

Culver City Democratic Club

Active Democrat



www.CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

Email: CulverCityDemClub@gmail.com • Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/culvercitydems

Post Office Box 4254 • Culver City, California 90231-4254

General Meeting On Zoom — 7 p.m., Wednesday, January 12, 2022

LA Democracy Vouchers on campaign finance reform

President's Message by Jeff Schwartz

The year ahead: endorsements and elections

Fellow Democrats,

We have quite a year ahead of us. This month we will elect officers and approve our budget. From there, we will jump into preparing our endorsements for the June primary. A record number of offices will be on the ballot.

Because Senator Kamala Harris became Vice President, her replacement Alex Padilla needs to stand for election this year, at what would have been the end of her term. State Senator Sydney Kamlanger, who was elected in a special election to finish Holly Mitchell's term, and Assembly Member Isaac Bryan, elected in another special election to finish Kamlanger's term, are in the same position as Padilla. Karen Bass' Congressional seat is open, because she is running for Mayor of Los Angeles. Every State executive office will also be on the ballot, from Governor to Insurance Commissioner. Some of these seats will be highly competitive, some have very strong incumbents. We will have a better idea of the field soon.

We have already heard from two of the candidates running to replace LA County Sheriff Alex Villanueva: [Cecil Rhambo](#) and [Eric Strong](#). A third, Robert Luna, will join us at our February meeting. I believe this is one of the most important contests on the ballot. I remind you once again that the Sheriff runs the LA County Jail, which is the largest mental health care provider in the nation, if not the world, and also encourage you to read [Cerise Castle's brave reporting on deputy gangs](#).

All these offices will be on the June 7 primary ballot. We will have a lot to research and discuss. Also, even though

Culver City residents will not be able to vote for Mayor of Los Angeles or in the County's Third Supervisorial District, some of our members are in those jurisdictions, and we will all be affected by who replaces Mayor Eric Garcetti (who has been appointed Ambassador to India by President Biden) and Supervisor Shelia Kuehl (who is ineligible for reelection because of term limits). So, we may want to consider endorsing in those races as well. Additionally, because of redistricting, some parts of Culver City have been assigned to different Assembly, State Senate, and Congressional districts than before. [Check the maps](#), especially for Congress, if you live west of the 405.

Because California is now permanently vote-by-mail, our endorsements need to be done early enough to arrive at people's homes at the same time as the ballots, which means we will most likely complete our endorsements at our April meeting. I expect we will continue hearing from candidates until then and will probably organize or co-host at least one forum. This will dominate our programs until the summer.

We might have a month or two to feature a non-election program, but the November 8 General Election will be coming up quickly. Assuming our endorsed candidates are in the top two in the primary and haven't done anything to lose our support, we won't need to revisit those offices, but there will be [a host of state propositions](#), probably some local ones, and two Culver City Council and three CCUSD School Board seats on the ballot. Again, because vote-by-mail ballots drop several weeks before Election Day, we will need to have our endorsements

set by September at the latest in order to have our mailer ready.

A lot is at stake. The November 2020 Culver City election saw record turnout, record spending, and the first [negative ads](#) and [campaign billboards](#) in the city's history. While we can hope things will be better in 2022, the behavior of local conservatives in print, at meetings, and in office suggests otherwise.

We have a lot of work ahead, but it is good and important work. To start, please [renew your Club membership](#), consider adding a monthly donation, and subscribe to [our YouTube channel](#).

Stay safe, and I'll see you at our next meeting!

JOIN THE CLUB OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

For information
on becoming a
member of the
Culver City Democratic
Club call Diane Rosenberg
at (310) 398-5328 *or*

[Click here to join the
Club or renew your
membership online](#)



Di's Corner:

by Diane Rosenberg

Update on Club member Charlotte Gunter: Even though the healing of her right arm is slow, she is still going for physical therapy. Her attitude is remarkable—always positive. She misses seeing everyone and is hoping in time that we can all get together and see one another in person.

Pete Rockwell's son Sam will appear on Broadway next year in a production of *American Buffalo*, by David Mamet.

Dates of the Culver City Democratic Club General Meetings in 2022

[Meetings are on the 2nd
Wednesday of the month]

January.....12th

February 9th

March 9th

April13th

May11th

June..... 8th

July13th

August.....10th

September.....14th

October12th

November 9th

December14th

Comments expressed in the newsletter are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the Culver City Democratic Club



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our Club website: www.culvercitydemocraticclub.com

Follow us on Twitter: @CulvCityDemClub

Instagram: CulverCityDemClub

and Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CulverCityDems>



January 5, 12 and 19 • 2 PM

Virtual Postcarding Parties

Register Democrats in Flippable Districts!

[California Democratic Party \(mobilize.us\)](https://mobilize.us)

January 6 • 5:00 to 6:30 PM

[January 6 Vigil for Democracy](#)

Westwood Federal Building—11000 Wilshire Boulevard

[See map for more events](#) on January 6

January 10 • 7 PM

[Culver City Council Meeting](#)



January 12 • 7PM

Culver City Democratic Club General Meeting

Program: [LA for Democracy Vouchers](#) on campaign finance reform

[CCDC General Meeting via Zoom](#) [CLICK TO REGISTER](#)



January 17

Martin Luther King's Birthday Observed

Call your Senators and tell them to support voting rights legislation!

January 24 • 7 PM

[Culver City Council Meeting](#)

January 27 • 6 PM

[Community Meeting](#) on the Farragut to Jackson pedestrian walkway

January 31 • 5 PM

Deadline to apply for open positions on Culver City

Boards, Commissions and Committees

<https://www.culvercity.org/City-Hall/Boards-Commissions>

March 3 through 6

Save the Date

California Democratic Party State Convention

Los Angeles Convention Center

For Volunteer Opportunities

to help keep Congress Blue, go to:

<https://www.mobilize.us/cadems/>

To donate to the State Party's DEM2022 campaign, go to:

[California Democratic Party - Federal Account \(ngpvan.com\)](https://www.mobilize.us/cadems/)

Senator Kamlager's priorities going into 2022

Senator Sydney K. Kamlager successfully authored six bills which were signed into law last year, and remains committed to furthering equity and opportunity heading into the next legislative year. While her full 2022 legislative package is not yet finalized, she will continue to champion these key priorities:

- **Housing affordability in L.A. County.** Senator Kamlager continues to champion SB 679: L.A. County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency (LACAHS), which will create an independent housing solutions agency aimed at creating and preserving affordable housing in L.A. County.
- **Criminal justice reform.** Along with serving as Vice Chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus, Senator Kamlager will usher through ACA 3: The California Abolition Act. Currently, the California Constitution prohibits slavery and involuntary servitude "except to punish crime." ACA 3 will amend the Constitution to remove such conditional language, abolishing slavery and involuntary servitude without exception.
- **Health care access and affordability.** A long-time advocate for health care access and affordability, the Senator supports numerous pieces of legislation that would improve health equity. She is the author of SB 642: Patients Over Profits, which aims to combat hospital discrimination and the California Affordable Drug Importation Act. Additionally, Senator Kamlager is an outspoken co-author of expansive health care legislation, namely: AB 1400 (Kalra), which will create guaranteed health care for all in California, and SB 519 (Weiner), aiming to decriminalize the possession and personal use of certain psychedelic drugs.



- **Climate justice advocacy.** Built upon the investments she led last year, Senator Kamlager remains passionate about climate justice — specifically urban farming. Supporting economic justice and urban sustainability via farming infrastructure will remain a top priority, especially amongst ethnic and Indigenous farmers.

As a member on Appropriations and Budget Senate Committees, Senator Kamlager will continue to ensure California's state budget includes robust investments into communities in the 30th District, like Culver City, while fighting to ensure equitable infrastructure funding distribution. Angelenos and Californians deserve nothing less.

Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell appointed Chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors



The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the appointment of Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell to serve as Chair. Representing Los Angeles County's Second District, Chair Mitchell shared a video message on her goals as Chair to help strengthen the County's path to recovery from COVID-19 with a commitment to building back with equity.

To view the video remarks that were shared from Chair Mitchell click below:



Defend Democracy! January 6th Day of Action: Vigil...Textbanking Boot Camp...Register Democrats



January 6th is a day that will live in infamy unless we reclaim it. Join us for a virtual day of action to register voters this January 6. (There are other dates as well as postcarding events.)

Click here to [sign up for textbanking boot camp](#)

Click here to [sign up for a postcarding party](#)

Click here to [sign up for a local vigil for democracy](#)

Assemblymember Isaac Bryan appointed Chair of Election Committee

On Monday, Assemblymember Isaac G. Bryan (D-Los Angeles) was appointed by Speaker Anthony Rendon as the Chair of the Committee on Elections.

Asm. Bryan was appointed to the seat previously held by Assemblymember Marc Berman, who led the Committee to pass the important reform that made vote-by-mail permanent. This year brings immense challenges for the Elections Committee, and Asm. Bryan is eager to lead the committee as it continues to push California to the forefront of the battles to ensure voting rights, to expand the franchise, and to ensure our politics are centered on people—and particularly people who have been barred from participating or have experienced unjust barriers to participation. It is vital to ensure that each of our democratic systems reflects the voters' intent and interests, including the recall process.

"We need to make voting easier, and we need more people voting. We need to find ways to ensure that each and every person who wants to participate can do so, and that their voices—the voices of the people of California—are those that make a difference in elections," said Assemblymember Bryan. "I'm proud of my participation in our democracy. I've voted. I've helped others register. I've led a ballot committee. I've stood for office. And I know the challenges our communities still face around ballot access, trust, and participation. We've got a lot of work ahead of us, and I'm deeply grateful for the chance to make a real difference for voters in Culver City, Los Angeles, and across California as the next Chair of the Committee on Elections."

"Asm. Bryan is deeply committed to protecting and promoting Californians' right to vote and to participate in our democracy," said Speaker Rendon. "His experience as a community organizer and his thoughtful and rigorous approach to policy is exactly the kind of leadership the Elections Committee needs in this moment. I have full confidence under his chairmanship we can expect progress to move forward."

The CCDC Officer Nominating Committee will place the following candidates' names in nomination at the general meeting on January 12:

President: Jeff Schwartz

First Vice President: Freddy Puza

Second Vice President: Will Herrera

Membership Secretary: Diane Rosenberg

Recording Secretary: Shannon Theus

Treasurer: Eric Fine

Corresponding Secretary: Cynthia Hart

The following resolution was adopted on December 8, 2021,
at the General Meeting of the Culver City Democratic Club

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING DIRECT HOUSING PILOT PROGRAM IN CULVER CITY

Whereas Homelessness is a major social and humanitarian crisis in the country, state and city today;

Whereas successful models for ending homelessness have been demonstrated from New York to Utah to California using the proven method of the Housing First approach;

Whereas since 2016, Housing First has been state law in California and the mandated approach to addressing homelessness for every jurisdiction in the state;

Whereas "Scattered Site" or "Direct Housing" has been an integral part and the "best practice" of implementing every successful Housing First program;

Whereas following these "best practices" the Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness has developed and unanimously approved a Direct Housing pilot program on November 16, 2021 to send to the Culver City City Council for consideration and adoption; and

Whereas the City of Los Angeles is currently developing a parallel program, the Housing Now program, giving us a regional partner in this approach to ending homelessness; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Culver City Democratic Club endorses the Direct Housing program developed by ACOHH and recommends to the Culver City City Council to approve this program to be implemented and included in the city's 2022/2023 budget cycle; and be it further

Resolved, that the Culver City Democratic Club recommend to our County and State representatives (Holly Mitchell, Isaac Bryan, Sydney Kamlager) to work with Culver City in their representative capacity to help expand and fund this program into the future.

Author: Mark Lipman

A Reintroduction to Vote16

by *Vanessa Andrick,
Ava Frans,
Shayna Graff,
Ada Meighan-Theil,
and Celeste Nunez*



We must start by reintroducing Vote16. We are a youth-led campaign to lower Culver City's municipal voting age to 16. [Vote16 CC](#) is a derivative of the larger Vote16 movement, which has chapters in cities across the country. Our leadership team is the third to come through this chapter.

Initial reactions to our movement are often immediate and negative. This is understandable; allowing 16-year-olds to vote in local elections appears as an unfamiliar and seemingly dramatic change. However, youth empowerment is the way forward. Eighteen became the national voting age only relatively recently during the 1970s. It can change to fit the priorities and attitudes of our community, and will ultimately lead to fairer elections that represent public interest.

So, why should you support our right to vote?

By the age of 16, people have developed what is called “cold cognition.” While “hot cognition” (impulsive, emotional, short-term decision making) is usually associated with teenagers, most of us have also developed “cold cognition” (logical, reasonable, long-term decision making) by this age. Sixteen-year-olds are asked to make decisions about their futures—are they not capable enough of

making decisions about their political environment?

Sixteen-year-olds are immeasurably impacted by local legislation. The school board has a direct hand in our day-to-day lives. We can work and live in Culver City, so elements like transportation, policing, and city planning impact us daily, too. Our perspective should be represented. This is not to say that youth voices are not being listened to. If anything, the status of teens as an important group has improved over the past few years. However, this should not be confused or conflated with the protections and powers provided with actual voting rights for 16- and 17-year-olds. We should have a say when these matters directly affect us.

As for education: in some ways, teenagers are better equipped than adults to be competent voters. Where most people over the age of 18 have been out of school for years at the time of the election, teens as students regularly receive an up-to-date education in civics and community responsibility in the classroom.

Moreover, voting at a young age creates life-long voters. However, most people do not vote in their first election. Giving teenagers the right to vote in local elections at a time when they have structure and familiarity in their lives will encourage voting and increase turnout. It would present a more accurate sample of public opinion. Lowering the voting age to 16 will help create a generation of habitual voters.

There is a lot of concern over the viability of our political ideology. The truth is that we form our beliefs the same way everybody else does. This has never been more true than it has been over the past few years. We look at the world and see the ways in which we want it to reflect our needs. Since we cannot vote, we organize protests, action groups, and campaigns to represent our interests. Students are among, if not the primary, group of individuals who have shown an invested and passionate interest in local politics. From school shootings and gun protections; police violence and racial discrimination; to education and historical bias, we have legitimate perspectives based on the ways in which these issues impact us daily. Belittling the importance of the youth voice is a form of suppression. It's a way to ignore the actual wants of the people. Minimizing our role as a portion of Culver City's population that deserves equal respect is a way to ensure that our local political scene does not represent all stakeholders and only upholds the status quo.

Extending the municipal vote to 16- and 17-year-olds is one step towards fair representation. It is one step towards progress. It is one step towards a vision of tomorrow that matches our priorities as a community.

Vote16 CC is fighting to be on the ballot next fall. We have been reaching out to local officials, speaking at city council meetings, and spreading the word. [But we need your support.](#) Our email is: vote16cc@gmail.com



One of Harry Reid's Last Wishes Was to End the Filibuster

Click here to read [Harry's 2019 article about the filibuster.](#)

He wrote this September 8, 2021, for the [Las Vegas Sun](#)

Click here to read [a piece from Truthout written shortly after Harry's death](#) at age 82.

“The future of our country is sacrificed at the altar of the filibuster.” —Harry Reid

Senator Raphael Warnock speaks in the US Senate on voting rights

[This is the full text of Senator Raphael Warnock's speech on the need to change the Senate rules in order to pass voting rights. Here is a [link to a video](#) of this important and inspiring speech.]



ballots; on their way to the night shift, or on their way back home. It seems to me that they want fewer voters and more dark money in our elections. And that's the sad place we're in, Madam President, right now.

But what is even more disconcerting is that these politicians in the state legislature have already laid the tracks to take over local boards of elections—for almost any frivolous reason—to undermine

Madam President, I come to the floor today after a long week of wrestling with my conscience. Before we left Washington last week, we in this chamber made a change in the Senate's rules in order to push forward something that all of us think is important. We set the stage to raise the nation's debt ceiling, and yet as we cast that vote to begin addressing the debt ceiling, this same chamber is allowing the ceiling of our democracy to crash in around us.

The American people have been pushing for leaders in Washington to address voting rights. And everywhere I turn, I have been hearing from my constituents in Georgia. They are deeply worried. I heard it all weekend. I've been hearing it over the last several months. And I submit that they are worried for good reason. They know their history. They are witnessing what is happening to our democracy in real time. And they see the handwriting on the wall.

They see the sweeping voter suppression proposals in 49 states, and the dozens of new laws that have now popped up across the nation, fueled by the Big Lie that seeks to delegitimize the voices of millions of Georgians and Americans who made their voices heard, made history, and more importantly made a difference last November and last January.

The American people see what is happening in Arizona and in Texas and in Florida and in Wisconsin and in Iowa. And they see what's happening in Georgia, my home state, where a new law—S.B. 202—passed right after I won, will make it harder for some voters to access their ballots by making it more difficult to vote by mail, allowing far fewer drop boxes, and only allowing for the use of those boxes, listen, during business hours.

"...the second most senior Republican in the Georgia State Senate announced recently that he wants to do away with election drop boxes altogether..."

You can use the drop boxes during business hours, which sort of defeats the purpose of having a drop box. In fact, back home, the second most senior Republican in the Georgia State Senate announced recently that he wants to do away with election drop boxes all together—literal boxes—where registered, eligible voters simply can drop off their

the voices of local voters and local election administrators, control the count, muddy the waters, question or determine the outcome.

"But what is even more disconcerting is that these politicians in the state legislature have already laid the tracks to take over local boards of elections"

And in the face of this crisis, the question is this, has this chamber risen to the occasion to take on the issue of voting rights, which I submit is the central moral issue confronting this Congress in this moment? What have we done: to strengthen access to the ballot as bedrock voting rights protections have been shredded by our courts, or to protect the sacred right to vote as partisan state legislatures have passed laws to dilute that right for so many people?

Well, some of us have acted. Democrats in this body have tried, not once, not twice, but we've tried this Congress on three occasions to consider legislation to protect and expand voting rights so that more eligible Americans can make their voices heard and help shape the direction of our country, and each time, whether it was for the [For The People Act](#) or the [John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act](#) or the [Freedom to Vote Act](#), with just one lone exception, all of our friends across the aisle have refused to engage with us—in any way—to address the growing barriers to what is basic to American democracy: the ballot box.

And here's what we've said: We've said to our Republican friends, if you don't like this provision or that provision, let's talk about it. Offer some amendments. Come, let us reason together. Let us have a debate out in the open so that the American people can hear it. Everybody talks about the divisions in America right now. Here is what folks on the left and the right agree on: there is something awry in our democracy, and in this moment in which there is debate happening on the outside, how is it that we refuse to even have a debate in the Senate? They don't even want to have a debate.

[see WARNOCK on page 7]

[WARNOCK from page 6]

And so, here we are, months have passed—no, that's not true—years have passed. Democrats have tried again and again to engage our Republican friends in a discussion on this issue, one that lies at the foundation of our democracy, and time and time again, because of a lack of good-faith engagement, the rules of the Senate have prevented us from moving that conversation forward. We could not imagine—we could not imagine changing the rules. That is, until last week. Because last week we did exactly that. Be very clear, last week we changed the rules of the Senate. To address another important issue, the economy.

“Voting rights are preservative of all other rights. They lay the ground for all of the other debates.”

This is a step—a change in the Senate rules—we haven't been willing to take to save our broken democracy, but one that a bipartisan majority of this chamber thought was necessary in order to keep our economy strong. We changed the rules to protect the full faith and credit of the United States government. We've decided we must do it for the economy, but not for the democracy.

So, Madam President, I will be honest, this has been a difficult week for me as I've pondered how am I going to vote on this debt ceiling question we're about to take.

I feel like I'm being asked to take a road that is a point of moral dissonance for me. Because while I deeply believe that both our democracy and our economy are important, I believe that it is misplaced to change the Senate rules only for the benefit of the economy when the warning lights on our democracy are flashing at the same time.

I happen to believe that our democracy is at least as important as the economy. Ours is a great nation, built upon both free enterprise and the free exercise of basic democratic rights. You cannot have good capitalism without freedom. Each is strengthened by the other. And together, they make for a nation that is both prosperous and free, a nation where everybody can breathe and every child has a chance to live up to her highest potential.

And so I stand here because of my children. My two precious children. And I think every day about what kind of country I want them to grow up in. I stand here today because we're in a place, we're dealing with the consequence of misaligned values and misplaced priorities. And that is for me a serious problem, because I lead Ebenezer Baptist Church where John Lewis worshipped, and where Dr. King preached, and I asked myself all weekend as I wrestled with how I would vote, I asked myself what would Dr. King do?

And I thought this week about Dr. King's speech in front of the Lincoln memorial. No, not the 1963 I Have a Dream speech. But the one he gave the first time he spoke in front of the Lincoln memorial in 1957, where he addressed what he called, quote, “all types of conniving methods that were getting in the way of the free exercise of the constitutional right to vote,” his rallying cry that day, in 1957, was [“give us the ballot.”](#)

So, Madam President, in light of the conniving methods of voter suppression we have seen enacted into law since the January 6th attack on the Capitol, I come to the floor today to share with the people of Georgia and the American people the message that I shared with my colleagues over the weekend and earlier today during our caucus meeting.

I said to my Democratic colleagues over the last several days, number one, unfortunately, the vast majority of our Republican friends have made it clear that they have no intention of trying to work with us to address voter suppression or to protect voting rights. They have embodied by their actions the sentiments of conservative strategist Paul Weyrich, who dared say in 1981, quote, [“I don't want everybody to vote.”](#) That's what he said.

“Elections are not won by a majority of people. They never have been from the beginning of our country, and they are not now. As a matter of fact,” he went on to say, “our leverage in the elections, quite candidly, goes up as the voting populace goes down.”

Second thing I said to my Democratic colleagues today is that while we cannot let our Republican friends off the hook for not being equitable governing partners, if we're serious about protecting the right to vote that's under assault right now, here's the truth: it will fall to Democrats to do it. If Democrats alone must raise the debt ceiling, then Democrats alone must raise and repair the ceiling of our democracy. How do we in good conscience justify doing one and not the other?

Some of my Democratic colleagues are saying well, what about bipartisanship? Isn't that important? I say of course it is. But here's the thing we must remember: slavery was bipartisan. Jim Crow segregation was bipartisan. The refusal of womens' suffrage was bipartisan. The denial of the basic dignity of members of the LGBTQ community has long been bipartisan. The [Three-Fifths Compromise](#) was the creation of a punitive national unity at the expense of black people's basic humanity. So when colleagues in this chamber talk to me about bipartisanship—which I believe in—I just have to ask, at whose expense? Who is being asked to foot the bill for this bipartisanship?

And is liberty itself the cost? I submit that that's a price too high and a bridge too far. And so I struggled this weekend. I talked to folks I believe in. Among them, I spoke with Reverend Ambassador Andrew Young, who was with Dr. King until the very end, about this vote. I talked to Ambassador Young, and I asked him, “what do you think?” And he said, “I try not to worry, but I'm worried about our country.”

And then this 89-year-old battle-worn soldier in the nonviolent army of the Lord drew silent on the phone. Then he said to me, “tell your colleagues that among your constituents are people who literally laid their lives on the line for the basic right to vote. They lost friends. They lost so much.” And so this is a real moral quandary for me, and it makes it difficult for me to cast this vote today, but after many conversations, with colleagues, with Georgians, with experts who know the economy, with voting rights advocates

[see WARNOCK on page 7]

[WARNOCK from page 7]

and civil rights leaders, I will indeed vote today with anguish.

I will vote to raise the debt ceiling. I'm voting yes because I'm thinking about the kids in the Kayton Homes housing projects where I grew up in Savannah, Georgia. I'm thinking about the hardworking families pushing to recover from the pressures of this pandemic, those on the margins and those who are least resilient, for whom a collapse of the economy would be catastrophic.

And ironically, many of these are the same people who are also being targeted by the voter suppression efforts I mentioned earlier. I'm thinking of them and the people of Georgia as I cast my vote today to raise the debt ceiling.

But I'm also thinking about what we need to do to keep our democracy and our economy strong today and for the next generation. Once we handle the debt ceiling, the Senate needs to make voting rights the very next issue we take

up. We must do voting rights, and we must deal with this issue now. So let me be clear: I'm so proud of what we did with the bipartisan infrastructure bill and the major economic investments we're putting finishing touches on that will close the Medicaid coverage gap and deliver historic relief to Georgia farmers and expand broadband access and so much more.

But, Madam President, I have to tell you that the most important thing that we can do this Congress is to get voting rights done. Voting rights are preservative of all other rights. They lay the ground for all of the other debates. And so to my Democratic colleagues, I say while it is deeply unfortunate, it is more than apparent that it has been left to us to handle alone the task of safeguarding our democracy.

Sadly, many of our Republican friends have already cast their vote with voter suppression. And so the judgment of history is upon us. Future generations will ask when the democracy was in a

9-1-1 state of emergency, what did you do to put the fire out?

Did we rise to the moment or did we hide behind procedural rules? I believe that we Democrats can figure out how to get this done, even if that requires a change in the rules—which we established just last week that we can do when the issue is important enough. Well, the people of Georgia and across the country are saying that voting rights are important enough. I think that voting rights are important enough. And so we cannot delay. We must continue to urge the party of Lincoln not to give in to the very forces of voter suppression that Dr. King described in that 1957 speech while standing in the shadow of Lincoln. But even as we do that, we cannot wait. We cannot wait on them. With uncanny and eerie relevance, Dr. King's words summoned us to this very moment. He said "the hour is late. The clock of destiny is ticking out, and we must act now before it is too late."

Madam President, I yield the floor.

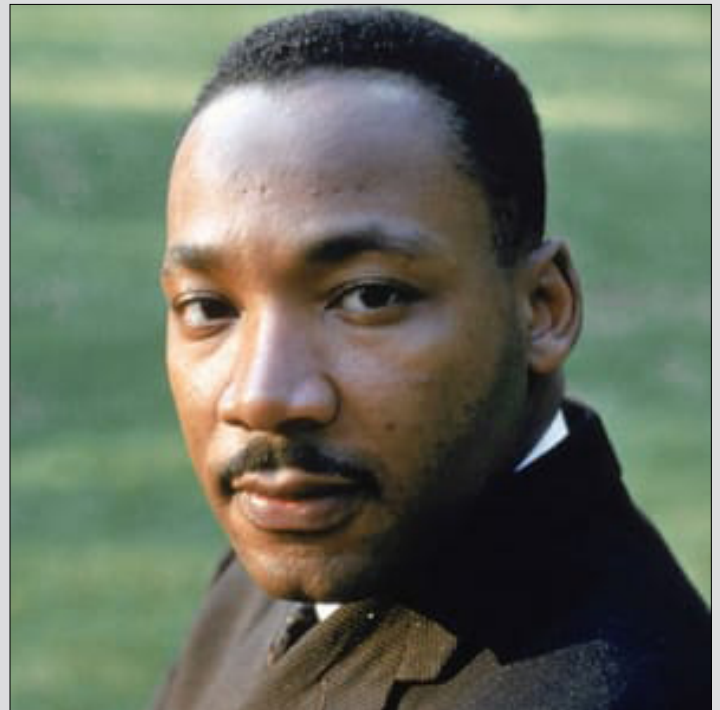
Honor the legacy of Dr. King with voting rights legislation

Members of the King family and a long list of progressive organizations are calling on the US Senate to honor Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday this month [more with legislation than with celebration](#).

As Senator Raphael Warnock points out in the speech reprinted in this newsletter, the Senate somehow managed to change its rules in order to raise the debt ceiling but now finds itself powerless in the face of the filibuster when the issue is voting rights. Martin Luther King III put it this way:

"We should not have to march once again for the same basic voting rights my father and civil rights leaders secured in the 1960s. But as my father would have, we will continue to use our voices to call for what is right, what is just, and what is equitable. It is long past time that we stop bending to the filibuster as it enables dangerous obstruction to persist. Together, we demand that Democrats abolish the filibuster and pass the [Freedom to Vote Act](#) and the [John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act](#) now."

We should not have to march again for the Voting Rights Act of 1965, but apparently, we do. Marches are planned for the weekend of Martin Luther King Day in Arizona and Washington DC. They will march over bridges, both to evoke the memory of the historic march over [the Edmund Pettus Bridge](#) and to highlight the irony that the Senate can build bridges but not pass voting rights.



Absent a global pandemic, we would likely have marches in every American city. As it is, we can support the effort by signing the [Moveon.org petition](#) created by Martin Luther King III and by emailing [Senator Dianne Feinstein](#) and [Senator Alex Padilla](#) and giving them no peace until they do whatever it takes to pass the [Freedom to Vote Act](#) and the [John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act](#).

In December, about a week before Christmas, Santa Claus made an appearance in Leimert Park. Some of our Club members were there to help give out food and presents



Club Second Vice President Jeanna Harris



LA County Supervisor Holly Mitchell and Santa

The photos on this page were taken by Culver City Democratic Club member Karim Sahli. See more of Karim's photos on next page.



Corresponding Secretary Cynthia Hart, Supervisor Holly Mitchell, Assemblymember Isaac Bryan, and Newsletter Editor Pete Rockwell



Assemblymember Bryan and Michele Reed



Assemblymember Isaac Bryan and Jeanna Harris

Medicare For All!

CalCare single payer legislation update

California's legislative session begins **NEXT WEEK**, which means now is our time to pass historic, single-payer health care in California.

To kick things off, California Nurses Association is organizing a CalCare Day of Action on Saturday, January 8th, with car caravans across the state to push for the passage of AB 1400, the California Guaranteed Health Care for All Act. [State Senator Sydney Kamlager is a co-author of AB 1400.]

California Nurses Association will host a large car rally in Sacramento, followed by a car caravan to the Capitol—and fourteen additional car caravans are being hosted by volunteers across the state. We need a huge turnout to show the widespread support for CalCare, so they're asking:

Will you sign up here to attend a caravan near you in West Hollywood or LA, on Saturday, January 8? After you sign up to attend, they will send you all event details and exact locations.

Here are the event details:

West Hollywood Car Caravan
West Hollywood Library
625 N. San Vicente Blvd.,
West Hollywood

Saturday, January 8, 1:00 PM
Los Angeles Car Caravan
"Cornfield" State Historic Park
1245 N. Spring Street, Los Angeles

"We've seen from the pandemic that employment-based health care doesn't work. Through CalCare we can guaran-

tee health care for all Californians," said co-author Assembly Member Alex Lee.

Here are the [core principles of CalCare](#):

Universal Coverage

Everybody in, nobody out.

Fully Comprehensive Benefits

Freedom to Choose Your Care Provider

No more "in network" or "out of network."

Free at the Point of Service

No more copays, premiums, or deductibles.

When the new session of the legislature opens in January, AB 1400 is one of the "two-year bills" that will finally get a hearing. It is expected that AB 1400 will go to the Assembly Health Committee on January 14th and to the Appropriations Committee January 21st. It is hoped that it will come to the Assembly floor on January 31st, which is the deadline for "two-year bills."

If you would like to submit a comment to the Health Committee, go to <https://ahea.assembly.ca.gov/> before noon on January 12th. For comments to the Appropriations Committee go to <https://apro.assembly.ca.gov/> before January 21st. It so happens that our very own Assembly Member Isaac Bryan sits on the Appropriations Committee. <https://a54.asmdc.org/contact>.

Sign up to [join the CalCare Car Caravan](#), happening in West Hollywood, on January 8th.

RSVP NOW



Two Years of COVID Have Forced Us to Recalibrate Our Concept of Hope

by [William Rivers Pitt](#)

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“I wish it was over for good or ill,” laments J.R.R. Tolkien’s over-curious hobbit, Pippin, on the eve of Sauron’s siege at Minas Tirith. “I am no warrior at all and dislike any thought of battle; but waiting on the edge of one that I can’t escape is worst of all. What a long day it seems already!”

A long day indeed. Waiting on the edge is what many of us have been doing for nearly two years now, and not only is there no end in sight, there is yet another unavoidable battle waiting for us out there beyond the torchlight. Omicron is rising, even in [my tiny little corner](#) of New England. If it isn’t everywhere already — how can we know, given the [shabby testing infrastructure](#) we’re still saddled with? — it will be soon.

My mother canceled the annual Christmas gathering at her house this year for fear of this thing. She was very matter-of-fact about it — and altogether certain it was the responsible thing to do (I agree, for the record) — but I could hear the sadness in her voice nonetheless. Our family has never been Currier and Ives when it comes to this season, but it remains a beloved touchstone, especially now that she is the grandmother of a genuinely astonishing 8-year-old. Another book of memories stolen before they could be made.

My family remains among the fortunate in this slow-grinding ordeal. According to a mid-December New York Times [report](#), COVID-19 has killed one out of every 100 people over the age of 65 in the U.S. That age group makes up a staggering 75 percent majority of the more than 800,000 who have died since all this began. That amounts to some 600,000 families who have lost an elder, leaving an empty seat at the Christmas dinner table.

Gloomy times all around. A small part of me envies those who have convinced themselves this is all [a big nothing noise](#), or have just decided they are [so](#)



[over it, you guys](#). A fair portion of them might be sick or dead by springtime, especially those who remain willfully unvaccinated, but in this moment such flat denialism must be invigorating.

To not feel like this anymore is deeply tempting, a harlequin abandonment of worries and doubts, until I realize I would rather be lonely and alive than an iconoclastic dying person in an overcrowded ICU, tube down my windpipe in service to lungs now made of ash, begging for the vaccine that can’t help me anymore. A double-vaxxed friend who caught the Delta variant said it felt like her bones were on fire. Yeah, no, in the [immortal words](#) of Simple Minds, “I’ll be alone, dancin’, you know it baby...”

The hardest part is the change in perspective I need to make, if I want to keep my head on straight. That change? I have to stop believing this is all going to end someday soon, because it isn’t. A huge swath of the world remains unvaccinated, a dilemma that most Global North leaders don’t seem to be in any rush to address, and every one of those people is a potential petri dish for the next variant, and the next, and the next. Now comes Omicron, still a

mystery but a confirmed fast-mover. There is a [growing body of evidence](#) to suggest Omicron’s symptoms are “mild,” but compared to what? A bear mauling? “Mild” still sounds pretty damn bad, and worse if you are older and/or unvaccinated.

How does it end, then? I have no idea. Maybe it really doesn’t. All I do know is that these last two years, and the years I suspect are coming, have once again forced me to recalibrate my concept of hope. Hope for me used to be results-based: I hope for something, and it happens or it doesn’t. COVID, the climate collapse and the generalized awful that is modern American politics, broke that mold.

Hope, now, is for me an exercise to see if I still have it in me to hope, despite all the reasons not to that are staring me in the face. The effort of hoping yields its own rewards, no matter the outcome and as intangible as they may sometimes seem. I sound like the last line from Rita Hayworth and the Shawshank Redemption (“I hope.”), but it’s the truth. Right now, it’s all we’ve got as we stand like Pippin waiting for the next battle, hoping to have hope. □

William Rivers Pitt is a senior editor and lead columnist at Truthout. He is also a New York Times and internationally bestselling author of three books: [War on Iraq: What Team Bush Doesn’t Want You to Know](#), [The Greatest Sedition Is Silence](#) and [House of Ill Repute: Reflections on War, Lies, and America’s Ravaged Reputation](#). His fourth book, [The Mass Destruction of Iraq: Why It Is Happening, and Who Is Responsible](#), co-written with [Dahr Jamail](#), is available now on Amazon. He lives and works in New Hampshire. [More by this author](#).

Published December 25, 2021.
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