

Article 7. Endorsement of Candidates and Measures

Section 1. Publicity of Endorsement Procedures

Publication of the procedures provided for by this Article shall be done in such fashion that all prospective and current Democratic candidates and ballot measure proponents seeking the endorsement of this Central Committee will be fully and adequately informed of the pertinent procedures in time to be considered.

Section 2. Endorsement Policy

- (a) The Central Committee recognizes that the bylaws and rules of the California Democratic Party preclude it from taking independent action on partisan, legislative and statewide contests, except to consider ratification of the positions of the California Democratic Party.
- (b) It shall be the policy of the Central Committee to endorse candidates in non-partisan races and to inform the county's voters of those candidates who uphold the principles and practices of the Democratic Party. The Central Committee shall not endorse candidates for county committees.
- (c) The Central Committee may endorse only as many candidates as there are seats to be filled for a particular office in any one election. All voting members of the Central Committee in good standing may vote on all final endorsement decisions, regardless of the jurisdiction of the office sought. For the purpose of voting on an endorsement, a member is regarded to be in good standing if they are current on their dues imposed by these bylaws, or, have had them duly waived or have entered into payment plan to pay them prior to the start of voting.
- (d) The Central Committee shall only endorse candidates who are registered as a Democratic voter at the time of candidacy filing.
- (e) The Central Committee shall not endorse any candidates before the close of the filing period for the office. Provided, chartered clubs and organizations may endorse candidates prior to the close of the filing period.
- (f) The Central Committee shall encourage candidates to seek chartered club and organization endorsements.
- (g) The Central Committee shall notify all eligible candidates of the endorsement process and timelines. Each candidate shall complete a provided questionnaire supporting their candidacy and participate in an interview process by appearing in-person or remotely at a public meeting of the Central Committee. The questionnaire and interview must be completed prior to an interview committee's recommendation to the Central Committee. The Central Committee shall only endorse candidates who have completed the full process provided by this Article.
- (h) Whenever an endorsement procedure is initiated, except as to ballot measures, the Secretary, or their designee, shall be responsible for sending to all candidates notification, in writing, to either the postal or email address the candidate has provided to the applicable election official of:
 - (i) Their right to consideration in conformity with these bylaws, with a link or a copy thereof provided; and
 - (ii) The date, time and place of all relevant meetings concerning their potential endorsement by this Committee; and

- (iii) The requirement that, in order to be considered for endorsement by this Committee, they must be a registered Democrat at the time of filing for that office, as well as the requirement to appear in-person or remotely at a public meeting of the Central Committee for an interview by members; and
- (iv) The content of the relevant, approved questionnaire by providing them with a copy of the questionnaire; and
- (v) The instructions for return of their completed questionnaire and for scheduling their interview with the Committee.

Section 3. Candidate Endorsement Procedures

- (a) Voting to endorse a candidate, which must occur at a regular meeting, shall be based on the recommendations of an interview committee constituted for that race, with names under consideration duly listed on the agenda alphabetically.
- (b) A sixty percent vote of the Central Committee members present and voting at the regular meeting shall be required to accept a recommendation of an interview committee to endorse a candidate, otherwise, the Committee shall have no position. If the interview committee's recommendation was no consensus or to not endorse, a motion to endorse the candidate nonetheless may thereafter be entertained and adopted by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Central Committee members present and voting.
- (c) Any voting member of the Central Committee may request that an individual recommendation made by an interview committee be pulled from the agenda item and be discussed and voted upon separately.
- (d) The Chair or the Central Committee, by a majority vote, may direct any or all endorsement votes be conducted via a recorded paper or electronic ballot bearing the respective name of each member voting.
- (e) The names of each member who voted on an endorsement decision and how they voted shall be entered in the minutes of the meeting and be publicly posted on the official website of the Central Committee.

Section 4. Interview Committees

- (a) Interview committees shall be convened and coordinated by the Executive Committee or the Chair, for each race where at least one qualified candidate seeks the endorsement of this Central Committee.
- (b) The interview committees shall review the questionnaires, interview candidates, and make recommendations based on those interviews for endorsement of candidates to the Central Committee.
- (c) An interview committee shall consist of at least two members or alternates of the Central Committee.
- (d) Every effort shall be made to ensure that a majority of the interview committee members reside within the geographical jurisdiction of the office being considered.
- (e) The Chair or designee shall be an ex-officio member of each interview committee, which are considered ad hoc committees.
- (f) Any member or alternate and chartered organization members may observe the interviews.
- (g) The chairs of interview committees shall collaborate with the Chair and Secretary to ensure that all eligible candidates receive timely notice of the interview and

recommendation procedures. It is the responsibility of the candidate to respond and request an interview appointment.

- (h) The Central Committee or the relevant interview committee must approve a uniform set of interview questions to be asked of each candidate. Questions unique to a specific office may be included if asked of all candidates for that office.
- (i) Every reasonable effort should be made to ensure that the members of an interview committee remain the same for all interviews for a particular office or race in order to ensure fairness and uniformity.
- (j) The interview committee, by a sixty percent majority vote, may recommend such candidate(s) within their remit to the Central Committee for endorsement.

Recommendations shall be limited to: endorse, no endorsement, no consensus.

Section 5. Ballot Measures

The Central Committee may, by at least a sixty percent vote, support or oppose county, city, and special district ballot measures. If at least a sixty percent majority is not achieved, the Central Committee shall have no position on the measure. Whenever an endorsement procedure is initiated as to a ballot measure, the Chair and Secretary shall be responsible for causing to be posted on this Committee's public website not less than seven days prior to the first such meeting the date, time, and place of all relevant meetings in the endorsement process for that measure and, in the event additional meetings are added, reasonably in advance of any such meetings.

Section 6. Recalls of Endorsed Candidates

The Central Committee shall oppose the recall of any public officeholder registered as a Democrat that the Central Committee endorsed at the most recent election for that office unless, within ten days from the date of qualification of the recall petition, a resolution is submitted to the Secretary proposing that the Central Committee either support or remain neutral on the recall signed by either:

- (a) A majority of the voting members of the Central Committee registered to vote in the district affected.
- (b) A majority of the Regular Members of the Committee.

Section 7. Revocation of Endorsements

Should an action to reconsider, revoke, or rescind an endorsement for any one or more of the reasons specified in subsection (a) need to be considered, the following principles shall be followed:

- (a) The reasons shall be limited to: failure to uphold the platform of the Democratic Party, support by the candidate in question of non-Democrats in other races, misrepresentation of the individual's own endorsement status or the endorsement status of other candidates.
- (b) Immediate action can be taken by two-thirds of the Executive Committee to revoke or rescind an endorsement in a timely manner for any candidate who, after investigation and discussion with the candidate, is found to have violated subsection (a) above. Such action is to be ratified by the full Central Committee at the next regular or special meeting.

- (c) The Central Committee shall publicize such actions, if passed, to media in the county and to all chartered clubs and organizations.

Section 8. Individual Endorsements

Individual members of the Central Committee may endorse Democratic candidates for office as private citizens. The Central Committee or Party office of those members making such endorsements may be indicated for identification purposes only and shall not imply any endorsement by the Democratic Party if that is not true.

Section 9. Conflicts of Interest

A member of the Committee may not vote on nor make a motion concerning an endorsement of a candidate under this Article, but may still attend the proceedings and designate a non-disqualified alternate, if any of the following apply:

- (a) The member or a member of their immediate family, such as a spouse, is a candidate for the public office under consideration.
- (b) The member is a paid employee or independent contractor of the controlled committee of a candidate for the office under consideration.
- (c) The member is an employee who serves or works in paid employment at the pleasure of a person standing for election to the office under consideration. Provided, that nothing in this subsection shall preclude any person serving on a non-salaried basis as an appointee to a public panel, board, or commission from voting on such a recommendation for endorsement.