

2024 Legislative Candidate Endorsement Guide

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Overview of the California Democratic Party Endorsement Process

For Congressional, State Senate, and State Assembly Races in 2024

Step 1: CDP Pre-Endorsing Conferences (CDP Bylaws Art. VIII, Sec. 3 g)

- **Purpose:** The CDP Pre-Endorsing Conferences are held locally in each CDP Region in which the Assembly, Odd-Numbered Senate, and Congressional Districts are located to issue endorsement recommendations.
- **Date/Time:** 2024 CDP Pre-Endorsing Conferences will be held the weekend of October 21-22, 2023. Times will vary for each CDP Region; please check the CDP Endorsement webpage (cadem.org/endorsements) for more details. All meetings will be held virtually.
- **Voting Body:** Those eligible to vote in the CDP Pre-Endorsing Conferences include:
 - Democratic State Central Committee (DSCC) Members with full voting rights as of September 15, 2023.
 - Regular Democratic County Central Committee Members as of September 15, 2023.
 - Club Representatives of participating Democratic Chartered Clubs/Organizations (CCOs).
- **Voting Process:** All ballots must be submitted using an electronic form. At least five eligible DSCC members must participate or by vote-by-mail ballot, to constitute a quorum.
- **Rule on Incumbents:** Incumbent Members of Congress, State Senate, or State Assembly are automatically placed on the endorsement consent calendar of the CDP State Convention for consideration, unless 20% of the eligible voters in a given district file an objection 10 days prior to the CDP Pre-Endorsing Conference (October 11, 2023).

Step 2: CDP Endorsing Caucuses (CDP Bylaws Art. VIII, Sec. 3 c)

- **Purpose:** CDP Endorsing Caucuses are held during the CDP State Endorsing Convention if:
 - A candidate received over 50% but less than 70% of valid votes cast during the Pre-Endorsing Conferences, or
 - A candidate received 70% or more of valid votes cast at the Pre-Endorsing Conference, but the endorsement recommendation was pulled due to a challenge. (CDP By-Laws Art. VIII, Sec. 3 g(13))
- **Date/Time:** The CDP Endorsing Caucuses are held at the CDP State Endorsing Convention on November 18, 2023 (Specific times will be made available on the State Endorsing Convention Agenda).
- **Voting Body:** Only Credentialed DSCC Members with full voting rights are eligible to vote during Endorsing Caucuses. Fifty percent plus one (50%+1) of the credentialed DSCC members of an Endorsing Caucus constitute a quorum.
- **Voting Process:** Endorsing Caucuses will be held prior to electronic voting, which will be merged with the Statewide Endorsing Caucus Ballot. Proxy voting is allowed, but vote-by-mail is not.

Step 3: CDP Convention Floor (CDP Bylaws Art. VIII, Sec. 3 d; Art. VIII, Sec. 3 g (13))

- **Purpose:** Ratification of the entire endorsement consent calendar (including incumbents that were not pulled and the recommendations from both the Pre-Endorsing Conferences *and* Endorsing Caucuses) will take place by a floor vote.
- **Date/Time:** The CDP Convention General Session Floor vote takes place on Sunday, November 19, 2023.
- **Voting Body:** All DSCC members or their qualified proxies can vote to ratify the endorsement consent calendar.
- **Voting Process:** Proxy voting is allowed, vote-by-mail is not.
- **Rules Generally:** All unchallenged endorsement recommendations are placed on the endorsement consent calendar.
 - Challenged endorsement recommendations are adjudicated prior to the consent calendar ratification.

2023 Pre-Endorsing Conferences

PRE-ENDORSING CONFERENCE

Pre-Endorsing Conferences for Congressional, Assembly, and odd-numbered Senate districts will take place on a virtual platform the weekend of October 21-22, 2023. Each region will hold a Pre-Endorsing Conference with assigned Assembly, Senate, and Congressional Districts. A list of the regions, conference times, assigned districts, and other information will be available in early October.

Pre-Endorsing Conferences will only be held in districts where a Democratic incumbent is not an eligible candidate or if an incumbent has been pulled from the consent calendar.

ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES

In order to be an Eligible Candidate for the 2023 Pre-Endorsing Conferences, an applicant must:

- Submit and sign a 2023 Candidate Registration Form;
- Pay the appropriate filing fee (Assembly \$400, Congress \$500, Senate \$650);
- Be a registered Democrat and in compliance with the residency requirements for the seat they are running for.

Votes cast for persons other than Eligible Candidates shall be counted toward the total vote threshold, but will not be tallied for the name submitted.

To receive access to the Pre-Endorsing Conference Voting List, a candidate must be an Eligible Candidate by Friday, October 13, 2023 at 12:00 PM. If a district has no Eligible Candidates by Friday, October 13, 2023 at 12:00 PM, the voting list for that district will be shared with Eligible Candidates as they file.

INCUMBENTS

An incumbent is any member of the Congress, Senate, or Assembly who is running for re-election to the same legislative body, regardless of District, that they currently serve in. A Candidate must be a member of the legislative body at the time of the endorsement process that they are applying for to be considered an incumbent.

In the event that two incumbents are running for the same office, then neither candidate shall be automatically placed on the consent calendar.

ELIGIBLE VOTERS

Eligible voters in a Pre-Endorsing Conference include DSCC Members, regular County Central Committee Members (who are not DSCC), and Club Representatives (who are not DSCC or voting as a County Central Committee Member). The list of eligible voters must be submitted by September 15, 2023, and will be finalized within approximately one week after that date. No proxy voting shall be allowed at pre-endorsing conferences.

PRE-ENDORSING CONFERENCE VOTING LIST

The Pre-Endorsing Conference voting lists are managed using Google Sheets. After a Candidate becomes eligible, the candidate and members of their team, listed in the Candidate Registration Form, will be given access to the Google Sheet for their district.

The list of voters on the Google Sheet is provisional until CADEM Staff confirms it as final. The Google Sheet will automatically update as changes are made to the voting list.

The Google Sheet will also include information on the status of Pre-Endorsing Conference Ballot submissions and if a delegate has paid their Convention Registration and annual Delegate Dues. Convention Registration and Delegate Dues are required for a Delegate to be fully credentialed and eligible to vote at the Convention.

PULLING AN INCUMBENT FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

An incumbent applying for the CADEM Endorsement, will be automatically added to the Consent Calendar, per Article VIII, Section 3, g., (12) of the CADEM Bylaws.

An incumbent may be pulled from the Consent Calendar if twenty percent (20%) of the eligible voters in the districts Pre-Endorsing Conference or two-thirds of a body composed of the CADEM Statewide Officers plus the Regional Director(s) whose region(s) include(s) all or part of the district represented by the incumbent file a petition to include the incumbent in the endorsement process.

The Objection to Automatic Endorsement of Incumbent Candidate Petition Form must be used when pulling an incumbent from consent. The petition must be turned in 10 days prior to the Pre-Endorsing Conference. A packet of completed and signed petition forms meeting the required threshold described above must be submitted to the CDP Headquarters prior to 12:00 PM on October 11, 2023. Any forms submitted after 12:00 PM on October 11, 2023 or submitted individually, will not be accepted.

The Objection to Automatic Endorsement of Incumbent Candidate Petition Form will be made public after the Pre-Endorsing Conference voting list is finalized.

Please review Page 9 of the Memo for additional information.

VOTING

Voting in Pre-Endorsing Conferences will be done with a paper ballot. Ballots will be distributed after the close of the Administrative Candidate Registration Deadline. Completed Paper Ballots will need to be submitted via an electronic form. All votes will be public per DNC Bylaws.

A single vote is taken, with each voter choosing one candidate or “No Endorsement.” After a ballot has been submitted it cannot be changed or rescinded. Voters are encouraged to only vote for candidates that have already filed. Votes cast for persons other than Eligible Candidates shall be counted toward the total vote threshold, but will not be tallied for the name submitted.

Voting “No Endorsement” contributes to the total number of votes cast, without supporting a candidate.

If a voter wishes to abstain in the election, then they should withhold submitting a ballot. All ballots submitted will count toward the total number of votes cast.

Votes are public per the DNC By-laws.

VOTING THRESHOLDS AND DECISIONS

If a candidate receives 70% or more of the votes cast in a Pre-Endorsing Conference Election that candidate will be placed on the Consent Calendar.

If a candidate receives 50% or more of the votes cast, and less than 70% of the votes cast, then the election will continue to an Endorsing Caucus vote at the November Convention.

If no candidate reaches 50% of the votes cast, the official position of the California Democratic Party will be No Consensus.

If a quorum was not reached during the Pre-Endorsing Conference Vote, then the election will continue to an Endorsing Caucus vote at the November Convention.

A decision of No Endorsement cannot be reached from a Pre-Endorsing Conference.

CHALLENGING PRE-ENDORSING CONFERENCE DECISION

If a candidate receives 70% or more of the votes cast in a Pre-Endorsing Conference Election, that candidate will be placed on the Consent Calendar. An endorsement recommendation can be pulled from the consent calendar by filing a formal objection at least 10 days prior (Noon on November 8, 2023) to the CDP State Endorsement Convention signed by 20% of the DSCC delegates within the district or 20% of the entire DSCC delegation statewide (approximately 715).

2023 Endorsing Caucuses

An Endorsing Caucus will be held if:

- No candidate received 70% of the Pre-Endorsing Conference vote, but a candidate received over 50%;
- There was no quorum for the Pre-Endorsing Conference;
- If a candidate receives 70% or more of the Pre-Endorsing Conference vote and a Letter of Objection is submitted by 20% of the DSCC Members in the District before November 8, 2023 at 12:00PM.

All Endorsing Caucuses will be held on Saturday, November 18, 2023, after the General Session, at the SAFE Credit Union Sacramento Convention Center.

LETTER OF OBJECTION

If a candidate receives 70% or more of the Pre-Endorsing Conference vote, that candidate will be placed on the Consent Calendar for the Party's Endorsement. That candidate may be pulled from the consent calendar if 20% of the DSCC members in that district or 20% of the entire DSCC Delegation submit a letter of objection no later than ten (10) days prior to the State Endorsing Convention. For the 2023 November Convention that date is November 8th at 12:00PM.

The Letter of Objection must clearly state the candidate's name and the office they were recommended for, the full name of the delegate signatory, their DSCC ID Number, and original signatures. Letters must be turned in all at once. Individually submitted letters will not be accepted. Letters must be received by CADEM on November 8th prior 12:00PM.

Submission accepted via:

Email: Endorsements@cadem.org

Mail: 1830 9th Street, Sacramento, CA 95811

Please review Page 10 of the Memo for additional information.

CANDIDATES

Only Candidates who were eligible to be voted upon at the Pre-Endorsing Conferences are eligible to be voted on at the CDP State Endorsement Convention caucus.

ELIGIBLE VOTERS AT STATE ENDORSEMENT CONVENTION

Eligible voters at the Endorsing Convention will be all DSCC members as of September 15th, at 12:00PM, who are fully credentialed for the convention, or their credentialed proxies.

ENDORING CAUCUS MEETINGS

Each Endorsing Caucus will have a meeting at the Sacramento Convention. During the meetings Eligible Candidates will have the opportunity to address delegates of the Caucus that are present.

VOTING

Voting will be conducted via an electronic ballot. All endorsing caucus votes will be conducted on a single electronic ballot. Delegates will have the opportunity to vote for an eligible candidate, "No Endorsement", or "Abstain" (decline to vote).

Delegates will access the voting portal via a publicized URL. Delegates will be emailed the URL, DSCC ID Number, and their Password at the beginning of voting. Delegates will first enter their DSCC ID Number, which they can find on their credential and via an email from the Party at the beginning of the voting period. Delegates will then enter a unique Password, which will also be emailed to them. If a delegate did not receive an email from the party, they may retrieve their Password in the voting room at the SAFE Credit Union Sacramento Convention Center, by showing their voting credential.

After entering the correct DSCC ID number and Password, Delegates will be redirected to their ballot, which will include all of the Endorsing Caucus contests that they are eligible to vote in. In each race, Delegates will be able to select one of the eligible candidates, “No Endorsement”, or “Abstain” (decline to vote). After a ballot has been submitted, it cannot be changed or rescinded.

Voting “No Endorsement” contributes to the total number of votes cast, without supporting a candidate.

If a voter wishes to abstain in the election, then they will need to select the “Abstain” button. A vote to abstain does not count toward the total vote threshold.

Votes are public per the CDP/DNC Bylaws.

VOTING THRESHOLDS AND DECISIONS

If a candidate receives 60% or more of the votes cast in an Endorsing Caucus, the candidate will be placed on the Consent Calendar.

If no candidate receives 60% of the votes cast in an Endorsing Caucus, the caucus shall have taken the position of “no consensus” for endorsement.

CHALLENGE BY PETITION (60% to under $\frac{2}{3}$)

If a candidate is recommended (received more than 60% of the vote), but receives less than two-thirds of the vote at the caucus, an endorsement recommendation can be formally objected to by submitting a petition signed by 300 DSCC delegates members with the CDP within 4 hours of the posting of the endorsing caucus results.

The [Objection to Endorsing Caucus Decision Petition Form](#) will be the only allowed petition form to be used when challenging the decision of an Endorsing Caucus. Copies of the petition will be available in the CADEM Staff Room. The Petitions will be pre-filled out by CADEM Staff, including the District and Candidate name. These petitions are the only acceptable forms.

Please review Page 12 of the Memo for additional information.

CHALLENGE BY PERC ($\frac{2}{3}$ or greater)

If a candidate receives at least two-thirds of the vote, a formal motion to pull an endorsement recommendation can be submitted either by two members of the Pre-Primary Endorsement Review Committee (PERC) or the required number of credentialed members of the relevant caucus (10 for Assembly, 20 for Senate/Congress) filing a written motion by 8:00pm the Saturday of Convention. In the case a motion is filed, the PERC will meet Sunday morning to

vote to uphold or deny the motion. If the motion is upheld, that endorsement recommendation will be pulled.

Please look at the Memo on Page 13 for additional information.

RATIFICATION

Those candidates that have been recommended for endorsement at the Pre-Endorsing Conferences before the convention and candidates recommended at the endorsing caucuses will go on the consent calendar to be ratified by the convention body on Sunday during the general session. Any recommendation that is pulled will be considered prior to the consent calendar.

The body will first discuss and vote to ratify the decision by the endorsing caucus. If a majority of the body votes to ratify, then that candidate will officially be the Endorsed Candidate of the California Democratic Party. In the event a majority of the body fails to vote to ratify an endorsing caucus, the endorsing caucus decision shall be considered “vacated.”

At this point, a substitute candidate, who was an eligible candidate in the Endorsing Caucus, may be considered. For that candidate to become the endorsed candidate, that candidate must receive 75% of the vote of the body. If a substitute candidate is unable to receive the endorsement, then the official position of the Party will be “No Endorsement”.

Objection to Automatic Endorsement of Incumbent Candidate

Article VIII, Section 3, g., (12), *An incumbent seeking election to the same office currently held shall be automatically placed on the consent calendar of This Committee's endorsing convention unless:*

Article VIII, Section 3, g., (12), (b), 2., *ten (10) days prior to the Pre-Endorsing Conference, twenty percent (20%) of the eligible participants or two-thirds of a body composed of the Statewide Officers of This Committee plus the Regional Director(s) whose region(s) include(s) all or part of the district represented by the incumbent file a petition to include the incumbent in the endorsement process otherwise indicated in this Section.*

The CADEM Bylaws require 20% of the Pre-Endorsing Conference eligible voters, in a district, to file a petition with the State Party, if they wish to prevent an incumbent from being automatically placed on the Consent Calendar. A petition has been developed by the State Party for eligible voters to fill out with their information, the elected office, and the candidate they are opposing. No other petition or form may be used. Any form that has been edited or changed will not be accepted.

A packet consisting of all completed and signed petition forms, meeting the required threshold described above, must be submitted to the CDP Headquarters prior to 12:00 PM on October 11, 2023. Any forms submitted at or after 12:00 PM on October 11th, 2023 will not be accepted. Petitions require an original signature. Illegible petitions will not be accepted. Individual forms will not be accepted. The petition is a fillable PDF and petitioners are encouraged to fill it out electronically prior to signing it.

The petition has been turned into a fillable PDF. CADEM strongly requests that petition forms be filled out electronically, prior to printing for a signature. Petitions will be made available on the CADEM Website after the Pre-Endorsing Conference voting list is finalized.

Submission accepted via

Email: Endorsements@cadem.org

Mail: 1830 9th Street, Sacramento, CA 95811

Petition Forms must be submitted all at once, in one packet. Individually submitted Petition forms will not be accepted. Anyone may submit a petition packet.

Notice will be provided to both the petitioners and the incumbent Candidate after a packet has been received and a decision on the petition packet is made.

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact:

Ben Seinfeld / political@cadem.org / (818) 441-4430

CADEM Operations Department / endorsements@cadem.org / (916) 442-5707

Letter Of Objection

Article VIII, Section 3, g., (13) The name of a non-incumbent or of an incumbent subject to Section 3.g.(12)(a) or Section 3.g.(12)(b) may be placed on the consent calendar of This Committee's endorsing convention upon receiving at least seventy percent (70%) vote, of those valid votes cast, at a Pre-Endorsing Conference. The consent calendar shall be approved by a simple majority vote of This Committee. Upon approval of the consent calendar the candidate shall become the endorsed candidate of the Democratic Party. A name may be removed from the consent calendar by at least twenty percent (20%) of the members of This Committee resident and qualified by a date selected by the Chair of This Committee and publicized on the Party's website that is between forty-five (45) and ninety (90) days prior to the State Endorsing Convention in the District in question or by at least twenty percent (20%) of the members of This Committee by filing a letter of objection with the State Chair no later than ten (10) days prior to the State Endorsing Convention. If a name is removed from the consent calendar, the By-Laws of This Committee regarding endorsements shall apply.

If a candidate receives 70% or more of the Pre-Endorsing Conference vote that candidate will be placed on the Consent Calendar for the Party's Endorsement. That candidate may be pulled from the consent calendar if 20% of the DSCC members in that district submit a letter of objection no later than ten (10) days prior to the State Endorsing Convention. For the 2023 November Convention that date is November 8th at 12:00PM.

The Letter of Objection must clearly state the candidate's name and the office they were recommended for, the full name of the delegate signatory, their DSCC ID Number, email address, and original signatures. Letters must be turned in all at once. Individually submitted letters will not be accepted. Letters must be received by CADEM on November 8th at 12:00PM. CADEM Staff is available to review letters prior to submission for guidance.

Submission accepted via

Email: Endorsements@cadem.org

Mail: 1830 9th Street, Sacramento, CA 95811

Letters of Objections must be submitted all at once, in one packet. Individually submitted Letters will not be accepted. Anyone may submit a packet.

Notice will be provided to both the submitter of the letters and the recommended candidate after a packet has been received and a decision on the packet is made.

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact:

Ben Seinfeld / political@cadem.org / (818) 441-4430

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Objection to Endorsing Caucus Decision Petition

Article VIII, Section 3, d., (3), *Formal objection to the ratification of an endorsing caucus decision may only be made after the recommendation of the Endorsing Caucus has been made, as follows:*

Article VIII, Section 3, d., (3), (a), *If the endorsed candidate received less than two-thirds of the vote at the Endorsing Caucus, formal objection must be signed by at least 300 credentialed members of This Committee on a form prescribed by the Secretary issued after the decision of the Endorsing Caucus has been made and filed with the State Chair no later than a time set by the State Chair that is no earlier than 4 hours after the form was issued the evening before the period set aside for ratification votes. In the event a formal objection is filed, each candidate shall be entitled to designate one observer who may be present during the signature verification process.*

If a candidate is recommended (received more than 60% of the vote), but receives less than two-thirds of the vote at the caucus, an endorsement recommendation can be formally objected to by submitting a petition signed by 300 DSCC delegate members with the CDP within 4 hours of the posting of the endorsing caucus results.

The Objection to Endorsing Caucus Decision Petition Form will be the only allowed petition form to be used when challenging the decision of an endorsing caucus. Copies of the petition will be available in the CADEM Staff Room. The Petitions will be pre-filled out by CADEM Staff, including the District and Candidate name. These petitions are the only acceptable forms.

Per CDP Bylaws the petition period will be a minimum of 4 hours after the endorsing caucus results are released. If the results are released at 7:10PM, then the Petitions must be received prior to 11:10PM. Petitions received by 11:11PM would not be accepted. CADEM Staff will make every effort to release the results as soon as possible after the close of balloting.

As is the procedure for all endorsement documents, an original signature must be used when signing. This means the petition form must be signed by hand. Electronically signed signatures will not be accepted.

Petition Forms must be submitted to the CADEM Staff Room. Once a petition has been submitted, it may not be returned.

After the deadline, staff will begin to review the petition forms. After reviewing the petitions, staff will inform the petitioner and the affected campaigns as to whether the petition was accepted or rejected. Staff will also inform all campaigns if an individual signature was rejected and why.

One representative from the Campaign of the Candidate being objected to will be given access to the petition forms submitted. They may not share, post, or in any other way make the forms available beyond their own review. People's personal signatures may not become widely available to the general public.

If a petition meets the threshold described in Article VIII, Section 3d(3)(a), then the endorsing caucus decision will be heard by the General Body prior to a vote of the Consent Calendar on Sunday, November 19th, during General Session 3.

Pre-Primary Endorsement Review Committee:

When a candidate receives the endorsement recommendation with at least two-thirds of the vote of the Endorsing Caucus, voting delegates of an endorsing caucus may file a motion with the Pre-Primary Endorsement Review Committee to overturn the decision of the delegates in their legislative endorsing caucus, per CDP Bylaws.

For an Assembly endorsing caucus, at least 10 voting members of the endorsing caucus must sign the motion.

For a Senate or Congressional endorsing caucus, at least 20 voting members of the endorsing caucus must sign the motion.

As is the procedure for all endorsement documents, an original signature must be used when signing. This means a motion must be printed out, signed by hand, and an image or pdf submitted. Any motion signed electronically will be rejected.

Per CDP Bylaws, this written motion must be filed with the Secretary of This Committee by 8 PM on Saturday, November 18th. A motion must be submitted to the CADEM Staff Room. All signatures of a motion must be submitted all at once. An individually submitted signature will not be accepted.

The recommended language for the motion is:

We the undersigned submit this motion to object to the endorsing caucus decision to endorse (Candidate Name) for the (District ##) (Asm/Sen/Cong.) district.

Signers of the motion must include with their signatures their First Name, Last Name, and DSCC ID Number as it appears on their credential. Proxies should be included in parentheses, after their name, "(PROXY - Name)" replacing the name with the name of the proxy who has signed it.

After the deadline, staff will begin to review all motions submitted. After reviewing a motion, staff will inform the submitter of the motion and all affected campaigns as to whether the motion was accepted or rejected. Staff will also inform all campaigns if a motion was rejected and why.

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact: Ben Seinfeld / political@cadem.org / (818) 441-4430

CADEM Bylaws and Resources

The CDP By-Laws supersede any information provided by staff regarding the endorsement process. A current copy can be found on our website at www.cadem.org/bylaws.

For more information on the CDP endorsement process, visit www.cadem.org/endorsements.

If you have any questions, please contact:

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