

46th Dems Legislative District Caucus
Eckstein Middle School
April 22, 2006

Scott White called the meeting to order at 9:20 AM.

Mark Saporito led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Scott appointed Mark Saporito as temporary Sergeant-at-Arms, Larry Smith as temporary Parliamentarian, and Stan Sorscher temporary Secretary.

Scott made announcements about the agenda, and events scheduled in the next few weeks.

Credentials Report. Janet Miller reported on who had signed in, to that point. We have 98 delegates and PCO's signed in and 102 present altogether. **Motion** to accept the credentials report - **approved** by voice vote.

Rules and Agenda. **Motion** to adopt the rules and agenda as proposed in the handout - approved by voice vote.

Election of Permanent chair.

Scott White was nominated and seconded. No other nominations were submitted. **Motion approved** by voice vote.

No alternate delegates are present to be seated.

Appointments. Scott appointed Stan Sorscher as Secretary, Mark Saporito as Sergeant at Arms, and Larry Smith as Parliamentarian.

State Convention Delegates. Scott read through the rules for electing delegates and alternates to the state convention in Yakima. We have 43 delegates and alternates. We divide that into 22 female and 21 male delegates, with 11 female alternates and 11 male alternates.

Candidates for elected office.

Ken Jacobsen. Ken talked about the Federal elections in November. He encouraged strong support for Darcy Burner in the 8th Congressional District. Controlling the House or Senate would give Democrats a big political advantage. Maria Cantwell won by thin margins and needs a strong effort to continue in office.

When Ken doorbells in his district, he hears a lot about school closures.

Phyllis Kenney. Phyllis thanked everyone for coming to the LD caucus. She spoke about supporting middle class values, instead of getting more tax breaks for high-income earners. She also emphasized the importance of getting control of the House or Senate. She reminded us that large swings sometimes occur at the State and Federal level. Phyllis said Cantwell needs support to win in November, and thanked everyone for all the hard work we do.

Hong Tran, Hong is running for US Senate. She came to the US in 1975, and works as a legal service lawyer for low-income residents. She supports the platform of the 46th District. Hong differs from Cantwell on the war in Iraq, CAFTA, and other significant issues. Hong has been a lifelong Democrat, and went to Florida to register voters in the last election. She will announce her candidacy in the near future.

Mark Wilson. Mark is also running for the Senate. He comes from a military family, but he opposes the war in Iraq, and is concerned about a future attack on Iran. He is a founding member of a Veterans for Peace chapter. He is a former Teamsters member. He differs from Cantwell on Iraq, CAFTA, class action suits, oil policy and other issues. Mark has campaigned in 80 different districts and venues throughout the state.

Final Credentials Report. Janet Miller reported 268 eligible delegates - 106 are present, plus 4 non-delegate members.

Scott thanked members of the Credentials Committee, Rules Committee, Platform Committee, and Planning Committee, as well as the school custodian who opened the building for us.

Phyllis Kenney donated two Mariners tickets for tomorrow's game.

Election of State Delegates and Alternates. Scott reported that we did not fill all the candidate positions. Javier Valdez chairs the State Credentials Committee. He advised Scott that we can vote by acclamation, since positions are open. Scott read the names of the female candidates, who assembled at the front. Eighteen female delegates were introduced. **Motion** to accept these delegates **passed** by acclamation.

Scott introduced 23 male delegates, who assembled at the front of the auditorium. Overall, we are still two delegates short of the 43 total. Three delegates present expressed an interest in serving, even though they had not signed up before the nominations closed. Javier advised that we can suspend the rules to accept additional delegates. Jeff Carnegie removed his name from consideration as a State Delegate.

Motion to approve the 22 remaining male delegates **passed** by voice vote. **Motion** to suspend rules regarding sign-in to be a delegate to the State Convention. **Motion passed** by voice vote.

David C. Garcia, Keela Williams, and Sal Gordon declared their candidacies for State Delegates. **Motion** to accept them as delegates **passed** by show of credentials.

Alternates. Scott asked to suspend rules to seek alternates who did not sign in. **Motion passed** by acclamation. Jeff Carnegie, Jeanine Ferguson, and Gad Ledy declared their candidacies as alternate delegates to the State Convention. **Motion** to accept these alternates **passed** by show of cards.

Special recognition. Scott White announced that Mark Saporito was retiring as Sergeant-At-Arms. He and Jan Ames read a special resolution of thanks and appreciation for Mark's important contributions to the group.

Guest: Scott introduced Jean Godden to the group. Jean is PCO in the District.

Platform and Resolutions.

Sarajane Siegfriedt referred to the handouts, and reviewed the process the Platform Committee used to create the platform and resolutions.

Resolutions are items of immediate concern. Longer-term items went into the platform. Within the platform, each section starts with a statement of values. Specific items are mostly grouped into elements "we support" with a few things "we oppose." Overall, the platform should highlight what we stand for as a party.

One handout lists 14 editorial changes.

In addition to the prepared resolutions, Bev Marcus brought a resolution with sufficient signatures resolving

"that the 46th District direct their elected US Representatives and Senators to exercise their Congressional oversight responsibilities by (1) opposing any and all actions leading to pre-emptive military strikes against Iran, (2) demanding the truth from the Bush administration about its goals and plans for a possible attack on Iran, and (3) demanding that the Bush administration exhaust every diplomatic means to sanely resolve any issues with Iran."

Scott explained that amendments to the prepared platform are out of order. However, as we go through the platform, sections can be flagged, and voted separately. Flagging an item would result in the point being included or removed, but not changed. This process will apply to resolutions, as well. The language was available 10 days before the meeting, and a process described in rule #19 permitted amendments. For flagged items, we can have 3 speakers for and 3 against, each limited to 1 minute.

Grammatical errors or typos can be directed to Dean who will update the official copy of the platform.

Our Values

Flagged: Good leaders

Guest: Maria Cantwell spoke about challenges we face in 2006. Maria was the 50th Democratic Senator in 2000. She has a 100% voting record with NARAL. She voted against Judge Roberts and Judge Alito. She worries about privacy rights with the current court composition. Policy decisions about endangered species, Hanford clean-up, forest protection, border security and port security are also big issues. Maria wants the Iraqi government to take control, so we can bring our troops home.

When Congress reconvenes, Maria sees a big fight over "energy independence." She wants alternative fuels and alternative energy sources to be the basis of our energy independence. We should invest in our future through education, but not by cutting taxes for the rich.

Motion to accept this section less the flagged part. Motion **passed** by show of credentials.

Discussion of flagged item:

Against - this language is not a value, but more of a practice.

For - platform is a living document, with imperfections. While it may not be technically a value, it is well said.

Against - avoid redundancy, and keep the platform succinct. This is covered under integrity, openness and accountability.

For - Nevertheless, saying it specifically reinforces this important point.

Against - Values should reflect into other parts of the platform. We should replace "leaders" with "representatives"

For - This is in the spirit of a democratic value.

Motion to keep the "good leaders" language: 44 in favor of keeping, 37 to remove, so the **Motion passed** and the language is retained.

Economic Justice and Taxes

Flagged; #3 estate taxes

Flagged #10 property tax

Motion to accept this section, less the flagged items. **Motion passed** by show of credentials.

Discussion of flagged item #3:

Against - Estate planning looks at Federal and State taxes, and they should match.

For - The Federal Estate tax is changing, and may disappear altogether. The State estate tax serves a different function, and we may need ours to be different from the Federal version.

Motion to keep the language in item #3 as presented. **Motion passed** by show of credentials, so the language remains unchanged.

Discussion of flagged item #10:

Against - ill advised because it would make it harder to establish income tax. This would make property taxes more acceptable. It also divides urban and rural home-owners.

For - Other planks refer to income tax and more progressive taxes overall.

Against - This favors home-owners over renters

For - A flat exemption is progressive and favors smaller home-owners.

Motion to keep item #10 in as presented. **Motion passed** 45 in favor, 29 against.

Energy and The Environment

Flagged item: #6 regarding privatizing national parks under "we oppose."

Motion to accept this section less item #6 in the "we oppose" portion - **passed** by show of credentials

Discussion of flagged item #6:

Against: Privatizing parks requires a special corporation

Motion to retain the language - **passed** by show of credentials.

Civil and Human Rights.

Flagged item: None flagged

Motion to accept section as presented: **passed** by show of credentials.

Media and Culture

Flagged item: #7 on art programs.

Motion to accept this section, less item #7 - **passed** by show of credentials.

Discussion of flagged item #7:

Against - Language is not clear what this applies to. We can clarify this by putting "one percent for arts" in quotes, with capital letters, signifying that is the name of the program at the state level.

For - Strong support for the arts, knowing what the one percent refers to.

Motion to retain this, with punctuation changed - **passed** by show of credentials.

Education

Flagged items: None flagged.

Motion to accept this section as presented - **passed** by show of credentials.

Foreign Policy

Flagged items: item #1, in the we oppose section

Flagged items: #10b, and 10d, support

Flagged items: #2, #3, oppose

Flagged items: #4, support

Flagged items: #9a, support

Motion to accept as presented less the flagged items - **passed** by show of credentials

Discussion of item # 4 in we support, regarding withdrawal of troops in Iraq.

Against - Withdrawing forces would be bad for Iraq. Iraq is in bad shape, and we need to be there.

For - Jim McDermott pointed out that the Iraqis would be more likely to work out their own problems if we were not there to impose our own order.

Against - Withdrawal will make it impossible to rebuilt the infrastructure of Iraq

For - We can send non-military resources, and rebuild Iraq

Motion to retain language about withdrawing troops - **passed** by show of credentials.

Discussion of item #9a, regarding the Kyoto protocols.

Against - this seems to belong in the energy section

For - The Kyoto protocols fit into the larger foreign policy picture.

Motion to retain this - **passed** by show of credentials.

Discussion of item #10b, regarding the Israeli security wall, and returning lands used in its construction.

Against - Israel needs to protect itself, and Hamas is hostile to Israel. At least the wall doesn't kill people.

For - The wall is meant to seal the territory, not for self defense, and killing feeds a cycle of violence.

Motion to retain the language on the Israeli wall - **passed** by show of cards, with 3 abstentions.

Discussion of item #10d, regarding withdrawal of Israeli troops from the West Bank.

Against - This presumes returning to the 1967 boundaries.

For - Israeli forces don't belong in the West Bank

Motion to retain item #10d - **passed** by show of credentials, with 2 abstentions.

Discussion of item #1 in the "we oppose" section, regarding actions in Iran.

Against - The might be construed to mean we would support an action approved by a Republican Congress.

For - Congress has the authority to declare war. If so, then we should support that, even if it's a Republican-controlled Congress.

Against - If Congress approves the action, we should not support it.

Motion to retain the language - **passed** by show of credentials.

Discussion of item #2 in the "we oppose section" on pre-emptive war

Against - this should be said more clearly, so we would not be understood to support an ill-advised action of Congress.

For - We oppose pre-emptive war, and that's what we direct our representatives to do.

Motion to retain this language - **passed** by show of credentials.

Discussion of item #2 in the "we oppose" section, regarding opposition to overt and covert destabilization of other governments.

No speakers on this topic.

Motion to retain this language - **passed** by show of credentials.

Health Care

Flagged items: #5 - regulating tobacco as a drug

Motion to accept this section, less item #5 - **passed**

Discussion of item #5 - regulating tobacco as a drug.

Against - Tobacco has no medicinal use, so the FDA would be forced to prohibit tobacco altogether.

For - Tobacco companies currently do not need to reveal contents of cigarettes.

Regulation would make ingredients public. The FDA would not necessarily prohibit tobacco.

Against - The war on drugs is already out of control, and adding another drug would be a step in the wrong direction. Education is better than regulation

For - Education is good, but the tobacco companies have done terrible things, and we need more than just education to overcome those powerful interests.

Against - Tobacco companies can influence the FDA to rule that cigarettes are safe enough.

For - We regulate all kinds of things to promote the public interest, and public health.

Motion to retain language about regulating tobacco as a drug - **passed** by show of credentials.

Human Services

Flagged items: None

Motion to accept as presented by the Platform Committee - **passed** by show of credentials.

Labor

Flagged items: None

Motion to accept as presented - **passed** by show of credentials.

Transportation

Flagged items: Item #6

Flagged items: Item #8

Motion to accept less items #6, and #8 - **passed** by show of credentials.

Discussion of item #6 - luxury tax on low-mileage automobiles

Against - low-mileage cars already pay higher taxes

For - low-mileage cars are selling like hot-cakes, so the extra tax is justified.

Clarify language to say low-mpg rather than low-mileage.

Against - If you already have a low-mileage car, then you would force low-income people to pay higher taxes.

For - The extra tax would influence low-income people to sell the car.

For - Colorado found old cars with low mileage were also higher polluting cars.

Comment - luxury tax was understood in the past to apply to new car purchases.

Scott ruled that the platform language can be clarified by changing "luxury tax" to "luxury tax on new"

Motion to retain item #6 regarding tax for low-mileage cars - **passed** by show of credentials.

Discussion of item #8 - in support of reliable school bus transportation.

Against - this allows high school students to use Metro buses and reduces use of yellow school buses.

For - Metro buses may sometimes be better than yellow school buses.

Against - Metro buses are sometimes better than yellow school buses, but this language is too ambiguous to keep in the platform

For - This is primarily a safety issue. Yellow school bus drivers are more qualified to handle students. Metro bus drivers are not prepared to deal with student's problems on their routes.

Motion to retain the language about school bus transportation - **failed** - the language will be removed.

Law and Justice

Flagged items: #8

Flagged items:#9

Flagged items:#12

Motion to accept the section, less items #8, 9, and 12 - **passed** by show of credentials,

Discussion of item #8 - regarding DNA testing

Against - DNA testing has been misused. This might lead to universal or near-universal data-bases and loss of privacy.

For - If we are worried about abuse, we should deal with that directly, rather than avoiding DNA testing in court.

Against - This plank is not necessary, since DNA testing is already being used widely

For - DNA testing is better than other methods

Motion to retain language - **passed**.

Discussion of item #9 - corporate personhood

Against - this item is badly worded - corporate personhood is based on case law, not constitutional language, and we should not roll back constitutional protections.

For - corporate personhood is not legitimately established and should be revoked.

Motion to retain the language **passed** by a show of credentials

Discussion of item #12 - gun registration

Against - Gun registration is dangerous

For - Registration is not a threat

Against - Licensing means ownership can be denied. Background checks for individual sales would be a burden. Fully automatic weapons must be approved, already.

For - The second amendment refers to a well-regulated militia.

Motion to retain the language - **passed** by show of credentials

Political Process

Flagged item: #3

Flagged item: #13

Flagged item: #14

Motion to adopt section, less items 3, 13 and 14 - **passed**

Discussion of item #3 - make election day a holiday

Against - with voting by mail, this makes no sense

For - even with mail-in ballots, a holiday on election day is a good idea.

Motion to retain item #3 - **passed** by show of credentials

Discussion of item #13 - have primary in June to have more time

Against - this should be a resolution, since it refers to a specific date in June.

For - This takes a position on state law.

Against - longer campaigns are more expensive and works against smaller candidates, and people get bored.

Motion to retain this language - **motion failed** - the language will be removed.

Discussion of item #14 - Instant runoff voting

Against - The Democratic Party and DNC oppose this

For - This lets everyone's vote count, and elected officials will be supported by a majority of voters.

Against - With instant runoff voting, the top candidates are not in the spotlight, as much, and the public's attention is divided among the lesser candidates.

For - IRV ensures the majority of voters elect the officials.

Against - With a primary then a second runoff election, the majority still elects the official.

For - Bernie Sanders got elected, but he's the exception, so IRV would encourage other candidates to run.

Motion to retain language - 37 to retain and 32 to remove - motion **passed** and the language remains in the platform.

Resolutions

May 18 is the next General Meeting at 7:30 at Olympic View Elementary School. The resolutions and initiatives will be considered at that time. Everyone eligible to vote today can come to that meeting and vote.

Regarding the correction sheet, item number 13 refers to a resolution on Maria Cantwell. Two similar resolutions were submitted, and only one made it into this package of resolutions. Scott said the second resolution may be submitted later.

Resolutions must be submitted to the chair and published in the newsletter. This can be suspended with a 2/3rd vote. Scott would need the resolution by the first Wednesday in May.

Meeting adjourned at 1:35 PM

Minutes by Stan Sorscher