



El Cerrito Democratic Club

September 2024 Newsletter

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ECDC
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1. El Cerrito Democratic Club General Information

Since 1952, the El Cerrito Democratic Club (ECDC)—one of the oldest Democratic clubs in the state—has provided 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 —*everyone!*—and usually 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 generally in a hybrid format accessible both in person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remotely via Zoom. For monthly meeting and calendar reminders, you are invited to download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) invites to your computer:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZUpcOCvqDkpEtH10GiVZ7NcegZqDI_tJeMI/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGpqjwjHdKXsxGCRpwcBo_CXe3wpnpej7d1zU_CChZpNS31M-V4I5ZWL8z6

For those of us who've been able to come to Hana Gardens, it's been wonderful to be in community and gather in person. Whether you join us in person or by Zoom, I encourage you to come 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 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.

El Cerrito Democratic Club executive board officer elections occur annually each January. Special thanks to our 2024 volunteer officers:

El Cerrito Democratic Club Officers (2024)

- President – Champagne Brown
- Past President – Greg Lyman
- Executive Vice President – Carolyn Wysinger
- VP Media – Madeline Kronenberg
- VP Membership – Neil Tsutsui
- VP Programs – Ruthie Abelson Olivas
- 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 and/or joining the Executive Board.

Help is always greatly appreciated!

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

2. Information and Zoom Link for the Tuesday, September 24 General Membership Meeting

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

To join the monthly ECDC General Membership Meetings via Zoom, please use this link:
<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

Zoom Meeting ID: 814 7976 2385; Zoom Passcode: c5fQKR

Dial In by Phone: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 408 638 0968;

Meeting ID: 814 7976 2385; Phone Passcode: 920761

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

September Meeting Agenda (Tentative)

6:20 pm – Assemble and Mingle, Zoom Logins

6:30 pm – Call to Order

6:31 pm – Approve September 2024 Agenda (**Action Item**)

6:33 pm – Approve July 2024 Membership Meeting Agenda (**Action Item**)

6:33 pm – Approve Minutes from the June 2024 Membership Meeting (**Action Item**)

6:35 pm – Officer Reports: Membership (Neil Tsutsui), Finance (Ed Crowley),
Website (Madeline Kronenberg), Publications (William Ktsanes) and Records (Lesie Reckler)

6:40 pm – Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC) Report

6:45 pm – September Program: A Conversation with **Congressman John Garamendi**,
US House of Representatives (CA District 8); 30-minute Presentation/15-minute Q&A

7:30 pm – Saving Our Democracy - GET OUT THE VOTE

El Cerrito Democratic Club 2024 Walk Program

September 28th - 9:30 am - 12:00 pm

September 29th - 2:00 pm - Booker T. Anderson Park in point Richmond (DPCCC)

October 5th - 9:30 am - 12 :00 pm

October 12th - TBA

* In conjunction with a “thank you” lunch/dinner for volunteers and members

October 19th - 9:30 am - 12:00 pm

7:40 pm – Announcements (please limit to 2 minutes)

7:50 pm – Good of the Order

7:55 pm – Adjourn

- Champagne Brown, ECDC President

3. Minutes from the July 23rd El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meeting

El Cerrito Democratic Club
General Membership Meeting Minutes
July 23, 2024
(in person at Hana Gardens, 10860 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito; and via Zoom)

Call to Order

President Brown called the meeting to order.

Approval of the Membership Meeting Agenda

- Brown asks to table all officer reports to allow additional time for the ballot measure presentation.
- Upon the motion of Lyman, and the second of Ktsanes and J. Smith the members voted to waive the club's three day noticing rule on endorsements so that the club could add an item to the agenda to endorse Madame Vice President Kamala Harris for President of the United States in the November 2024 election. The motion was approved unanimously with no nays nor abstentions.
- Upon the Motion of Akacic and the second of Lyman the agenda was approved with the above additions and subtractions.

Approval of the June, 2024 minutes

Upon the motion of Ktsanes and the second of Tsutsui the minutes were unanimously approved as presented with no nays nor abstentions.

Endorsement: President of the United States, November 5, 2024 Election

Upon the motion of Lyman and the second of Salzman the club voted unanimously with no nays nor abstentions to vacate the endorsement of President Joe Biden for President of the United States and to endorse Madame Vice President Kamala Harris as the Democratic nominee for President of the United States.

Thank you Note to Joe Biden

- Upon the motion of Brown, and the second of Lyman the members voted to waive the club's three day noticing rule on action items so that the club could vote to send a letter to President Joe Biden thanking him for all of the work he has done on behalf of our country.

- Upon the motion of Cain and the second of Lyman members voted to send a letter to President Joe Biden thanking him for all of the work he has done on behalf of our country. The vote was unanimous with no nays and no abstentions.

Officer Reports

- Officer Reports were tabled in order to concentrate on ballot measures.

July Program: Discussion of and ECDC Member-Voted Endorsements for Statewide Propositions and Regional/Local Measures on the November 5th Ballot (Action Item)

STATEWIDE

- Proposition 2: Public Education Facilities Bond
- Proposition 3: Right to Marry and Repeal Prop 8
- Proposition 4: Parks, Environment, Energy, and Water Bond Measure
- Proposition 5: Lower Supermajority Requirement to 55% for Local Bond Measures to Fund and Housing and Public Infrastructure Amendment
- Proposition 6: Remove Involuntary Servitude as Punishment for Crime Amendment
- Proposition 32: \$18 Minimum Wage
- Proposition 33: Prohibit State Limitations on Local Rent Control
- Proposition 34: Require Certain Participants in Medi-Cal Rx Program to Spend 98% of Revenues on Patient Care
- Proposition 35: Managed Care Organization Tax Authorization
- Proposition 36: Drug and Theft Crime Penalties and Treatment Mandated Felonies

REGIONAL/COUNTY, CITY (EL CERRITO)

Bay Area Affordability Plan

- El Cerrito Continuation of Measure R

Please see the Powerpoint of the presentation [linked here](#) and available on the website. <https://ecdclub.org/>. A recording of the presentation is also available through the same links.

Good of the Order

- Betty Brown Celebration of Life Saturday, September 14, 2024, 11 am - 2 pm, Padre Picnic Area in Tilden. Pls RSVP.
- Memorial Service for former Mayor Jane Bartke on July 25, 2024, Berkeley Country Club, noon- 3:00 p.m.

Adjourn

President Brown adjourned the meeting.

- Leslie Reckler, VP Records

4. **September Program: A Conversation with Congressman John Garamendi, US House of Representatives (CA District 8)**

Please join us in welcoming Congressman John Garamendi, a Democrat who has represented portions of Northern California in the United States House of Representatives since 2009. Joining via Zoom, Congressman Garamendi will be our guest and program speaker at our Tuesday, September 2th El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meeting.

Congressman Garamendi served as the California insurance commissioner from 1991 to 1995 and 2003 to 2007, the US Deputy Secretary of the Interior from 1995 to 1998, and the 46th lieutenant governor of California from 2007 until his election to Congress in 2009. With his election in 2022 to represent California’s newly-drawn District 8 situated between the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys, he now represents much of Contra Costa County, including El Cerrito and Richmond.

Congressman Garamendi was born in Camp Blanding, Florida, and raised in Mokelumne Hill, California. He earned a BA in business from the University of California, Berkeley; an MBA from Harvard Business School; and then served in the US Peace Corps (RPCV Ethiopia, 1966 to 1968).

From one Returned Peace Corps Volunteer (“RPCV”) to another, I thank John for his service!

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications; RPCV Thailand (1993-1995)

Additional Biographical Information

(from <https://garamendi.house.gov/about>)

Congressman John Garamendi is honored to represent California’s Eighth Congressional District, which includes much of Contra Costa and Solano Counties. He has dedicated his life to serving the people of California and, in his eighth term in the House of Representatives, he continues to advocate for working families, veterans, and Americans across the country.

Garamendi previously served four terms in the California State Senate, where he developed a state agenda to advance California’s economy and facilitate scientific research at public universities.

Additionally, he introduced legislation that would become California’s assault weapons ban – the first of its kind in the nation and still in effect today. Today, Garamendi continues his work as an advocate for gun control and remains fervently committed to keeping Americans safe.



Garamendi currently serves as the top Democrat on the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness, where he works to ensure current and former servicemembers are treated justly. He has enacted legislation empowering the military to combat climate change, improve health care for servicemembers, and provide greater legal recourse and care for those harmed by unhealthy conditions during military service. Garamendi consistently advocates for veterans and has supported every bill in the House designed to help veterans and their families.

Garamendi also serves on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, where he uses his position to modernize America’s infrastructure, produce millions of good-paying union jobs, and revitalize California’s water resiliency efforts. With 30 years of experience in California water issues, Garamendi is a leading advocate for a comprehensive water plan that includes water recycling, conservation, and storage to help meet California’s needs.

With his eye always on the communities he represents, Garamendi’s top priority is to advocate for the people of California’s Eighth Congressional District and ensure they have the funding and resources necessary to thrive. Garamendi vows to never stop fighting for policies that guarantee equal rights, opportunity, and justice for every member of his community.

5. ECDC Endorsements

By vote of our membership, ECDC makes the following endorsements for state ballot propositions and local measures:

Proposition	Name / Description	Type
<p>Proposition 2 (School Facilities Bond)</p>	<p>K-12 Schools and Local Community College Public Education Facilities Modernization, Repair and Safety Bond Act</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>
<p>Proposition 3 (Affirmation of Marriage Equality through the Repeal of 2008’s Proposition 8)</p>	<p>Constitutional Right to Marriage</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>
<p>Proposition 4 (Climate Bonds)</p>	<p>Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>

<p>Proposition 5 (Reduces Voter Approval Threshold for Local Government Borrowing)</p>	<p>Affordable Housing and Public Infrastructure: Voter Approval</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>
<p>Proposition 6 (Prohibits Forced Labor in State Prisons)</p>	<p>Eliminates Constitutional Provision Allowing Involuntary Servitude for Incarcerated Persons</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>
<p>Proposition 32 (Raises the State Minimum Wage to \$18 per Hour)</p>	<p>Raises Minimum Wage</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>
<p>Proposition 33 (Prohibits State Limitations on Local Rent Control)</p>	<p>Expands Local Governments' Authority to Enact Rent Control on Residential Property</p>	<p>No Consensus</p>
<p>Proposition 34 (Requires Certain Providers to Use Prescription Drug Revenue for Patients)</p>	<p>Restricts Spending of Prescription Drug Revenues by Certain Health Care Providers</p>	<p>No Consensus</p>
<p>Proposition 35 (Makes Permanent an Existing Tax on Managed Health Care Plans)</p>	<p>Provides Permanent Funding for Medi-Cal Health Care Services</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>
<p>Proposition 36 (Overhauls Proposition 47 by Increasing Penalties for Certain Drug and Theft Crimes)</p>	<p>Allows Felony Charges and Increases Sentences for Certain Drug and Theft Crimes</p>	<p>No Consensus</p>
<p>Measure G (Local 1% Sales Tax; Continuance of Measure R)</p>	<p>1% Local Sales Tax Continuance</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>

By vote of our membership, ECDC makes the following endorsements for candidates to elected office:

Elected Office	Positions Up for Election on November 5, 2024
<p>El Cerrito City Council Three of five seats on the El Cerrito City Council are up for election in 2024.</p>	<p>Lisa Montayama Rebecca Saltzman (no consensus for the third seat)</p>
<p>Kensington Fire Protection District Board of Directors Two of five seats on the Kensington Fire Protection District Board of Directors are up for election.</p>	<p>Incumbents Rick Artis and Danielle Madugo are uncontested.</p>
<p>Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District Board of Directors Two of five seats on the Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District Board of Directors are up for election.</p>	<p>Incumbents David Spath and Sylvia Hacaj are uncontested.</p>
<p>Stege Sanitary District Board of Directors Two of five seats on the Stege Board of Directors are up for election.</p>	<p>Incumbents Paul Gilbert-Snyder and Beatrice O'Keefe are uncontested.</p>
<p>AC Transit Board of Directors, Ward 1</p>	<p>H. E. Christian (Chris) Peoples</p>
<p>BART Board of Directors, District 3</p>	<p>Barnali Ghosh</p>
<p>East Bay Regional Park Board of Directors, Ward 1</p>	<p>Elizabeth Echols</p>
<p>California State Assembly District 14</p>	<p>Buffy Wicks</p>
<p>California State Senate District 7</p>	<p>Jesse Arreguín</p>
<p>United States House of Representatives (District 8)</p>	<p>John Garamendi</p>
<p>United States Senate</p>	<p>Adam Schiff</p>
<p>President/Vice President</p>	<p>Kamala Harris and Tim Walz</p>

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

6. Future Events – *Mark Your Calendar!*

El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meetings and Events

ECDC September General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, September 23rd (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://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

ECDC “Saving Our Democracy - Get Out the Vote” Neighborhood Walks

- Saturday, September 28th - 9:30 am -12 pm
- Sunday, September 29th - 2:00 pm - Booker T. Anderson Park in point Richmond (DPCCC)
- Saturday, October 5th - 9:30 am -12 :00 pm
- Saturday, October 12th - Morning/Afternoon; Saturday, October 12th (Followed by a “thank you” appreciation lunch/dinner for volunteers)
- Saturday, October 19th - 9:30 am - 12:00 pm



ECDC Annual Dinner (“Thank You Dinner for ECDC Volunteers and Members”) – 72nd Annual Dinner; 6:00 pm, Saturday, October 12th; Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall)

ECDC November General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, November 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://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

ECDC Holiday Party – 6:00 pm, Friday, December 6th; Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall)

** There are no El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meetings in October or December; ECDC’s Annual Dinner is in October and its Holiday Party is in December.*

Other Community Events

El Cerrito Farmers Market – 9:00 am-1:00 pm, every Tuesday and Saturday; since 1994; El Cerrito Plaza, 9000 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530; southwest corner parking lot between Trader Joe's and Wells Fargo Bank; <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/7549/Contra-Costa-Certified-Farmers-Markets>

Ballots Mailed for November 5th Election – October 7, 2024; all eligible, registered California voters will get a ballot mailed to them; make sure your voter information lists your current mailing address; re-register at vote.ca.gov ([Elections and Voter Information :: California Secretary of State](#)) if you have moved since the last time you registered

Last Day to Register to Vote for the November 5th Election – October 21, 2024;
register to vote at vote.ca.gov ([Elections and Voter Information: California Secretary of State](#))

2024 General Election – Tuesday, November 5th; vote-by-mail ballots must be postmarked on or before November 5th and received by November 12th

- William Ktsanes, VP Publication

7. Membership Renewal Reminder and Instructions

REMINDER! – ECDC annual memberships expire annually on **September 30th**. If you have not yet done so, please renew for 2025. **Now is the time!**

You can do so online at: <https://ecdclub.org/join/>

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

Dues are \$5 for students, \$20 for individual members, and \$30 for two adults at the same address. The newsletter comes with membership and is delivered electronically by email. The added cost for a printed, hard-copy, postal mailed newsletter is \$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 membership 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 eleven months a year (each month with the exception of a combined December-January issue) and 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, August 2022 and March 2023 ECDC meetings. The ECDC Bylaws are posted on the ECDC website at <https://ecdclub.org/club-documents/>.