



PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

of the CALIFORNIA DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Minutes

Progressive Caucus Solidarity Summit August 15-16, 2009 San Luis Obispo, CA

Saturday, August 15, 2009

Morning General Session:

10:00 Am - Karen – Introduces the Progressive Caucus Officers

Officers Present: Karen Bernal, Dotty LeMieux, J Brian Washman, Mayme Hubert, Jeffrey Killeen, Mal Burnstein

Karen Bernal gives a summary of what is planned for the day

About 75 people were present. Each attendee introduced themselves and said where they were from.

Karen passed our sheets of paper for attendees to write down the issues they consider to be the highest priority

The speakers were introduced and gave the topics they would be speaking on throughout the day.

Mal Burnstein gave a brief history of the Caucus and our struggles to be approved in '05. We are now the largest Caucus in the CDP (670 paid members as of this date, many more come to meetings)

Discussion:

- How to get more organized and influential. We need to be savvy. Karen explains how we have been stymied in the past with some of our efforts, like getting the Rules amended to require endorsed candidates to read the CDP platform and the problems getting our "Out of Iraq" resolution passed, when the General Session was We need to pick our battles wisely. Organize. "We are being looked at for what we are going to do."
- Part of organizing triumph – getting Hilary Crosby elected Controller
- Hilary Crosby will be here tomorrow with info on the DEM2010 program
- New direction of the CDP under Chairman John Burton – Night and Day (Applause)
- shutdown due to a controversial quorum call.

Lobby Project Report – Mayme Hubert:

Mayme explained how the Lobby Project works with liaisons and choosing to support or lobby against.

- Budget and HC became the focus
- We need to see where energy is in this group for lobbying.
- Concentrate more on policy and ballot measures such as:
 - SB810 long term
 - 2/3 requirement to pass a budget and raise revenue
 - Marriage equality issue
 - Clean money for Secretary of State election
 - Constitutional Convention

Caucus Priorities:

- Work with Progressive State legislators to get them vote as a block in the state Legislature
- Brian to do website page on where to find your Assembly Person, letters to send to them on issues
- Karen: John Burton and Party have heightened vigilance of Caucuses. She now participates in Caucus Chair Conference Calls with staff. They want us to be involved more in regular Party activities. What is our purpose, usefulness to Party? She wants to tell them what our members have to say.

Attendees gave lists of their priority issues. Tammy Dramer wrote them all down on the chalkboard:

- Push Party to left

- Make Party more responsible to needs of people
- Hold candidates and electeds more accountable to platform, help them write legislation.
- Liaison w/Progressive Caucus in the House, progressive agenda, and end occupations, advance human needs – try to get Progressive Caucuses in all 50 states
- Challenge electeds
- Delegate reps. at conventions and E-boards We should have voice on national super (appointed?) delegates – need more progressive Reps. Have a point system for activists.
- Clearing House for info and messaging, conduits to our clubs and AD's to take info back on what is happening on Party – DTS dropping out because of this (lack of)
- Lead the party, frame issues
- Passing Single Payer, get Dem Governor in the short term
- Election integrity
- Stand up, identify, vet, recruit, and support progressive candidates in primaries at all levels Cong. State local – see them as Statewide races
- Promote Real change, not buzz word “change” (he suggests one term “politicians”)
- Carole Lutness - Stop being nice. (applause) Party must help with local races in red districts. She has “begged” Party to help with her race for Assembly. Burton said we'll give you training. We need \$\$ instead
- Speaker's bureau, go to colleges, high school etc. change attitude toward financing, id business constituents who share our point of view. Teach ins. Dems are selfish.
- Why should we justify ourselves to Party? They ought to ask what they can do for us. Republicans can explain positions.
- 2 key pieces of legislation in Congress: Employee Free Choice, Healthcare
- Dems not supporting because of contributions from business. We must counter this.
- Party is discouraging Progressive candidates who come forward. Put a stop to that.
- Party's choice of unelectable candidate to run against Maldonado is unconscionable, and purposeful. Recruit and mentor local candidates.
- Voter registration. Expand electorate
- Why we organize. Advocate and achieve action create better society, not just economy
- Define non-negotiable bottom line of Progressive Issues. Mechanism for candidates to take position on the platform. Other wise what does it mean
- Organizing for short term actions – national state, etc. water, fair elections act, Dave Jones thing to rescue Hosp. money and families' money
- Messaging, get away from rhetoric, framing - simple language teach others how to persuade – things with no meaning, get away from that, our own correct frames clear
- Guerilla actions for visibility – a la tea parties, only better
- Values – 2/3 majority is blocking us. Undermine Rep seats wherever we can.
- Mayme – Our principles are listed on the signup on the form. Don't lose momentum prepared agenda. Collect material now for our platform/bylaws

The sheets with the attendee's lists of priority issues were collected. The results will be compiled and reported later.

We are not changing bylaws as such today, as we cannot do so without proper notice.

Karen – Demographics.

- Expand our reach. Where we are located. Brian prepared a breakdown of our membership by County. The County breakdown doesn't add up to total members (Some people didn't list their counties)
- Where are we lacking? We need to know our weaknesses so we can strengthen them. We need to have numbers out there. North/South not a realistic division. Fresno, for instance, is not either one. Do we need Central Vice Chair?
- Some other Caucuses are organized on a regional model. Chicano/Latino and Rural. We need on the ground point people,

Discussion on Regions:

Where is Central Valley? The CHP has 12 regions based on highways.

- Some "Central Valley" locations are really in the mountains.
- Sacramento Valley, rural areas in North, San Joaquin to Tehachapi, Delta region
- Sutter, Yolo, Butte, San Joaquin, Stanislaus Merced. No org. Central Valley to speak of. Need to firm up
- Start where members live? Clusters.
- Central Coast? Where begin and end?
- Reg. 10 Monterey to Malibu. Huge. Need new model Can't use the one already here.
- What works for us?

Let's make decision and change as we grow. Reorganize Caucus into regional/district models, our own, not Party's, let's do that today. Help us quantify our numbers for effective action within party, for votes, resolutions, platform and representation on committees.

Afternoon Breakout Sessions:

A vote was taken to decide which sessions would be provided when. Based on the number of votes each topic would be addressed between one and three sessions.

- Budget – Susie Shannon will lead [big vote]
- Healthcare - Andrew McGuire, Rose [big vote]
- Wars, occupation, resolution from SF Dem Party - Marcy Winograd [big vote]
- Water - Steve Haze - Delta joint legislative hearing on the bills is Tuesday. Med [big vote]
- CDP, Interaction with - Henry V
- Progressive Caucus Organization – an officer? (Jeffrey leads bylaws discussion in a small breakout)

Breakouts went on and were reported on in the wrap up during the Sunday Morning general session

Saturday Evening Session:

Approximately 70 people present

Saturday night we heard Marcy Winograd and Norman Solomon on the occupations

Rose Roach gave a very informative and compelling presentation on Single Payer Healthcare.

Sunday August 16, 2009

Wrap up Sunday Morning:

Approximately 40 people present

Susie on voting for a majority rule, instead of the 2/3 majority requirement –

Call it "Majority rule" per George Lakoff's suggestions

- Poll to test simple language
- Need to raise \$35,000 for a poll
- Budget and revenue or just go for the budget now?
- Union reps did poll, not for revenue
- Hoping to persuade them
- Speakers' bureau
- Statewide geographic representation
- Facebook Group "Stop the Insanity"
- Yahoo group camajorityrule@yahoogroups.com
- Website: www.camajorityrule.com

Marcy – War breakouts

- Brainstorming
- Looking at warfare state, how to frame it as an economic not just moral issue
- Progressives for a sustainable future

- Do we want to peacefully dismantle the Empire
- Dialogue with progressive Caucus in the House
- What are they doing? Can we engage with them, get a report back.
- Conf. Call monthly basis or so with them

Upcoming events, E-board, anti-war generals and soldiers to speak to Resolutions and at a dinner Chair, Burton, wrote letter opposing escalation, can he share with other party chairs?

Rahm Emmanuel browbeat freshman Congress people to vote for supplemental. Or no more support. We will ask Hillary and John to communicate message not to ever do that again.

Inside outside strategy. Demonstration at April convention. Against escalation in Afghanistan

Talking points.

Women's Caucus? Will they help? Show how women's rights have actually gone downhill after our escalations in these countries.

Motion - Pro Caucus request Karen to communicate directly with CA. Progressive Caucus members on conference call Motion/sec Julie Dad/Leah H

2404 Exit strategy. Jackie Speier sponsor. Resolution for the next E-board meeting.

Another white paper on Afghanistan. Set sights high.

Need committee to do it.

Support primary challengers opposing Dems supporting warfare state

Healthcare – Karen

Maybe move to kill state option in committee. George Miller is the key.

He's getting teabagged. We need to press on him.

Matsui and Cardoza on Rules where state option may get stripped out.

Coming down from White House. Why? Insanity

676 goes to floor for vote. Probably lose. Main thing is state option

SB810 – 2015 to actual enactment. If we win and it is signed, there is likely to be a backlash ballot to undo it.

Also funding is needed, need 2/3 for the funding mechanism to pass

Committee Exists in Progressive Caucus

Harlan – how to get 100% commitment from Dems on Kucinich amendment?.

If it doesn't pass, there will probably be a lawsuit. Mark Leno may bring one.

Marcy – Brought up the following resolution for passage in clubs, central committees to applaud Woolsey, express disappointment in Chiu, censuring Miller and Davis:

Resolution as Adapted for the Progressive Caucus:

Whereas the California Democratic Party voted to support single payer healthcare for all, joining a statewide effort to successfully pass a single payer bill in both houses of the state legislature

Whereas Congressman Dennis Kucinich introduced an amendment in committee to protect state's rights to enact single payer healthcare regardless of what federal health care reform bill is enacted

Whereas Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey voted for the Kucinich amendment, while Democratic Party Congress members Susan Davis and George Miller voted against the amendment and Congresswoman Judy Chu passed during the committee vote

Therefore be it resolved that the Progressive Caucus of the California Democratic Party censure Davis and Miller, express disappointment in Chu, and applaud Woolsey for courageously and loyally supporting the will of the people of California and for affirming the right for states to provide health care for all.

Therefore be it further resolved that the Progressive Caucus of the California Democratic Party call on all members of the California delegation to vote for the Kucinich states' rights single payer health care amendment when the amendment reaches the floor of Congress.

Adopted on _____, 2009

Motion/sec. Marcy/Harlan – passed

Maldonado – if we are successful, call and make sure our reps are supporting state option and 676,

- Get the Clubs to do so

- Publish their fax and email numbers to the listserv
- They are on the website

Water – Mayme

Water presenter assumed more knowledge than we had

Lobby project send email to those in Central Valley informing them of hearing on Tues. 18th Aug. Rush to jam down without input, stakeholders missing, delta farmers, fishery, rec.

Gov appoints 4 out of 7 in Delta Stewardship Council

Concern is over a Peripheral Canal.

Karen – subversion of Dem. Process. Water users in delta left out hearings.

Carle –(??) Santa Clarita is part of water wars, sprawling urban dev. Peripheral Canal brings water to LA developers. Opposed environmentally. And economically.

Adjourn 1 PM