

Report to 46th District Democrats

From Sarajane Siegfriedt, LARC Co-Chair

Re: **Legislative Action and Research Committee** meeting

September 22, 2005

Also present: Chad Lupkes (Co-Chair), Betty Means

Our bylaws task us with a) developing a political profile of the 46th District, for the purpose of targeting political campaigns; b) facilitating 46th LD member's access to relevant aspects of the voting records, qualifications and performance of persons likely to be seeking electoral support in the District; and c) assisting the organization with action plans to advance key issues consistent with its platform, in coordination with the KCDCC and WSDCC and other interested organizations.

A) Developing a political profile

We believe PCOs should have access to the voting records of their precincts. Janet Miller and Betty Means have requested this data from a well-known political consultant. If we have it, we can disseminate it to PCOs, encourage them to set goals for turnout and Democrat votes in top races. We could recognize best and most improved in each of these categories. Given the low participation of PCOs walking their precincts prior to the primary, it is important to motivate PCOs to participate in distributing literature.

Action: Betty will check with Janet and the consultant.

B) Facilitating access to relevant aspects of the voting records and performance

This will be a short session in Olympia, 60 days, January to mid-March. They will be looking at a supplemental biennial budget, so fewer big issues. Last session, the P-I published votes on key pieces of legislation, but omitted the 46th.

Action: Sarajane will contact the P-I and "clarify" this omission, which inhibits tracking.

Clearly we cannot track all issues, so we will facilitate member's getting on the action lists of their chosen advocacy groups.

Action: Sarajane will provide Nancy Amedei's 2005 list, from Policy Watch. (List attached, for website, Demogram if space available.)

We will forward KCDCC's requests for action. We will concentrate our efforts on those committees our legislators chair or sit on, since this is where we and they can be more influential.

Action: Betty will research our legislators and the committees they sit on.

We will also look to the Washington Association of Churches (Alice Woldt) for human services and justice issues and to WashPIRG or Washington Conservation Voters for environmental issues.

Action: Sarajane and others will contact them and get on their lists.

Action: Sarajane will send info to Betty for Seth Dawson's excellent action alerts on Homelessness—Wash. State Low Income Housing Alliance.

In addition to the State Legislature, we are interested in the voting records and committees of Senators Murray and Cantwell, Congressman McDermott, King County Councilmembers Gosset, Phillips and Ferguson, City Councilmember Steinbrueck (esp.). We are interested in Seattle School Board issues, but need input from someone who follows them, as well as for the Monorail and Port of Seattle.

We note that the Americans for Democratic Action is a source for ratings and key votes in Congress, and the Progressive Caucus has been tracking Cantwell's votes. WashPIRG, NARAL and the Washington Assn. of Church are other sources of ratings and key vote histories.

We will provide links to these, and will undertake specific research on specific issues as asked, in order to give our members the data to hold our candidates and representatives accountable to our platform.

C) Assisting the organization with action plans to advance key issues consistent with it platform

Our goal is to engage, educate and empower our grassroots, including inspiring and facilitating other legislative districts and progressive groups to do the same.

Action: Sarajane and Chad: will post the 2006 state legislative calendar when it becomes available. (Sarajane emailed the Legislature's webmaster to request that the 2005 calendar at www.leg.wa.gov be updated with the 2006 one.)

Action: Gerry and Scott, we request that the November meeting of the 46th include a legislative preview by our state legislators, highlighting any of their initiatives that we can get behind.

Action: Sarajane will research Seattle and County Council budget cycles—when are hearings held? (Scott?) [Mayor's Seattle budget was released this week.]

Action: Sarajane will write for the website an overview of the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness, including its origin, legislative progress, who supports it, and the State Housing Trust Fund and Fund for Families progress.

Action: Betty will write an article for the website on resources for activists. Sarajane will send Policy Watch to Betty. [Note: although Nancy Amedei announced she has retired from Policy Watch after 10 years, she has since said she may public "PW Lite." For the past decade, Policy Watch has been the best source of tracking human service legislation and introducing activists to the legislative process.]

We did not set another meeting. We invite more interested members of the 46th to join us.