



El Cerrito Democratic Club

Newsletter – February 2023

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ECDC
PO Box 192
El Cerrito CA 94530

Newsletter Editor: William Ktsanes

1. El Cerrito Democratic Club General Information

The El Cerrito Democratic Club (“ECDC”) provides a forum for area residents to discuss and take action on issues and campaigns of local, national, and international importance. Our General Membership Meetings are open to all and held on the fourth Tuesday of each month except October and December, when we typically have our annual dinner and holiday party.

Our monthly General Membership Meetings are in a hybrid format accessible both in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Ave, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remotely via Zoom. For those of us who’ve been able to come to Hana Gardens, it’s been wonderful to be in community and once again gather in person.

Our next monthly General Membership Meeting will be at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, February 28th. We encourage you to come to Hana Gardens or join the Zoom call a few minutes early to mix-and-mingle with fellow ECDC members.

The El Cerrito Democratic Club and its activities are supported by volunteers and the annual dues of its members. Please see the “Membership Renewal Reminder and Instructions” section towards the end of this newsletter for directions on how to join the ECDC or renew your membership.

Officer elections for the El Cerrito Democratic Club occur annually and were last held during the General Membership Meeting in January. Special thanks to our volunteer officers:

El Cerrito Democratic Club Officers (2023)

- President – Champagne Brown
- Past President – Greg Lyman
- Executive Vice President – Carolyn Wysinger
- VP Media – Madeline Kronenberg
- VP Membership – Neil Tsutsui
- VP Programs – *vacant*
- VP Publications – William Ktsanes
- VP Records – Leslie Reckler
- VP Treasurer – Ed Crowley

The specific duties of officer positions are described in section “VII. Officers” of the Bylaws posted on the ECDC website at <https://ecdclub.org/club-documents/>.

If you’re interested in participating more actively in the ECDC, please consider volunteering with the Club. We have an opening for a Vice President of Programs to help arrange guest presentations for our monthly membership meetings. Please let Champagne or Carolyn know if you’re interested. We also need volunteers for tasks and projects that arise throughout the year. *Help is always greatly appreciated!*

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

2. Information and Zoom Link for the General Membership Meeting on Tuesday, February 28th – *In-Person and on Zoom!*

Our General Membership Meetings are held in a hybrid format, accessible both in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Ave, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and via Zoom.

Zoom Link to Join the ECDC Meeting: <http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87570578180?pwd=MWNoT2hVY0VXeEhubHNoaE9xZGpKUT09>)

Zoom Meeting ID: 875 7057 8180; Zoom Passcode: c5fQKR

Dial in by phone: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 408 638 0968

Meeting ID: 875 7057 8180; Phone Passcode: 468602

Please note that the Passcode is different if you dial in by phone rather than join the meeting through the Zoom link.

Agenda (Tentative)

6:20 pm – Assemble and Mingle

6:30 pm – Call to Order

6:35 pm – Approve Minutes from the January 2023 Meeting (**Action Item**)

6:39 pm – Officer Reports: Treasurer, Membership, Programs, Publications, Media, Records

6:45 pm – Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC) Report

6:50 pm – ECDC Diversity Committee Report

6:55 pm – Finalize 2023 ECDC Budget (**Action Item**)

7:10 pm – 2023 Monthly Programs (Zoom Poll)

7:30 pm – Support for Older Adult Education (Linda Cain)

7:40 pm – Nancy Gans Award

7:50 pm – Good of the Order

8:00 pm – Adjourn

** Please send calendar events to the Executive Board in advance of the meeting for possible discussion at the General Membership Meeting and publication in the newsletter.*

- Champagne Brown, ECDC President

3. Minutes from the January 24th General Membership Meeting

(Note: There was no General Membership meeting in either October or December.)

Meeting Minutes
El Cerrito Democratic Club
Tuesday, January 24, 2023
On Zoom and In-Person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments, El Cerrito

6:20 pm – Assemble and mingle.

6:37 pm – President Greg Lyman called the meeting to order.

Minutes

On the motion of Champagne Brown and the second of Janet Abelson, the minutes from the November 2022 meeting were unanimously approved with no abstentions or objections.

Officer Reports

Treasurer: Ed Crowley reported he is collecting memberships, and some refunds were sent out for overpayments. The bank account balance is approximately \$10,000.

Membership: Neil Tsutsui reported the club has 104 members.

Programs: Carolyn Wysinger presented a Programs list from 2020 for review and discussion.

Media: Madeline Kronenberg reported that the Facebook and website are up and running and are current.

Publications: William Ktsanes reported that there was no newsletter in December but instead a combined December/January this month.

Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC) Report

Champagne Brown shared that the Central Committee met last week. It was the reorganization meeting/election. Their terms run for two years. There were minimal changes in district directors and delegates.

New DPCCC officers: Craig Cheslog, Secretary; Floy Andrews, Treasurer

District 1: Michael Nye re-elected

Delegates to State Democratic Party: Michael Nye, Gabe Quinto, Joan Smith, Cheryl Sudduth, and Champagne Brown.

Michael Nye reported that there would be an in-person delegate meeting in May in Southern California. If you have an ADEM ballot, vote by mail. Ballots must be received by January 31, 2023.

ECDC Diversity Committee Report

No official report by committee chair.

Quinto - Equity and Inclusion League of CA Cities/Mayors. There are more Democrats than at any other time, and very diverse. Used to be overwhelmingly white and male and now ethnically much more diverse and more center left. Congratulations to Cameron Sasi, Pinole Councilmember, who will represent at the state level. A lot to work to do, but representing the diversity of Contra Costa County. More representation from the younger generation as well.

2023 ECDC Budget Overview

Ed Crowley reported that a small loss appears in the budget because Hana Gardens was paid through June. In reality, the club made a bit of money last year. Dues aren't 100% straight as people pay for multiple years, so the number is inflated. Moving year end close to September 30th to straighten out some of inconsistencies.

The follow potential updates to the budget were presented and discussed:

REVENUES

Newsletter \$100

Dues \$2400

Dinner \$2200 (eliminate the duplicate line item)

Contributions \$100

EXPENSES

Hana Gardens \$1400 (paid through June)

Equipment Expense (Camera) \$225

Annual Dinner (Breakeven item) \$2000

Dinner Supply line - creamer, salt/pepper sharks, coffee

Printing is just for election years

Donation \$1200 to Central Committee (Move to Contributions Political)
BBQ \$200
Printing \$1000
Contributions Charitable \$100 political expenditures
\$400 buy tables at events
\$200 holiday party
Office Supplies \$200
Insurance Expense \$550
Postage \$100
Website \$840
Web Service \$350
Printing Expense Newsletter \$200
PO Box Expense \$230
Charitable Donations \$4,000

The budget will be submitted for approval in February 2023.

There was a discussion of making a donation to the “Future Leaders Fund” to encourage youth involvement.

Discussion of Possible Topics for 2023 General Membership Meetings

- September - Always try to have something school-related.
- Library at El Cerrito Plaza/BART on the ballot in 2024
- EL Cerrito City officials “State of City and Survey Results”
- 2024 Business Roundtable Ballot Measure sponsored by Chambers and large corporations trying to stop cities and school districts from passing bond measures.
- 2024 Nancy Skinner’s seat will be up. Considering a program around 2024 elections.
- Blue-Green Alliance - Labor and Environmental Organizations working together to solve issues.
- Moms Demand Action - Speakers on Gun Violence
- Local elected officials, Buffy Wicks, etc.
- How Democrats cannot be divided
- Transit issues when Federal funds expire in the next few years
- Evolve - Prop 13 Split Roll Funding
- Environment

7:56 pm – Greg Lyman called the discussion “Action to Close.”

2023 ECDC Officer Elections (Action Item)

Janet Abelson submitted the following board-recommended slate of 2023 candidates for the El Cerrito Executive Board:

President – Champagne Brown

Immediate Past President – Greg Lyman

Executive VP – Carolyn Wysinger

VP Membership – Neil Tsutsui

VP Programming – Janet Abelson

VP Records/Secretary – Leslie Reckler

Treasurer – Ed Crowley

VP Media – Madeline Kronenberg

VP Publications – William Ktsanes

Greg asked for objections on the slate. None were offered.

On the motion of Abelson and the second of Lyman, the above slate of officers for the El Cerrito Democratic Club for the 2023 year was unanimously approved by the ECDC members present with no abstentions or oppositions.

Good of the Order

Michael Nye reported that Cesar Zepeda was elected, taking the Richmond council seat by just three votes. He worked extremely hard. The Democratic party endorsement is extremely valuable. This election reminds us that every vote counts.

Greg Lyman reported that the 34th year of the MLK Parade was touching and enjoyable. They wanted to give Janet a plaque, which she received over the weekend.

William Ktsanes shared that the newsletter recognized Janet for all of her years of service and thank her in person for her many years of service.

Final laudations for Janet were offered.

8:00 pm – The meeting was adjourned by newly-elected EDCD President Champagne Brown

– Leslie Reckler, VP Records

4. In Memoriam of Janet Abelson (August 6, 1946 - January 26, 2023)

Janet, We Miss You

I first met Janet when I interviewed to be on the Recreation and Park Commission for El Cerrito in 2003, however, it was the campaign to increase the Landscape and Lighting Assessment District in January 2006 when I really started working with Janet. I already had experience coordinating campaign walks for Jan Bridges and Bill Jones in Fall 2004, which was my first volunteer task for ECDC. We met at Janet's house, the nerve center for much of El Cerrito politics over the last 20 years, to discuss campaign strategy. Campaign challenges included paper yard signs melting in the rain, only mail in ballots, and only property owners could vote with votes weighted by lot size. Although the campaign failed, it cemented our cooperative working relationship and began my long, complicated relationship with Janet.



Many of you knew Janet from PTA, Soroptimists, League of Women Voters, St. Peter's Church, ECDC, or one of her many passions. I knew Janet from City Council (12 years) and her time on the ECDC Board (4 years). Janet was generous with her time and energy. Janet was perpetual motion and restlessness. Janet was quick to share the latest information she learned at a conference or meeting, and there were many, or tell you about her family. Janet was everywhere and it always took her time to get there. Janet would tell you about her journey without emphasis on herself or the sacrifices she made for us. Her health always took second place to her commitment to issues and the Community.

It is hard to peel apart my complex emotions for Janet – awe and appreciation intertwined with frustration around her determination and focus. If you ever had the opportunity to work in Janet's office, or meet at her home, you know that Janet placed more importance on her key passions; the environment, mobility, transit-oriented development or seniors; than keeping

house. Don't be fooled by her cluttered office or seemingly disorganized environment, Janet was laser focused on her passionate issues. Over the years, I met many people who expressed both love and exasperation as they explained how her dogged persistence was challenging their perspective and plans. I know I was often under the grindstone of Janet's will to see progress on one of her near and dear issues, ultimately seeing the world from her perspective.

I am left wondering if I ever really knew Janet because she was always engaged in championing for El Cerrito. I know her accomplishments, her work, her passions, and, of course, all about her family, but I am not sure I knew the woman behind all of that selfless dedication to our City, our Bay Area and our planet. I asked Janet several times over the years why she was doing one thing or another. Her response was invariably, "Because it is the right thing to do, right?" This response was never really complete, yet it always ended that line of questioning. I will miss Janet's endless optimism in progress by good people for the community, both large and local.

Her sudden passing robs us of a champion fighting for a better El Cerrito. I was looking forward to her laser focus on campaigns for new City facilities, including a Library, Senior and Community Centers, Public Safety Building and Public Works offices. We know the many successes Janet gave us; however, we may never understand the hole her passing leaves in our community. Rest peacefully Janet. You earned it.

- Greg Lyman, ECDC Past President

Note:

A memorial service and celebration of life for Janet Abelson was held from 1:00-3:00 pm on Saturday, February 25th at El Cerrito Community Center (7007 Moeser Lane, El Cerrito). Janet's family is amenable to flowers in Janet's honor or charitable donations in her memory, and have provided a list of Janet's favorite nonprofit organizations:

- League of Women Voters, West Contra Costa County – You can send donation checks made payable to "League of Women Voters, WCCC" to

LWV WCCC
PO Box 1618
El Cerrito, CA 94530

- Contra Costa College Foundation – You can donate online at https://connect.clickandpledge.com/w/Form/b53b31dd-5ffc-4099-ba4c-0476c4568efd?fbclid=IwAR3EgO0ZDQrFYLdN_MHs1xexeuwijsIIM5Nx3zD89DK8wOgNZ-ssnM0ywT8

- Soroptimist International of El Cerrito – you can donate online at <https://sielcerrito.org/donate-today>

If you would like to send condolences to the family, please send them to:

The Abelson Family
 7 Pomona Avenue
 El Cerrito, CA 94530

Janet’s obituary from the San Francisco Chronical:

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/sfgate/name/janet-abelson-obituary?id=43105431>

5. El Cerrito Democratic Club – Proposed Budget, FYE 12/2023

The El Cerrito Democratic Club Executive Board recommends approval and adoption of the proposed 2023 budget below. The budget will be presented, discussed and voted upon by members at the February 28th General Membership Meeting.

El Cerrito Democratic Club Budget For the year ended 31 December 2023

Revenue	Budget
Member Dues Revenue	2400
Newsletter Revenue	100
Annual Dinner Revenue	2200
Meeting Pizza Revenue	0
Contributions	100
Total Revenue	4800

Expenses	Budget
Meeting Expense - Room Rental	1400
Meeting Expense - Voting Service	0
Meeting Expense - Speaker Honoraria	100
Meeting Expense - Equipment	225
Total Meeting Expense	1725
Annual Dinner Expense - Room Rental	140
Annual Dinner Expense - Food	2000
Annual Dinner Expense - Supplies	50
Annual Dinner Expense - Printing	50
Total Annual Dinner Expense	2240
Campaign Expense - Printing	0

Campaign Expense - Political Contributions	1200	
Total Campaign Expense		1200
General Expense - Office Supplies	50	
General Expense - Insurance	550	
General Expense - Affiliations and Memberships	0	
Total Operating Expense		600
Communications Expense - Website & E-mail	840	
Communication Expense - Online Membership Web Service	350	
Communication Expense - Newsletter Printing	200	
Communication Expense - Newsletter Postage	120	
Communication Expense - Post Office Box	235	
Total Communication Expense		1745
Membership Outreach Expense	0	
Printing Expense - Recruitment	0	
Total Recruitment Expense		0
Charitable Contributions - General	3000	
Charitable Contributions - George Floyd	750	
Charitable Contributions - Future Leaders	2000	
Total Charitable Contributions Expense		5750
Financial Expense - Mechanics Bank Fees	0	
Financial Expense - PayPal Fees	150	
Total Financial Expense		150
Total Expenses		13410
Net Income		-8610

- Ed Crowley, VP Treasurer

6. Future Events – *Mark Your Calendar!*

Memorial Service and Celebration of Life for Janet Abelson (retired El Cerrito City Councilwoman, past mayor, ECDC Executive Board member, and long-time political activist) – 1:00-3:00 pm, Saturday, February 25th; El Cerrito Community Center, 7007 Moeser Lane, El Cerrito

ECDC February General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, February 28th (4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link <http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

ECDC March General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, March 28th
(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments
(10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link
<http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

Earth Day – Saturday, April 15th – Volunteer work parties 9:00 am-12:00 pm followed by an
appreciation lunch at the El Cerrito Community Center from 12:00 to 1:30 pm; to organize
a work party, sign up for a work party, or to get involved in planning the event, please reach
out to earthday@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us; for more information visit www.el-cerrito.org/EarthDay.

ECDC April General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, April 25th
(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments
(10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link
<http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

7. Membership Renewal Reminder and Instructions

Big thanks to all who have renewed their membership since January 1! If you have not yet
done so, then your membership lapsed on December 31, 2022.

Now is a great time to renew online at: <https://ecdclub.org/join/>

Or by mailing a check to: ECDC Membership
PO Box 192
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Please note that our new dues are \$5 for students, \$15 for individual members, and \$23 for
two adults at the same address. The cost for a printed hard-copy newsletter has increased to
\$18 (in addition to dues). Please make checks payable to “El Cerrito Democratic Club” and
provide an email address for all individual members. If you have questions, please email Neil
Tsutsui at membership.ecdc@gmail.com.

Thank you!

- Neil Tsutsui, VP Membership

8. Call for Newsletter Submissions

The El Cerrito Democratic Club Newsletter is published monthly in advance of the General Membership meetings. ECDC members, friends and supporters are invited to submit articles and announcements regarding local issues and events of interest. Submissions should be emailed to William Ktsanes at wktsanes@gmail.com for review and editing.

9. Link to the ECDC Website and Bylaws

Periodically the Club updates our Bylaws. The bylaws were changed in October 2018 to meet DPCCC requirements; revisions were proposed and adopted during the January 2021 and August 2022 ECDC meetings. The ECDC Bylaws are posted on the ECDC website at <https://ecdclub.org/>.

Appendix - Letter to the ECDC from Linda Cain

To: El Cerrito Democratic Club officers and members
Attention: Champagne Brown

From: Linda Cain
El Cerrito Democratic Club Member

I understand that nearly 25% of the population of El Cerrito is over 55 (or will be soon). Some of these seniors might be your family members, friends, or neighbors. I am one of them — and you might be, sooner or later!

In addition to being a member in the Democratic Club, I am active in local senior Adult Education. For five or 6 years, I have participated in Older Adult Education Centers — the first at Christ Lutheran Senior Center and later I joined St. John's Senior Center. These two programs in El Cerrito meet once a week. Each is run by a director/teacher who is funded by the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD). The centers are co-supported by local churches which let us use their community halls.

As a retired person in El Cerrito, I have benefitted from participating in these programs — the chance to learn new things (like playing ukulele) as well as many useful things in presentations about community and senior services. Seniors also go there to socialize, share a meal and get to know other seniors in town. At the senior center, someone knows who we are and if are doing okay! Since I spent many years commuting to work, and now I find it helpful to have a friendly place to go in town and to make new friends and contacts.

However, almost since the beginning of my participation in these senior programs, we have had frequent funding scares — when the school district threatens to leave our senior program out of the budget in order to fund something else they need to pay for. They want to stop paying our teachers (for a measly 6 hours per week) and shut down our programs. Some years this has happened more than once in a school year — in December and again in May — and participants in our programs have gone before the school board and spoken out for continuing support of our senior activities. (On the bright side, I have become a better public speaker!)

From what I have learned in this recurring political process, the issue with funding for Older Adult Education stems from the California state government. It has been a long process of weaning senior education out of one education program after another... for instance, community colleges no longer encourage

(or possibly even allow) seniors to take certain courses — if those courses are even offered. In the past, the Average Daily Attendance was reported to the state for Older Adult Education programs — but now the state no longer subsidizes school districts for Older Adult Education. This is why the West Contra Costa Unified School District keeps trying to eliminate our senior programs from the budget — and we understand, they have a lot of other programs they need to fund!

I belong to a local activist group that consists of Older Adult Education teachers, students and interested community members. It is called “Older Adults Education Forever!” We are part of the fight to keep funding older adult education programs such as the two in El Cerrito, as well as Sakura Kai (a senior program supporting Japanese-American culture and learning) and older adult exercise programs that are currently offered online. In addition, we are looking at where the money went — why there is no longer funding to support local services for older adult education programs. That is the background for this letter. We are writing to state education leaders to call attention to the fact that under the California Adult Education Program (CAEP), state funding for older adults’ programs in K-12 Adult Schools has been eliminated. We are reminding our state government leaders of the benefits of Older Adult Education and asking for restoration of funds for Older Adult programs in Adult Education programs. This letter has already been signed on by the Democratic Party of Contra Costa.

I am asking the El Cerrito Democratic Club to please sign on to our letter to state leaders, including Kevin McCarty, Assembly Subcommittee on Education, and others, in support of the Master Plan for Aging and the need for schools to receive funds so that senior citizens can continue to receive educational services. Thank you!

Honorable Kevin McCarty
Chair
Assembly Subcommittee on Education

Honorable John Laird
Chair
Senate Subcommittee on Education

Honorable Al Muratsuchi
Chair
Assembly Education Committee

Honorable Connie Leyva
Chair
Senate Education Committee

Honorable Jose Medina
Chair
Assembly Higher Education Committee

Mr. Chris Ferguson
Program Budget Manager, Education
Department of Finance

Mr. Paul Steenhausen
Legislative Analysts Office

RE: Adult Education Funding Concerns

On November 16, 2022 California Council for Adult Education (CCAEE) and California Adult Education Administrators Association (CAEAA) sent a letter to you expressing concerns about adult education program coordination and suggesting changes to adult education funding. We are an organization of adult school students, teachers, and community supporters, and we would like to call attention to another problem with the California Adult Education Program (CAEP) – the fact that under CAEP, state funding for Older Adults programs in K-12 adult schools was eliminated. The arguments for defunding these programs were appallingly ageist, and policymakers ignored a large body of research proving that programs that keep elders socially, physically and mentally engaged actually save the state money by significantly improving the health of participants. In California, one quarter of the population will be over the age of 60 in a few short years. The state’s failure to fund educational programs for older Californians is unacceptable and must be corrected.

Under the CAEP system, a statewide network of educational services for California’s vulnerable older adult population was destroyed, with most areas losing these services altogether. In the few areas where some services survived, they were severely reduced, and in most cases could only survive by beginning to charge students money. Thus, even those older adults who lived in one of the few areas where Older Adults education survived lost access to services if they were among the 45% of older adults in California who live below the poverty line. As a result, isolation, which puts older adults at increased risk for disability and can ultimately kill, increased in California.

The state’s decision to defund Older Adults education programs was woefully short-sighted. Californians over 60 are the fastest growing portion of the state’s population; by 2030, 10.8 million Californians will fall into this demographic. In recognition of this demographic shift, the state recently adopted a bold masterplan for aging. In furtherance of this plan, the state should restore funding for programs for older adults offered through the state’s adult school system. Educational opportunities for adults are an integral part of healthy aging, combating isolation, providing mental and physical stimulation, and giving seniors access to information that allows them to take control of their lives. When Older Adults education is offered through K-12 school districts, it can also offer unique opportunities for inter-generational learning and give seniors an ongoing stake in their local school district after their children are grown up and no longer in school.

Restoring state funding for adult school Older Adults programs would support every facet of the Masterplan for Aging. Seniors need to master technology so they can access services like affordable housing and transportation; adult schools can offer computer courses designed specifically for elders. Seniors need to exercise to maintain good health and mobility; adult schools can offer exercise classes that meet their particular needs. Seniors need information about how

to avoid scams and manage their finances; adult schools can provide workshops and classes to help them. Adult schools are very flexible, and can offer any kind of instruction that is needed to support Older Adults students.

As CCAE and CAEAA have pointed out, the CAEP system is in need of reform and improvement. In addition to the improvements CCAE and CAEAA suggest, we respectfully request that you also consider restoring funding for Older Adults education through CAEP. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

CC: Honorable Tony Thurmond, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education
Honorable Daisy Gonzales, Interim Chancellor, California Community College Chancellor's Office
Members, Community Colleges Board of Governors
Association of Community and Continuing Education (ACCE)
Sonya Ramirez, President, CCAE
John Werner, President, CAEAA

Resolution In Support of State Funding for Adult School Classes for Older Adults

WHEREAS the California Masterplan for Aging, which seeks to establish “A California for all ages” by 2030, has as one of its goals Inclusion and Equity, not Isolation, for California’s seniors; and

WHEREAS the California Democratic Party Platform for 2022 includes support for Adult Education and Community College programs for life-long learning; and

WHEREAS education programs for older adults are a low-cost, effective way to combat isolation and promote healthy aging that can reduce the likelihood of participants contracting dementia by 18% (American Journal of Epidemiology, vol. 155, No.12, June 15, 2002) and can save the state money by improving healthy life expectancy; and

WHEREAS California had, for decades, a robust network of free education opportunities for Older Adults offered through the state’s adult schools and community colleges which was funded by the state, but was completely defunded in adult schools in 2013 and has also been much reduced in the community colleges; and

WHEREAS this network of education opportunities for Older Adults still exists in vestigial form in some community colleges and adult schools and could be brought back in order to fulfill the goals of the Master Plan on Aging.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County recognizes that the State of California needs state-funded educational opportunities for Older Adults in order to fulfill the goals of the California Master Plan on Aging; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County declares support for state funding educational opportunities for older adults through the state’s adult schools and community colleges; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County will review and consider proposed legislation that restores state funding for adult school and community college educational programs for Older Adults.

Submitted by Maria Alegria, Elected Member, District 1 and Kristen Pursley,
West County Adult School Teachers United

Approved by the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County, October 20, 2022