

**Candidates for Party Chair, California Democratic Party
PDB notes on Candidates' Forum, Vallejo (April 7)**

At the Party Chair Candidates' Forum in Vallejo on April 7, PDB asked five questions to each of the candidates, related to the following issues:

1. Should there be a policy of not accepting money from corporate donors and PACs?
2. End fracking?
3. Ensuring race and gender equity in candidates for elected and appointed offices.
4. Should the party stay neutral in primary elections, pledging not to provide donations or other material support to incumbents?
5. Healing the Bernie/Hillary divide within the party.

Here are notes from our PDB correspondent of the answers from the Candidates:

1. Corporate donors and PACs:

Lenore Albert-Sheridan: Yes, need to level the playing field.

Kim Ellis: Yes, not one penny from corps. Give party to people. Need new stream of revenue (supports public financing of elections)

Rusty Hicks: We need to have that conversation. Source of funding should be based on our values.

Mike Katz-Lacabe: Yes, should have policy. Small D not Corporate Party.

Daraka Latimore-Hall: Need an Ad Hoc policy that we don't take money from certain entities (e.g., Charter Schools). Still need to beat other's money at the ballot box.

2. End fracking?

Albert-Sheridan/Ellis/Katz-Lacabe/Latimore-Hall: Yes.

Hicks: A qualified yes - ASAP but regulate first. Need to consider impacts to oil industry workers and transition them (Green New Deal).

3. Ensuring race, gender equity in candidates.

Albert-Sheridan: Transparency. Have power and use it.

Ellis: 1. Reject policies that blacklist consultants. 2. Recruit and train and back with dollars. 3. Publicly financed elections. Also have target of 50% women and 50% people of color.

Katz-Lacabe: Recognize biases and obstacles and work to overcome them. Live it by staffing accordingly – 50/50 women/people of color.

Hicks: No real answer that could be discerned.

Latimore-Hall: Build an infrastructure so all people can access. Bread and butter party-building.

4. Party stay neutral in primary elections and pledge not to provide donations or other material support to incumbents in safe districts.

Albert-Sheridan: No clear statements.

Ellis: Need to be careful. Get money out of politics. More focus on local level. Concern that counties and cities have high number of republican incumbents. Need to build a bench/farm team by investing in the local level (city and county).

Hicks: Empower local/county grassroots organizations to work year round. Can't wait until the final 90 days.

Katz-Lacabe: Be careful how you go about it. Need an informed calculation of where we spend our resources.

Latimore-Hall: Vast majority of money is controlled by individuals and the DCCC, etc. Focus should be on flipping county and city council seats.

5. Healing the Hillary/Bernie divide within the party.

Albert-Sheridan: Be sure everyone is at the table.

Ellis: That's a false narrative. It's actually Systemic Change vs. Status Quo.

Katz-Lacabe: Start where we agree by finding common ground. Need to be talking to young people about issues that excite them.

Hicks: Primary opportunity to heal wounds. Need a common enemy. In the campaign for Party Chair we need to avoid a contentious election.

Latimore-Hall: Bottom up, not top down. Focus on issues. Focusing on issues diminishes focus on candidates.

In addition to these notes on the candidates' answers to PDB's five questions, our PDB correspondent thought of one word that came to mind regarding each candidate:

- **Lenore Albert-Sheridan:** Lecturer
- **Kim Ellis:** Forthright
- **Rusty Hicks:** Measured
- **Mike Katz-Lacabe:** Genuine
- **Daraka Latimore-Hall:** Energetic