

**LEAD CO-CHAIRS**

**MARGARET GRANADO  
AMAR THOMAS**

**CO-CHAIRS**

**CORY ALLEN  
SASCHA BITTNER  
GEORGETTE BRADFORD  
HEIDI MARTINEZ  
GUY STRAHL  
AMY WIWUGA**

**MEMBERS**

**GLORIA ALVARADO  
DEBRU CARTHAN  
MICHAEL COLBRUNO  
MICHAEL CONTRERAS  
TODD DAVID  
JOHN ERICKSON  
ELIZABETH ESCALANTE  
ANSERMIO JAKE  
ESTRADA  
ELIZABETH LINNEMAN  
BOBBI LOPEZ  
HARPAL MANN  
ALEXANDER MELENDREZ  
IMAN NOVIN  
FREDDIE QUINTANA  
MARTIN RAWLINGS-FEIN  
MARILYN RILEY  
MARIANA CORONA  
SABENIANO  
JOY STERLING  
ANN TURTLE  
PAULA VILLES CAZ  
ROSALIND WYMAN  
CAROLYN WYSINGER**

**APRIL 2022**

---

**CALIFORNIA DEMOCRATIC PARTY  
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE  
EXPLANATION OF RULES CHANGES**



## **Why did the Legislation Committee (LegCom) Procedures need to be updated?**

### A. Prioritizing Legislation

The California Democratic Party (CADEM) bylaws charge the Legislation Committee to maintain a listing of all pending legislation that is of "must" and/or major concern to the Party. [CADEM bylaws Art. V(5)(g)] The challenge for LegCom has been how to determine which pieces of legislation constitute "must and/or major concern" and which do not. Under the previous procedures adopted in 2011, nearly any Democrat (we currently have about 10 million registered Democrats in California) could submit a bill for possible endorsement without any additional support and LegCom was tasked with deciding which bills met the threshold. LegCom was tasked to sift through all the submissions and determine a maximum of 25 bills per a legislative cycle which could be considered of "must and/or major concern" to the party.

The consensus has been that the 25 bill cap method of determining priorities was draconian and unhelpful, especially as CA is the largest Democratic Party in the country. The legislation committee used parliamentary procedures to get around the bill cap, and more and more bills were endorsed. This made it impossible to decide which bills were of "must and/or major concern" for the party, and which were not. The LegCom spent most of its time processing the endorsements.

Furthermore, many of the "must and/or major" bills often had little to no support and died quickly in the legislative process, which led to the CADEM endorsement not meaning much and for activists to become increasingly frustrated with our lack of advocacy post endorsement of bills. Upon being appointed last year, the co-chairs immediately identified that the procedures needed to be updated and laid out a plan for a transparent, consensus driven process to replace the subjective 25 bill cap with something more equitable and democratic.

### B. Organizing for Advocacy

The CADEM bylaws charge that LegCom shall in consultation with the Chair of This Committee, organize and coordinate activities to advance Party positions on legislative priorities. [CADEM bylaws Art. V(5)(g)] The LegCom has been unable to act as an organizing force for several years due to its inability to assess exactly which bills for which it should be advocating and which organizations within CADEM would be willing to advocate for key legislation. This is due to the sheer number of bills submitted and little organizational buy-in needed to submit a bill for endorsement consideration.

Upon being appointed and conducting a review, the co-chairs concluded that the LegCom procedures needed to be updated to provide for a manner to determine how much support a bill had from within the party as part of the submission process, and that the LegCom committee structure needed to be amended to provide for organizing and communication as needed.

## **What are the key changes to the Legislation Committee Procedures?**

### **A. Legislation Submission**

One of the key changes for the LegCom procedures is determining who can submit legislation to the committee for consideration to be of “must and/or major concern” to the CADEM. Under the newly adopted guidelines; 1) Democratic County Central Committee, 2) a recognized Caucus of the DSCC, 3) Organizations Chartered by the DSCC, 4) the legislation’s author who is an elected Democratic legislator, 5) a majority of the Legislation Committee Co-Chairs, or 6) a referral from the Chair of the DSCC can all submit legislation for consideration. In submitting a bill, these organizations are bring the bill up for endorsement consideration by CADEM.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **A. Were the Policies & Procedures changed properly?**

Yes. Throughout the process, the lead-chairs met with the co-chairs to discuss the Policies & Procedures changes. Additionally, the Legislation Committee met as a whole to discuss the changes and voted on the procedures while gathering public comments. There were several public comment sessions and four committee meetings with amendments made based on feedback offered at each session. The updated procedures were adopted in accordance with CDP Bylaws by a vote at the CDP Rules Committee.

### **B. What is the new submission process?**

Please see the [How to get a bill endorsed by CADEM.](#)

### **C. Why not just abolish the 25 bill limit?**

The Committee is required by CDP Bylaws to consider and maintain a list of bills of must and/or major concern to the party. The 25 bill limit was the previous method of complying with CDP Bylaws. If the 25 bill limit is removed it must be replaced with an alternative method of determining whether a bill is of must and/or major concern to the Party.

### **D. Why can’t we have a lesser endorsement than “must and/or major concern?”**

CDP Bylaws instruct the Legislation Committee to track bills of must and/or major concern to the Party. There is no provision in the Bylaws regarding lesser endorsements for non-priority bills. If there is a desire to find an alternative endorsement process for non-priority bills, then the Bylaws will likely need to be amended.

### **E. Why not let individual Democrats submit bills for endorsement?**

The CDP Bylaws require that the Legislation Committee organize for advocacy of bills of must and/or major concern to the Party. In order to assess whether a bill meets this standard and to facilitate organizing for advocacy after endorsement, CADEM's Legislation Committee is taking an approach to ensure that we prioritize legislation that has a groundswell of support and that the Committee can organize advocacy efforts in partnership with the Democratic organizations that are already advocating for the legislation.

### **F. What about duplicate submissions?**

The more of the same bills that are submitted to the Committee, the more that this means that the legislation has a groundswell of support. Duplicate submissions from various organizations within the CDP should be celebrated as it demonstrates the bill is more clearly of must and/or major concern to the Party.

### **G. Why is there a formula for the number of county submissions?**

Counties with bigger central committees determined that it was unfair for them to have the same number of bill submission slots available to them as the small central committee, thus we created a formula so they would be represented equitably.

### **H. Why weren't Regional meetings/directors included?**

The CDP bylaws instruct the committee to "organize and coordinate activities to advance Party positions on legislative priorities, including, but not limited to, lobby days with legislators, grassroots mobilization, and delegate outreach." Given that the Regional Meetings are not standing deliberative organizations but instead momentary gatherings of Democrats, and cannot organize volunteers between meetings, they were not included in the list of submitter organizations.

### **I. How to enable new delegates and those that face institutional barriers?**

The committee has released a fact sheet describing the new rules for beginners. This form is posted on our website. There will also be a training scheduled for submitting legislation for endorsement.

### **J. How are Democratic Clubs represented?**

Local Democratic Clubs are able to advocate via their County Central Committees and Statewide Recognized Chartered Clubs & Organizations are able to submit directly to the Legislative Committee itself. Clubs are also able to coordinate with their local legislators and statewide caucuses to submit legislation for endorsement.