
DNC Winter Meeting 2018 Re-Kapp

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Michael Kapp

Member, Democratic National Committee

Michael --

The Democratic National Committee met for its 2018 Winter Meeting in Washington DC from March 8 to 10. [Here is the main agenda](#) and [caucus/council agendas](#).



With fellow CA DNC Members Sandra Lowe and Melahat Rafiei

As always, if you have any questions about this meeting or anything else related to the DNC, please feel free to shoot me an [email](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or text/call me at (510) 717-8260.

Thursday, March 8: DNC Executive Committee, DNC Youth Council, DNC Western States Caucus, DNC Rules and Bylaws Committee

Thursday morning began with a meeting of the DNC Executive Committee. Several California DNC Members (not including me) sit on this committee.

DNC Chair Tom Perez and Deputy Chair Keith Ellison opened up the meeting. Tom spoke about the Texas primary, increased Democratic turnout, our wealth of strong female candidates, and that Democrats are focusing on the issues while Ted Cruz is focusing on nicknames. He received the most applause when he mentioned flipping 39 state legislative seats from red to blue and reported on improved fundraising. (The average online donation to the DNC last year was \$21.)

The keynote speaker was California's own Michael Tubbs, Mayor of Stockton. Tubbs mentioned that it's great that the California Democratic Party has added UBI to its Party Platform.



Afterwards, I attended the DNC Youth Council meeting, where I am proud to represent California and young people as Vice Chair.

We reported on our efforts to work on changes to increase the size of our board to allow for more Young Democrats to take leadership positions and help us engage new voters throughout the country.

We are also committed to working with our allies and partners at Young Democrats of America, College Democrats of America, High School Democrats of America, and Law School Democrats of America to build the much-needed pipeline for new activists to join our Party and create transformative change.

The Youth Council was pleased to welcome Congressman and Deputy Chair Keith Ellison, Assemblymember and DNC Vice Chair Michael Blake, former Youth Council Chair and DNC Secretary Jason Rae, and Senator Jeff Merkley.



Immediately following was the first full meeting for new DNC Western Region Caucus Chair -- and favorite son of California -- Jess Durfee.

In our official business, we rectified a flaw in the bylaws to allow for additional leadership positions for states that don't already have representation on the Caucus executive board.

Going into this meeting, the board included:

Chair: Jess Durfee (California)
Female Vice Chair: Tina Podlowski (Washington)
Male Vice Chair: Keith Umemoto (California)
Treasurer: Susan Eastlake (Idaho)
Secretary: Sharon Mast (Washington)

Thank you to Jess for recognizing the need for geographic diversity and leading the effort on this important bylaws change.

Newly elected at-large Caucus board members include Ellie Perez (Arizona) -- the first DREAMer on the DNC and a Young Democrat -- Ed Wesley (Alaska), and Marcus Stevenson (Utah).



Washington State Chair Tina Podlodowski reported that the Washington State Democratic Party is using the DNC grants they earned to pay for several organizers in red to blue seats. Arizona DNC Member Luis Heredia said his state was using their grants to invest in digital, mail, and phonebanking.

My favorite part of the meeting was hearing updates from State Party Chairs and representatives about all the goings-on in their state/territory.

[We also heard from Deputy Chair Ellison, whose speech I livestreamed.](#) We also received introductions to DNC staff that are dedicated to the Western States; you can see their picture below.



In the evening, I attended the DNC Rules and Bylaws Committee which is charged with bringing the Unity Reform Commission recommendations to the full DNC Membership. At this meeting, the Committee confirmed that the DNC would not be considering any votes on charter amendments or Convention rules changes at General Session -- this included no vote on superdelegate reform or other Unity Commission recommendations. (These votes will be taken at the August 2018 DNC meeting.)

Instead, the Rules and Bylaws Committee began discussion and debate on the exact language to use in a report updating the DNC on the Unity Reform Commission recommendations.



Friday, March 9: Members-only Session, DNC Credentials Committee

The morning began with a less formal meeting of the DNC Membership. This is a recent tradition that was started by Chair Tom Perez and our DNC officers to provide DNC Members with a more intimate back-and-forth discussion with our leadership.

Most of the meeting included discussion and Q&A on the Unity Reform Commission. On superdelegates, Chair Tom Perez said "whether it is about real influence or perceived influence, it doesn't matter: we must confront this crisis of confidence."

We also received a fascinating political update, which one DNC Member remarked was the most comprehensive update ever given by DNC leadership. [I took pictures of every slide and posted them on Facebook; they can be viewed by clicking here.](#)



Later that day, I attended my first DNC Credentials Committee meeting. I am the only Californian on this committee, but I am joined by many great people -- and a few fantastic Young Democrats from other states!

We discussed two complaints involving the Democratic Parties of Florida and Puerto Rico. Full debate and consideration on these complaints will occur at a later date.



Saturday, March 10: DNC General Session, API Reception

On Saturday morning we began General Session. [You can watch Tom Perez' speech here.](#) A major business item before us was the approval of the DNC's Rules and Bylaws Committee report on the Unity Reform Commission's recommendations. [You can find the full report here](#) and [an executive summary here](#). After some discussion by DNC Members both in favor and against the recommendations, the report passed the full DNC Membership. [My livestream of this discussion can be found here.](#) (Full disclosure: I voted in favor.)



I highly recommend you watch these two excellent videos that were shown to DNC Members at General Session. [This first video spotlights recent Democratic victories in Oklahoma and our candidates who won.](#) [This second video clearly demonstrates why Democrats are the Party of the people.](#)

[The DNC also passed 30 resolutions](#). I am pleased that all of the resolutions I co-sponsored passed! Thank you to the original authors and my fellow co-sponsors! These resolutions covered the following issues:

- unionizing Democratic Party employees,
- expanding Head Start,
- protecting Social Security,
- encouraging small businesses to partner with local unions,
- reforming our bail system,
- opposing the militarization of law enforcement,
- thanking the DNC for instituting a paid internship program, and
- demanding that Members of Congress repeal the 2001 AUMF and force another debate and vote.

[You can read the text of these resolutions here.](#)

Immediately following the close of General Session, I attended an API reception hosted by Congresswoman and DNC Vice Chair Grace Meng, DNC AAPI Caucus Chair Bel Leong-Hong, and many other national API leaders and organizations.



At this meeting, as always, I spent a lot of time getting to know other DNC Members from around the country. With only two DNC meetings a year, most of our collaboration is outside the actual meetings. However, it's great to actually sit down and talk in person with these incredible activists about the best strategies to move our Party forward in a more progressive, responsive, and transparent direction.



Oregon's Matt Keating, Texas' Kat Hoang, Virginia's Atima Omara, Wisconsin's David Bowen, and California's Michael Kapp

Thank you for the incredible opportunity to serve you and our National Party.

Your ally in activism,



Michael Kapp
Member, Democratic National Committee

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