
DNC Winter Meeting 2019 Re-Kapp

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Michael Kapp

Member, Democratic National Committee

Michael --

The Democratic National Committee met for its 2019 Winter Meeting in Washington, D.C. from February 14 to 16. [Here was the schedule](#) and [caucus/council agendas](#).

Wednesday, February 13: I Will Vote Gala



I flew into Washington D.C. a day early so I could attend the "I Will Vote" Gala to support our voter registration and turnout operation in all 50 states. It was great to reconnect in person with DNC staff, DNC Members, and other activists and friends on how we can best work together to move our Party and advance our issues forward.

Speakers included DNC Chair Tom Perez, DNC CEO Seema Nanda, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senator Chris Van Hollen, and Congresswoman Deb Haaland. [You can watch Speaker Pelosi's excellent introduction video by clicking here.](#)



Thursday, August 23: DNC Youth Council, DNC Credentials Committee



DNC Youth Council with the Chair and Co-Chair of the High School Democrats of America and the leadership of the Young Democrats of America

On Thursday, the DNC's 2019 Winter Meeting began with Council meetings. [I led my first full meeting as Chair of the DNC Youth Council](#); my Chair's Report centered around a plea to support and defend sexual assault and harassment survivors, as well as whistleblowers. Our Vice Chair Kat Hoang (Texas), DNC officers (including Tom Perez, Jason Rae, and Jaime Harrison), DNC staff, High School Democrats of America, College Democrats of America, and the Young Democrats of America all shared important updates and items for discussion. We also held an engaging Q&A segment and shared best practices.

In closing the meeting, I recognized outgoing YDA President Louis Elrod for his service to our Democratic Party, our values, and all young people in this country. We adjourned the meeting in memory of Congressman John Dingell, Jr. and those who lost their lives in Parkland (which had occurred exactly one year ago).



with DNC Treasurer Bill Derrough and the leadership of College Democrats of America

Immediately after the Youth Council, I attended the meeting of the DNC Credentials Committee. I am the only Californian on the committee, which began at 10:30am and didn't conclude until after 3pm.

We heard two combined challenges against the DNC credentials of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Alabama Democratic Party, alleging that the meeting that resulted in their election was improper. After discussion, I believed that (1) the Alabama Democratic Party structure essentially barred any minority groups (other than African-Americans) from participating; (2) there was no effective notice; and (3) that proper election procedures were not followed. Therefore, I argued that the election results should be thrown out and the credentials for the Alabama Chair and Vice Chair should be revoked, and a new election called.



Senator Doug Jones speaks before the DNC Credentials Committee

The committee voted unanimously to call for a rewrite of the Alabama Democratic Party's bylaws (which must be approved by the DNC Rules and Bylaws Committee), followed by new elections supervised by the DNC. However, I was disappointed that the committee voted 12-11 to allow the Alabama Chair and Vice Chair to keep their DNC credentials; as I stated during the committee meeting, I felt that allowing them to keep their DNC credentials would not disenfranchise Alabama Democrats (since Alabama has other DNC Members), but rather it would further compound the problem created by the improper election.

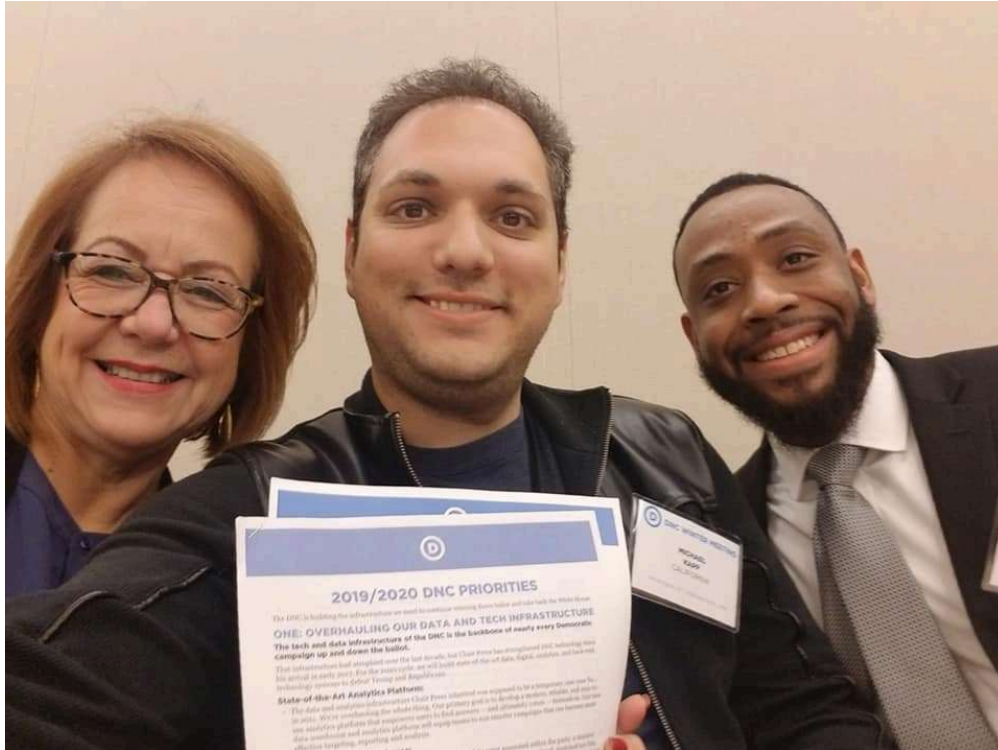
You can watch the Alabama Chair defending herself, and U.S. Senator Doug Jones (D-AL) speaking in favor of the challenging parties, followed by Q&A and discussion by the committee members [by clicking on this link](#). Senator Jones begins his testimony at 5:52 in the video; I ask questions and speak from 20:00-30:40, 1:02:25-1:04:40, and 1:22:30-1:23:33.

[You can read the final report of the Credentials Committee by clicking here.](#)

Friday, February 15: Council and Caucus Chair Breakfast, Inclusion Training, Stacey Abrams Speech

The day began with an early 7am breakfast for Caucus and Council Chairs. We discussed past successes and challenges, especially as they relate to our Caucuses and Councils, and we planned for the future and organizing around races in 2019 and 2020.

Discussion on goals, engagement, support, and training was led by DNC staff. [For pictures of the provided handouts, please click here.](#) Chairman Tom Perez was in attendance and provided some brief closing remarks, and he mentioned the success we had in the midterms in California and Orange County.

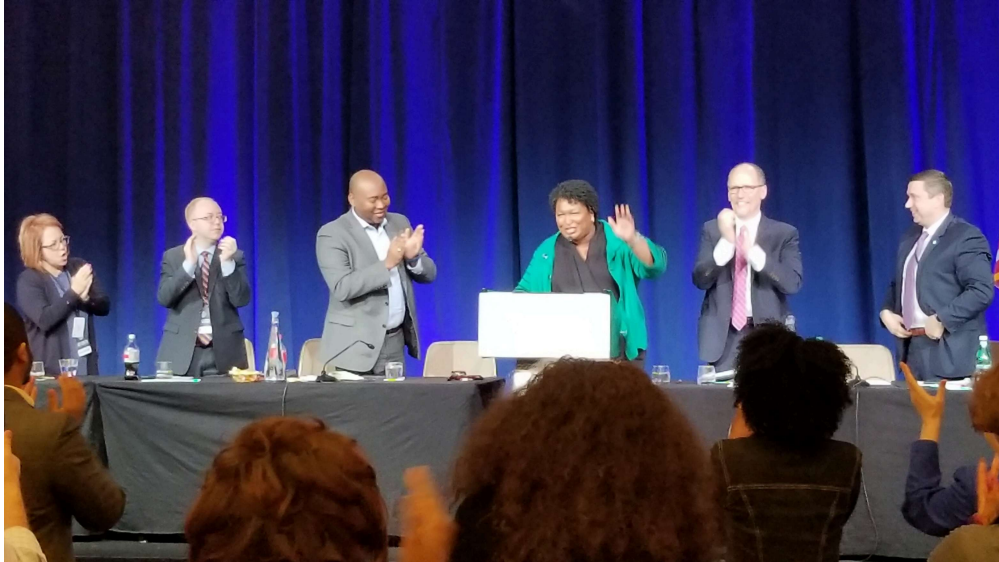


with DNC Vice Chair and California State Senator Maria Elena Durazo and DNC Midwest Caucus Chair Ron Harris (Minnesota)

I then attended an extensive anti-sexual harassment training with other DNC Members and campaign staff. [For photos of the slideshow, please click here.](#)



After a brief DNC Members-only session, we heard from former Georgia gubernatorial candidate Stacey Abrams. [To watch some of her speech, please click here.](#)



We also saw this short but impactful video entitled "Our Power in Time." It's definitely worth a watch -- no pun intended!

Saturday, February 16: Black History Month Breakfast, General Session

Saturday began with an energizing Black History Month Breakfast hosted by the DNC Black Caucus. I livestreamed one of the keynote speakers, Wisconsin's Khary Penabaker, who also serves as the Treasurer of the DNC Black Caucus; [you can watch his speech by clicking here](#).



with DNC Member Khary Penebaker

Following the breakfast, I attended the Western Regional Caucus. The meeting was led by Washington State Chair Tina Podlodowski. Laurence Zakson reminisced about one of our own, Greg Pettis, and Luis Heredia (Arizona) spoke about Carolyn Warner, both of whom recently passed away.

We received updates from DNC staff (on our electoral successes in 2018, infrastructure investments, and tech updates) and from our Caucus Officers and Executive Committee representatives.

We also heard reports from the states. Sandra Lowe provided the California Democratic Party report, focusing on our successful campaign to elect Tony Thurmond for State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Highlights from other states include a \$17 minimum wage bill in Hawaii, killing a Republican-led gerrymandering effort in Idaho, John Tester's win in Montana and Jacky Rosen's win in Nevada, a tripling of the size of the Washington State African-American Legislative Caucus, and celebrating that votes from Democrats Abroad provided the margin of victory that flipped two Western Region congressional seats: CA-21 and UT-04.



California DNC Member Sandra Lowe gives the California Democratic Party report

The final meeting was General Session. DNC Officers and staff provided reports. In 2018, the DNC raised \$60.6 million through online and direct marketing -- this was \$8.6 million more than the DNC had budgeted. This was the best year for net grassroots funding since 2010 (when we held the White House). The DNC online store was three times as profitable than 2016, and the online number for December 2018 was 94% higher than December 2017. The DNC stated that they were committed to continuing monthly funding for all state parties at \$10,000/month in 2019, and promised a new series of targeted grants to the state parties. The DNC will continue to mobilize and build organizing and fundraising lists. Investing in technology, including a data warehouse/analytics, cybersecurity, and technology and data support to candidates and state parties continues to be a priority. Demographic data on the diversity of senior staff was provided:

	People of Color	Self-identified as Female
All Staff	43%	57%
Senior Staff	50%	43%
Paid Interns	48%	52%

In particular, the diversity of DNC interns was highlighted; DNC CEO Seema Nanda reported that the DNC has had an "exponential" improvement in the diversity of DNC interns since the implementation of paid internships. (Paid internships at the DNC were a priority for me, and was something that I raised to all DNC Chair candidates two years ago.)

During General Session, we approved the Credentials Committee and Resolutions Committee reports. The final Resolutions Committee report, [which amended this document here](#), removed Resolution #21 (Creating a DNC Task Force to study the role of corporate money in fundraising) and replaced it with a vote by the 2020 Democratic National Convention Platform Committee on whether these corporate contributions to the DNC would be allowed in 2020. While we didn't get everything we wanted, I do want to thank California DNC Member Christine Pelosi for her leadership on both her original resolution (which I co-sponsored, but did not pass out of committee) and this compromise referral to the 2020 Platform Committee.

The primary guest speaker at the General Session was the Rev. Al Sharpton; [you can watch some of his speech here](#).



the California delegation to the DNC (photo taken after the Western Regional Caucus meeting)

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

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

Your ally in activism,

Michael Kapp
Member, Democratic National Committee

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