

DNC Fall Meeting 2021 Re-Kapp

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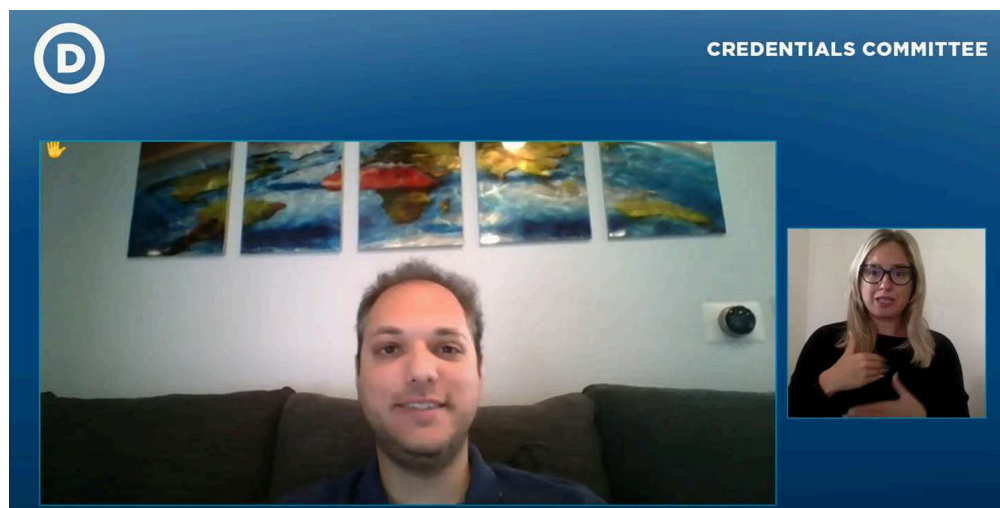
Michael --

The Democratic National Committee met virtually for its 2021 Fall Meeting on October 7-9, 2021.

While originally announced as an in-person meeting, Chair Jaime Harrison made the decision to meet virtually instead. Because of the move to a virtual environment, all the DNC Caucus and Council meetings, along with any briefings and trainings, were canceled. As Chair of the DNC Youth Council, I am working with staff to schedule the next meeting of the Youth Council.

At this virtual meeting, only the four Standing Committees and General Session met.

Thursday, October 7, 2021: DNC Credentials Committee meeting



I attended this meeting as the only Californian member of the DNC's Credentials Committee. [The full meeting may be viewed here.](#)

The only item of business was the consideration of a credentials challenge against a DNC Member from Puerto Rico. The central question of this challenge was whether the DNC Member was properly domiciled in Puerto Rico at the time of their election.

The committee voted to dismiss this challenge 14 to 1. Believing that the domicile requirement hadn't been met by the challenged party, I was that "nay" vote.

For transparency, my comments during this committee meeting [may be found here](#). If you have questions or would like further context about this case, please email me and we can talk!

This was the final meeting of the 2017-2021 term. I was reappointed to the Credentials Committee by Chairman Harrison, so I will continue to provide updates on my actions taken at this committee through at least 2023. I'm further grateful that Melahat Rafiei and Christine Pelosi, also elected California DNC Members, were also appointed to this committee in the new term.

Important Context for General Session

Before I report on what happened today in General Session, I want to make sure that I provide context on the process and actions taken at this meeting.

Every four years, at the DNC meeting after the meeting in which the new DNC Officers are elected, the DNC considers the addition of 75 at-large DNC Members to its ranks, as well as the Chair's appointments to the DNC's Executive Committee and the four DNC Standing Committees. The stated rationale of having these 75 at-large members is to ensure that the DNC meets or surpasses unspecified diversity and demographic goals.

Per the DNC's Bylaws, the at-large DNC Members are required to be elected by the full DNC Membership. However, the DNC has never actually held an open election for these positions. Instead, seven days before the DNC meeting (the minimum allowable under the Bylaws), the Chair recommends a slate of individuals for the DNC to ratify. (In years in which Democrats hold the White House, the Democratic President has a lot of influence on who gets chosen for these positions.)

Going back decades, in every cycle, there has never been any opportunity for rank-and-file DNC Members to pull names from the Chair's slate or nominate different alternatives.

When Tom Perez was DNC Chair, he created a form for DNC Members to submit names for consideration to his slate of nominees -- to my knowledge, this was the first time that the input of DNC Members was formally solicited. Chairman Harrison continued this tradition set by Chairman Perez. However, "consideration for the Chair's slate" is not the same as being able to nominate people for election.

Last Saturday, October 2, just before the 7 day deadline for notice had passed, Chairman Harrison announced his [slate of 75 nominees as at-large DNC Members](#), his [slate of 11 nominees to the DNC's Executive Committee](#), and asked for [ratification of his appointments to the four DNC Standing Committees](#). (Click those links to see the names.) Approximately 30 minutes later, after the deadline for notice had presumably passed, the [Rules of Procedure for this process](#) -- which did not explain how to nominate individuals for these positions -- was sent to DNC Members.

This past Thursday, October 7, I emailed the DNC Western States Caucus on a private listserv to share my thoughts on this flawed process and explained why I was planning to vote against these appointments. (I fully stand by my email. Yesterday, portions of my email [were published by an online news outlet](#).) For transparency, I am sharing my full email below:

In addition to all the excellent points being made above, I further believe that this process isn't following our own rules. Article 2, Section 8(d)(i) of the Bylaws clearly state that the 75 at-large DNC Members must be elected. Therefore, I don't believe it's appropriate for the DNC to simply rubberstamp a slate where there is no opportunity to nominate other slates or individuals for consideration. That's not an "election" by any real definition.

Additionally, Article 2, Section 10(g) gives the Chair the authority to appoint Standing Committee members, but that subsection also requires that the Chair must make these appointments "in consultation with the Executive Committee" -- that hasn't happened here. I can't remember the last time the Executive Committee met, and they aren't meeting today or tomorrow either.

I also have a problem with the process -- the rules around this election, as passed by the [DNC Rules and Bylaws Committee], was only released to DNC Members 30 minutes after the Chair announced his appointments, at almost 10:30pm ET last Saturday. Even if there was a procedure for rank-and-file DNC Members to nominate slates or individuals for election (as opposed to providing suggestions to be considered for the Chair's appointments), I don't believe 90 minutes offered in the middle of the night of a weekend is sufficient time for non-Chair nominations to be made.

Finally, after reviewing the bios for Chair's proposed at-large slate, it looks to me that the DNC's ranks of young Democrats is about to be diminished. As Chair of the DNC Youth Council, this is especially disheartening. I am particularly saddened that the Youth Council's Secretary -- the first DREAMer on the DNC, and a member of our Western States Caucus -- was not included on this proposed slate. Her voice was an important one, and this organization is worse off for her exclusion.

As I did four years ago, I plan on voting no on the Chair's appointments for the 75 at-large DNC Members and the Standing Committee members.

Thank you,

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Michael Kapp

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Okay, moving on to today.

Sunday, October 9, 2021: General Session

[A replay of General Session may be viewed here.](#)

[Here is the agenda for General Session.](#)

[Here are the Rules of Procedure for today's General Session, as drafted and approved by the DNC Rules and Bylaws Committee, as approved by the DNC.](#)

[Here is the final report from the DNC Rules and Bylaws Committee, as approved by the DNC.](#)

[Here is the final report from the DNC Credentials Committee, as approved by the DNC.](#)

[Here is the final report from the DNC Resolutions Committee, as approved by the DNC.](#)

For transparency, I co-sponsored the following resolutions prior to consideration by the Resolutions Committee:

- Resolution Urging Democrats in Congress to Act on Legislation to Protect and Expand the Right to Vote
- Resolution Expressing Support for President Biden's Build Back Better Agenda
- Resolution Affirming the Democratic Party's Commitment to Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and Moving the Country Towards Net-Zero Emissions by No Later Than 2050
- Resolution in Support of Ending Our 20-Year Military Presence in Afghanistan
- Resolution Supporting President Biden's COVID-19 Response to Lead Us Out of the Pandemic
- Resolution Condemning the Texas Abortion Law and Reaffirming the Party's Steadfast Commitment to Reproductive Freedom
- Resolution Reaffirming the Democratic Party's Commitment To Equality For Citizens of US Territories
- Resolution Regarding The Authorized Use of Military Force (AUMF)
- Resolution to Renounce Campaign Contributions from Police Organizations
- Resolution Honoring the Life and Career of Hank Aaron
- Resolution Honoring the Life and Career of Senator Mike Gravel
- Resolution Honoring the Life and Career of Colleen O. Kelly
- Resolution Honoring the Life and Career of Richard Trumka
- Resolution Honoring the Life and Career of Martha White

(I was a co-author of the "Resolution to Renounce Campaign Contributions from Police Organizations," which was later amended and passed as "Resolution Calling on Congress to Act Now on the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act.")

The major items of business at today's General Session were consideration of [the Chair's slate of 75 nominees as at-large DNC Members](#), [his slate of 11 nominees to the DNC's Executive Committee](#), and [ratification of his appointments to the four DNC Standing Committees](#).

There were several votes that were taken at today's General Session, and at the time of this writing only the topline numbers are known -- these are shared below. I will share the voter-by-voter tabulations as soon as I receive them.

[The Rules of Procedure for this ratification of appointments](#) were approved with 319 voting in favor, 4 against. I voted against, for the reasons stated above.

A motion was made that both suspended the rules and called for a "vote of acclamation" for the Chair's slate of at-large DNC Members. I believed that this motion was improper for a few reasons. First, the motion should have been divided into two. Second, the motion was unclear as to what rules were being suspended. Third, it's my belief that there can be no acclamation if there is dissension -- claiming acclamation when dissension exists only silences those dissenting voters. Fourth and finally, requests to discuss this motion before the vote were denied.

Shortly thereafter, the motion was approved by the DNC Membership 304 in favor, 59 against. I voted against, for the reasons stated above.

Next, there was a similar motion to suspend the rules and approve the Chair's slate of 11 appointments to the DNC's Executive Committee by acclamation. No discussion was afforded. This motion also passed, 323 in favor to 36 against. I voted against.

Finally, there was another motion to suspend the rules and ratify the Chair's appointments to the DNC's Standing Committees by acclamation. No discussion was afforded. This motion also passed, 293 in favor, 27 against. I voted against this motion too -- even though this motion also included my own reappointment to the Credentials Committee, as well as appointments of others from California and elsewhere whom I deeply respect.

While the final result was disappointing, it was not unexpected. I take heart that the "no" votes on the at-large motion were about ten times as many as the "no" vote on this identical question four years ago when Tom Perez received ratification of his slate.

The fact that there were so many "no" votes today is a testament to the growth in numbers of pro-reform DNC Members, as well as our stronger organization and collaboration, since 2016-17.

The hard work of organizing around reforming our National Party, supporting and strengthening our State Parties, and focusing on all races up and down the ballot, continues.

If you have any questions or just want to talk about the DNC, you can always reach me by [email](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or text/call me at (510) 717-8260.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you and the California Democratic Party.

Your ally in activism,



Michael Kapp
Member, Democratic National Committee
Chair, DNC Youth Council

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