a rural area growing up in Michigan and I have represented clients living in rural California.

\* What are your experiences with rural California voters- specifically what races, organizing; coalitions have you been involved in?

I have tried to assist giving members a voice who were unfairly targeted by local party members whether it was a dirty recall campaign or such. The rural caucus helped my county greatly by supporting my petition to terminate a member in our local party who continued to support Republicans against our Democrats. It resulted in an admonition from the CDP. He went out and supported Republicans again in the 2018 cycle and this time he was immediately terminated from his delegate seat after we voted him off of our Central committee. Like a bad penny he ran for ADEM and made it because there is not much competition in his AD so after he is seated in May we will have to petition to terminate him again. If elected as Chair, I will make it priority to close this loophole by creating an Order to Show Cause procedure, where the delegate is automatically ordered to show cause to the CDP why they should not be terminated for the same length of time as the County committee terminated the member. This would have disqualified him from running for ADEM.

\* What is your experience with fund raising in rural areas?

I do not recall ever fundraising in rural areas.

\* What is your fundraising plan for Election 2020 and what portion of those funds would be allocated to the rural districts?

I liked the fundraising program instituted in 2017 and would want to crank that wheel back up into motion. Our red district didn't get funding until we became targeted due to our numbers. Rural districts need a more proactive system for ballot harvesting, especially because you are rural and the geographical area is so large. I would suggest getting the bounty program and Tom Steyer's grant for registering voters now in the rural districts. Create tighter guidelines on how the money will be spent when writing your grants if that was an issue last time.

Create your own circular free papers if you don't have them. Orange County does not need as much seed money this time, and those monies should wave into other red areas like rural areas.

Rural has an opening for funding due to Cox and Nunes.

Keeping TJ Cox seat is going to cost money because the Republicans have made it a targeted seat. Here are RNCC targets:

- Rep. TJ Cox, CA21
- Rep. Katie Hill, CA25
- Rep. Gil Cisneros, CA39
- Rep. Katie Porter, CA45
- Rep. Harley Rouda, CA48
- Rep. Mike Levin, CA49
- Rep. Jason Crow, CO06

DCCC has targeted:

- California 22nd District, Rep. Devin Nunes
- California 50th District, Rep. Duncan Hunter

Hunter does represent part of Riverside which is also rural.

These areas will be strong rural area targets for 2020 down ticket where the numbers are and will get funding.

\* How can you make the party more accessible for rural delegates and activists?

If elected as Chair, I do want to add a regional CDP headquarters in the Central Valley and one in Southern California to make the headquarters more accessible to all Californians, with the hope that it does not take more than 4 hours to drive to get to your regional headquarter, which can be important nearing election time.

I believe that the party has now been in the process of livestreaming all of our Sunday general sessions making our meetings accessible to those all across California that cannot make it to the meetings. However, without adequate internet service in some rural areas this does not solve the problem. We really need to have rural internet and radio programs that are left leaning in our rural districts to broaden the accessibility and education of varying points of view to assist in messaging to the community.

\* How will you lead the party, substantiating to voters that rural California is a priority?

As Chair I would include at least one major rural issue is given as much media time as other issues in our state.

\* How will you help build our base in rural counties?

As Chair I would direct out of district assistance to targeted areas from phone banking to canvassing.

\* What plans do you have for outreach heading into the 2020 election to help Democrats win in rural communities up and down the ballot?

We have to look at the numbers. Then proceed with the targeted districts as discussed above. Also, we need to make sure our messaging is uniform and gets out there in a way that the voters understand it when they hear or read the two to four word label you decide to give to the issue that is important to your community. For example, you educate your voters that they are not being hit with a water tax, but that there is a real problem with the toxicity. Bring up Flint or Erin Brokovich. Get the messaging down and get it in a language your voters can understand.

\* What are your plans for communications and rural specific messaging?

The leaders in the rural community come up with the issues from their listening campaigns and canvassing of the voters. From that, messaging is borne keeping in tune with the Republican message. We really do need a radio show and better internet access and need to push for that.

\* Will you commit CDP funds for training, GOTV and electioneering in rural California?

There is the bounty program and Tom Steyer grants. I would commit to training. I would also commit to out of district help with GOTV from remote sites and having outside district volunteers come assist the districts we target to flip.

\* Do you support the concept of the Governor's proposed Clean and Affordable Drinking Water Fund? Already several State Senators have said they will not vote for anything resembling a tax. What can the Party do to press our electeds to fulfill the mandate of clean drinking water for all Californians?

In 2015 I authored a clean water resolution which passed. I believe it was August Eboard. I fully support clean water and the fund. We will flip that message, Erin Brokovich style and reassure our elected that this will not hurt their reelection campaigns. We can press for accountability and transparency on how the funds are used to quell fears of mismanagement.

\* In 2020, 24 Water Districts will elect new, or re-elect existing, Board Members. How will you inspire/encourage/support Democrats to run for these seats?

I hear this happening at the County levels and I think the message is working. The environmental caucus should be encouraging their members to find candidates that align with our principles to run.

\* How can the Party help achieve broadband equity and influence the stakeholders to invest in broadband in our rural counties? Would you make this issue a priority and support the efforts of the Rural Caucus?

Yes. See above. I believe this is a landowner issue. As I recall the major companies offered around \$2,500.00 (per month or per year) to put a cell tower on a private owner's land. First step would be to educate me as to why the land owners in rural districts are reticent in putting a cell tower on their land.

\* It is very disconcerting that the only "creditors" so far left out in the wind in the PG&E bankruptcy proceedings are the fire victims. How do you feel about the State of California taking over PG&E? Do you support the PG&E Resolution and Legislation co-authored by Lowell Young, Glenn Glazer, and Peter Leinau? (See attached)

Yes, I support the resolution and signed on when Lowell Young presented it on the Progressive listserv.

\* What are your plans for the Party to combat gerrymandered rural districts?

I think those wheels are already in motion from the prior chair. I would have to be brought up to speed on that issue because I am not familiar with how the lines are now drawn in the rural districts or who is working on this in the CDP. I do know that at one of our general sessions there was a callout for people to assist with our next redistricting.

\* What do you think the CA Democratic party can do to advocate for rural economies and ensure that rural concerns and interests are included in policy decisions?

We have passed a resolution where the candidates must read the platform. The delegates representing rural districts need to make sure they add their concerns to this platform. Grass roots selects the candidates to support and run. When they are elected, the Grass roots that helped elect the candidate can hold that elected accountable to the platform. Don't let someone else select your candidate for you.

\* In what order would you place these rural priorities: health care, affordable housing, education, jobs, immigration, homelessness, poverty, fire resiliency, and infrastructure?

Poverty is the number one issue. Solving poverty solves most education, jobs, homelessness, and affordable housing problems and some healthcare problems, too. Immigration is really a jobs issue. Fire resiliency and infrastructure also are an issue. I cannot rank these. These are all important.

\* How would you help bridge the urban-rural divide?

There are people who like to live where you can walk outside your home without seeing your neighbor six feet away from you and sleeping in a place so dark you can see the stars at night.

Then there are people who like to be able to order delivery take out from one block away and have comfort hearing their neighbor snore so they don't feel all alone.

However, that urban dweller will use their vacation time to go to the mountains camping, or stay at a B&B at a ranch. And the rural family will use their vacation to go to Disneyland for the weekend or see the Rockettes in NYC.

Framing issues with that type of appreciation in mind bridges the urban rural divide.

Dated: 4/1/2019

s/Lenore Albert

Lenore Albert