

# 46th District Democrats

## Candidate & Ballot Measure Support Standing Rules

*Last Revised by the Membership March 20, 2014*

### Definitions

**Chair** – May refer to the District Organization Chair, or anyone s/he asks to Chair and Endorsement Meeting or Sub-committee. Context is key.

**Endorsements** – for the purposes of the procedures of this document, when used generally, endorsements may refer to endorsement of candidates or ballot measure. It may also refer to district-wide recommendations for appointed office, and other types of support where the district is named as “endorsing” or “supporting” a candidate or measure.

**Voters** – For the purposes of this section, voters are defined as members of the legislative district in Article III of the Bylaws who will be 18 years of age on or before general election day for the year the election endorsement is considered.

### I. Meeting Scheduling and Conduct

A. Meetings to allow the 46th District Democrats to express support for or against candidates or ballot measures under Article XVI of the Bylaws shall be called according to the terms of the Bylaws.

B. These “Support Meetings” called under Article XVI of the Bylaws shall be run according to these Standing Rules.

C. The District Chair may designate a person to run the candidate and ballot measure support portion of the meeting. Where these rules refer to “District Chair” or “Chair”, this also refers to the District Chair’s designee, if any.

### II. Eligibility to Vote

A. Those individuals defined as members in Article III of the Bylaws and who will be 18 years of age on or before election day are eligible voters.

B. Voting by proxy is not allowed.

C. Voters in a Caucus called under Section V below are only those defined as eligible in II.A above and located within a precinct covered by the area specified for that Caucus.

### III. Eligibility for Endorsement

A. Only candidates and ballot measures eligible for support as described in Article XVI of the Bylaws are eligible to appear and be considered at the support meetings.

B. The District Chair or her/his appointed representative will make best efforts to contact all eligible candidates for office and those advocating for a ballot measure to participate in the meeting and any candidates and issues forums. However, it is the responsibility of any candidate or ballot committee wishing to participate in the support process to contact the District in a timely fashion.

### IV. Voting

A. 60% of the eligible voters present and voting, excluding abstentions and excluding ballots ruled illegal, are required to endorse or recommend support.

B. Voting will be by written ballots issued to eligible voters; EXCEPT

1. A vote by show of hands may be called for in the case of a Third Ballot as described below.

C. Counting of votes shall be completed according to the 46th District Democrats Standing Rule(s) covering methods of voting and determining results in effect at the time of the support meeting.

D. In order to expedite the endorsement process, motions will be entertained to endorse a block of unopposed candidates, provided that a motion to divide the question (e.g., flag one or more names from the list for separate consideration) will be in order. A motion to divide requires a second and, to pass, a simple majority.

### V. Local Caucus Procedure

A. The Executive Board may, at least 21 days in advance of any meeting declared for the purpose of voting on an Endorsement or Recommendation, designate geographically-based Caucuses whereby only residents of precincts located within the Caucus are eligible to vote on candidates or issues brought before the Caucus. The Executive Board is limited in this power to creating Caucuses for:

1. Kenmore, Lake Forest Park, and Seattle city government positions or ballot measures
2. Northshore, Shoreline, or Seattle school district Board positions or ballot measures
3. Any local utility, fire, or similar district positions or ballot measures.

4. Municipal or District Court positions or ballot measures.

- B. No rule in this document may be amended or stricken by any Caucus. No Bylaw may be amended or stricken by any Caucus. The Caucus may only consider races designated by the Executive Board.
- C. The Caucus may be held simultaneously with the full District support meeting or it may be held on a separate day and/or in a separate location.
- D. The purpose of the Caucus is to bring forward to the full membership a Caucus list of recommended candidates and/or ballot measures recommended by the Caucus members.
- E. A quorum for the Caucus shall be declared by the Chair to exist when 10 (ten) voting members or 10% of the membership eligible to vote in the Caucus, whichever is more, is present when the first vote is taken. If a quorum for a Caucus is not present, the full membership will take up endorsement of the races originally designated as Caucus races.
- F. No Recommendation or recommended endorsement decision offered by a Caucus is valid until it the recommendation is voted upon by the members present at a duly called monthly meeting of the district membership where endorsement or support is clearly on the agenda, and the call is mailed and e-published 10 days in advance of the meeting.
- G. No candidate or ballot measure may claim support from a 46th LD Caucus unless the decision of the Caucus is approved and endorsed by the full membership as described below.
- H. Procedures for producing caucus recommendations.
  - 1. The District Chair may appoint a Caucus Chair. The Caucus Chair is not required to be a member of the Caucus.
  - 2. The Caucus Chair will run the Caucus' Endorsement Recommendation meeting following all applicable Bylaws and the Candidate & Ballot Measure Support Standing Rules in effect at the time of the meeting.
- I. Procedures for the full membership acting upon caucus recommendations.
  - 1. The Caucus Chair, or his/her designee, shall present the Caucus recommendations at a meeting of the full district where Endorsements are on the agenda.
  - 2. The recommendation of the local caucus shall be treated as a committee report, in that it reaches the membership already having been moved and seconded. A motion for "no endorsement" may also be entertained A 60% vote of the full membership is required for endorsement, as with other races.
    - a. The list of recommendations comes to the full membership as a committee report. To expedite the endorsement process, the question may be divided, in other words, recommended individual candidates on the local caucus list may be flagged for further discussion and review before voting upon the endorsement.
    - b. Speakers, alternating pro and con, may speak on the question of whether to endorse each of the flagged candidates as their race comes up. If there is no Con or no Pro speaker, the Chair has the option to recognize one speaker.
    - c. The designated time for these speeches shall be the longer of one minute or the time announced by the District Chair at the beginning of the endorsement process.
    - d. The number of speakers shall be the larger of four or the number announced by the District Chair at the beginning of the endorsement process.
  - 3. All members eligible to vote under Section II.A above shall vote whether to endorse the candidates recommended by the local caucuses, with any changes to the list adopted as amendments, following the rules for endorsements as outlined otherwise in these rules

## **VI. Endorsement or Recommendation Procedures – Candidates**

### **A. Nominations**

- 1. For each race with candidates, the floor will be open to motions for endorsement of eligible candidates and for "No Endorsement." Only eligible voters may make or second such motions. A motion to close nominations shall be out of order. After three audible requests for nomination with no response, the Chair shall close nominations for the position.
- 2. As used herein, the word "nominate," in whatever form, does not refer to the conduct or consequences of Legislative District Nominating Conventions held under the auspices of the State Democratic Party.

### **B. Speeches**

- 1. The designated time for speeches shall be the longer of one minute or the time announced by the District Chair at the beginning of the nomination process.
- 2. For each candidate nominated, the candidate or a member of the 46<sup>th</sup> District designated by the candidate may speak for the designated time. For No Endorsement/Recommendation, a member of the 46th District may speak for the designated time.

3. Members will hear all speeches on behalf of all candidates or “No Endorsement” for that race before commencing the vote.
4. Speeches will commence after nominations are closed when the District Chair deems appropriate. The order of speeches shall be as follows:
  - a. If, under Article XVI, Section 3, of the Bylaws, the 46th District Democrats Executive Board has made an endorsement recommendation, a designee of the Executive Board may speak to explain the recommendation. This speech does not count against the time for any candidate or “No Endorsement”.
  - b. Speeches for nominated candidates in the order in which they were nominated
  - c. If a motion for “No Endorsement” was made, a speech for “No Endorsement” will follow

C. Voting

1. First Ballot: All eligible candidates who are nominated, and “No Endorsement,” will be options on the First Ballot. “No Endorsement” shall appear on the First Ballot even if no specific motion for “No Endorsement” was made. Each eligible voter will vote for one nominated candidate or “No Endorsement.”
  - a. In the case of a race with only one candidate, the First Ballot is eliminated and we begin with the “Second Ballot” procedure described below.
  - b. If any nominated candidate or “No Endorsement” receives 60%, that decision controls.
  - c. If neither a candidate nor “No Endorsement” receives 60%:
    - i. If there are two to four ballot choices, we move automatically to a Second Ballot- *EXCEPT*,
    - ii. If the three choices are two candidates plus the option of No Endorsement, and No Endorsement received zero votes. In this instance, we move to the Third Ballot procedure described below.
    - iii. If there are more than four ballot choices, all items on the First Ballot are arranged from highest to lowest in order of percentage of votes received, rounded to one decimal point. (Figure 1)
    - iv. The percentage of votes received for each ballot item is totaled starting from the top. (Figure 2) Once this total reaches or exceeds 50%:

**Figure 1.**

Choice	Votes	%
Candidate A	20	19.6%
No Endorsement	19	18.6%
Candidate B	18	17.6%
Candidate D	16	15.7%
Candidate E	15	14.7%
Candidate C	14	13.7%

**Figure 2.**

Choice	Votes	%
Candidate A	20	19.6%
No Endorsement	19	18.6%
Candidate B	18	17.6%
Total		55.9%

1. If two or fewer ballot items are required to reach 50% or greater, we move to a Second Ballot.
2. If more than two ballot items are required, a Runoff Ballot is held with only those ballot items required to total 50% or greater. If any choice in this Runoff Ballot receives 60%, that decision controls. If no choice receives 60%, we move automatically to a Second Ballot.

2. Second Ballot: The top two choices receiving votes from the prior ballot, if any, shall be on the Second Ballot. (This may include “No Endorsement”). If there is only one candidate and the First Ballot is eliminated, the Second Ballot shall be the candidate and “No Endorsement”
  - a. If any choice on the Second Ballot receives 60% of the vote, that decision controls
  - b. If the choices on the Second Ballot are a candidate and “No Endorsement”, and no choice receives 60%, the official outcome is “No Position” and the balloting is over.
  - c. If the choices on the Second Ballot are two candidates, and no candidate receives 60%, then we move to a Third Ballot.

3. Third Ballot: Prior to the Third Ballot, a motion for dual endorsement will be entertained under the following procedure:

- a. Each of the two candidates on the Third Ballot, or his/her designated representative, shall be given up to 30 seconds to address voters.
- b. The Chair shall entertain a motion for a Dual Endorsement.
- c. If no motion is made and seconded, the official outcome is “No Position” and the balloting is over.
- d. If a motion is made and seconded, a vote will be taken. A dual endorsement requires a 60% vote. A show of hands may be called for, subject to the discretion of the Chair. If the 60% threshold is reached, the official outcome is Dual Endorsement and the balloting is over. If the 60% threshold is not reached, the official outcome is “No Position” and the balloting is over.

## **VII. Endorsement Procedures – Ballot Measures**

### **A. General**

1. Ballot Measures include all initiatives, referenda, levies, and other races without candidates, including advisory measures. Any such measure considered shall be presented in the form it would appear on the ballot. Any motion to endorse a position in support of or in opposition to such a measure is unnecessary and out of order, as that position – “Support,” “Reject,” or “Take No Position” – will be determined by the voting.
2. For each Ballot Measure considered, each of the three positions (“Support,” “Reject,” and “Take No Position”) are allotted time to speak. The designated time for speeches shall be the longer of one minute or the time announced by the District Chair at the beginning of the nomination process. Speakers are those invited by the District Chair for the meeting or, absent that, any eligible voter. Voting members will hear all speeches on that Ballot Measure before the vote.
3. Speeches will commence after the District Chair or her/his designee opens consideration on the Ballot Measure. The order of speeches shall be as follows:
  - a. If, under Article XVI, Section 3, of the Bylaws, the 46th District Democrats Executive Board has made a recommendation on the Ballot Measure, a designee of the Executive Board may speak. This speech does not count as a speech for Support, Reject, or Take No Position.
  - b. A speech for Support, a speech for Reject, and a speech for “Take No Position”, in that order.

### **B. Voting**

1. First Ballot: Each eligible voter will vote for “Support,” “Reject,” or “Take No Position.” If any option receives 60%, that decision controls. If no option receives 60%, we move to a Second Ballot.
2. Second Ballot: The top two choices between “Support,” “Reject” or “Take No Position” will appear on the Second Ballot. If either option receives 60%, that decision controls. If no option receives 60%, the position of the 46th District Democrats will default to “Take No Position”.

## **VIII. Reconsideration of an Endorsement**

A. Endorsements shall only be reconsidered in the following circumstances:

1. Death or long-term incapacitation of the endorsed candidate
2. Withdrawal of candidacy of the endorsed candidate
3. Conscious and deliberate failure by the candidate to file for office on the applicable ballot
4. Disqualification from the ballot of the endorsed candidate
5. The endorsed candidate switches parties, or by declared choice of caucus, would cause the Democratic Party to lose a majority or committee chairperson positions in any legislative or governing body.

B. Reconsideration of an endorsement in these circumstances requires 10 day written notice to the body and all candidates eligible for endorsement for the affected office. The written notice must specify when the reconsideration and possible new endorsement process will occur.

C. It is permissible for the reconsideration vote and potential new endorsement process to occur at the same general or special meeting of the membership.

D. A 60% vote of the members is required to reopen the endorsement. If the membership votes in the affirmative to reopen the endorsement, then the endorsement process is carried through from the beginning, following the rules described herein, as if there had not been an endorsement in the race previously.

## **IX. Procedure to add a second name to a Dual Endorsement after the Primary**

- A. This section only applies when a dual endorsement is made in the Primary Election and only one endorsed candidate makes it through to the General Election. This section is triggered by Bylaws Article XVI, Section 12 (b).
- B. The candidate endorsed in the Primary Election who makes it through to the General Election is also endorsed for the General Election. This candidate's endorsement may not be reconsidered except under Section VIII above.
- C. If the other candidate in the General Election meets all eligibility requirements in these Rules and the Bylaws for endorsement, the 46th District Democrats may add him/her as a Dual Endorsed Candidate under the following procedure.
1. At the specified endorsement meeting for the General Election, a motion must be made and seconded to consider endorsement of the other candidate. The motion must be made to the entire membership even if the race is subject to a Local Caucus.
    - a. Speakers, alternating Pro/Con, may speak on the question of whether to pass the motion. If the race is part of a Local Caucus, the Chair shall insure members of that Local Caucus wishing to speak are recognized to speak.
    - b. The designated time for these speeches shall be the longer of one minute or the time announced by the Chair at the beginning of the ratification process.
    - c. The number of speakers shall be the larger of four or the number announced by the District Chair at the beginning of the ratification process.
  2. The entire membership shall vote on the question of whether to consider endorsement. 60% of the eligible voters present and voting, excluding abstentions and excluding ballots ruled illegal, are required to pass the motion.
  3. If the motion passes, the appropriate body for the race – Local Caucus or entire membership – shall consider endorsement of the candidate under these rules. The ballot choices will be the candidate and No Endorsement.

**X. Tie votes**

- A. If any vote for an Endorsement or Recommendation under VI.C.1 or VII.B.1 (or their subsections) results in a tie, and the tie affects which ballot choice moves on to the next step or receives the Endorsement/Recommendation, a Tiebreaker Vote will be held. Eligible voters will revote only on the two tied items with the subsequent winner advancing to the next step.
- B. If the Tiebreaker Vote results in a tie, the Chair or their designee will conduct a coin flip to determine the outcome.

**XI. Exceptions to these Rules**

If the District holds a Legislative District Nominating Conventions under the auspices of the State Democratic Party to fill a vacancy in the State Legislature, the candidate winning the Nomination shall be the sole Endorsed candidate of the 46th LD Democrats for the subsequent election.

**XI. Suspension of Endorsement Rules**

Any request to suspend these rules for a particular race or ballot issue must be made prior to consideration of that race or ballot issue, and requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote for such suspension; provided, however, that Rule IV's requirement of a sixty percent (60%) vote for an endorsement cannot be suspended and any motion to close nominations is prohibited. Section XVI of the Bylaws also governs whether proposed amendments substantially changing the process require advance, written notice to the membership.