

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF LANE COUNTY

Platform Committee

9/19/2019

RESOLUTION 2019.20

A resolution of the Democratic Party of Lane County

Relating to increasing participation in the Democratic Party Primary

WHEREAS, the Unity Reform Commission of the Democratic National Committee (“DNC”), composed of representatives from Chairman Tom Perez and the Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton campaigns, issued its report stating that “it is critical that all eligible persons participate in the electoral process, including the Democratic presidential nominating process”, and that “the party process be improved to ensure maximum participation and Party growth”; and

WHEREAS, the Commission strongly praised the 30 jurisdictions which allow non-aligned voters to participate in Democratic Party primaries, and strongly “favor(ed) same-day and automatic voter registration, which includes same-day party switching”; and

WHEREAS, the Democratic Party stands for inclusion, participation, diversity and progress, and its electoral selection process should fully reflect those values; and

WHEREAS, Same day party switching will allow a voter who receives a primary ballot that is not for the party they wanted to get the ballot of their choice from their County elections office; and

WHEREAS, Same day voter registration will allow those who become interested in voting at a late date to do so if they are willing to make the effort to visit their County elections office; and

WHEREAS, there are over 900,000 registered non-affiliated voters (NAVs) in Oregon (about 50% of the total registered who are not eligible to participate in the Democratic Primary), and demographic studies of this non-aligned group of voters show them to be disproportionately composed of the young, students, people of color, and the newly-registered, and many other state Democratic Parties, including California, have opened up their primaries to non-aligned voters (who nationally now comprise 40+% or a plurality of voters); and

WHEREAS, the Secretary of State has in the past done outreach to NAVs about how to participate in a party primary, and participation by NAVs was substantially higher when they did so; and

WHEREAS, Oregon Motor Voter added 390,000 NAVs since its inception, and the Democratic Party of Oregon and the local county parties should pursue opportunities for outreach and inclusiveness to NAVs, of which over 29% are under 30 years old;

WHEREAS, there are 11 Certified Nurse Midwives, 6 Registered Nurses, 2 Medical Assistants, 2 receptionists, 1 manager and 1 admin support/childbirth educator who will no longer have jobs;

THEREFORE, the Democratic Party of Lane County resolves:

SECTION 1: Oregon should allow online same day party switching, with clear procedures for ballot handling if someone switches party after ballots are mailed.

SECTION 2: The Secretary of State should be required to inform NAVs how they can participate in a partisan primary - whether by registering with a party or requesting a ballot for a party. The process for partisan primary participation should be designed to be as easy as possible for all voters, including those who are currently registered as NAVs.

SECTION 3: For the longer term, legislators should put on the ballot a constitutional amendment allowing same day voter registration.

SECTION 4: Our support for these notions will be communicated to appropriate legislators and other public officials.

**Resolved by the Central Committee of the Democratic Party of Lane County,
Assembled in Eugene, Oregon, September 19, 2019**