



Santa Monica Democratic Club

Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 2

November 2015

Presidents' Address

by Jay Johnson

Greetings, Santa Monica Democrats!

Honors and Political Celebrities

Congratulations to Club Co-President Maryanne Solomon, 2015 "Democrat of the Year" from our 50th Assembly District! The award was conferred by the Los Angeles County Democratic Party at a gala dinner November 8 at the Hyatt Regency in Long Beach. Thirty Santa Monica Democrats were among those attending, including Councilmember Sue Himmelrich, Santa Monica College Trustee Louise Jaffe and Cheri Orgel, Deputy Director to Congressmember Julia Brownley. They led a contingent of Club Executive Board members and grassroots activists from various groups in Santa Monica and numerous individuals. The printed program included congratulatory ads to Maryanne from Santa Monica Mayor Kevin McKeown, Assemblymember Richard Bloom, and the

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AD50 Democrat of the Year Maryanne Solomon

The event featured remarks from Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, State Attorney General Kamala Harris, and Insurance Commissioner Dave Jones. During the dinner program, video messages were aired from Democratic Presidential candidates Martin O'Malley, Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton.

National Stage - Presidential Candidates

The entertainment value of the Republican candidates has added many of us to the viewership. Entertainment aside, their positions on issues are shocking many Americans. On Immigration, Economy/Taxation, Syria/Middle East, the positions are unrealistic, appealing only to their early-state bases, never to be enacted by any Congress, and insulting to large groups worldwide. Prediction: Rubio and Cruz, both with Cuban roots, will be left standing as voters tire of Trump, Carson and their know-nothing rhetoric. Bush, Christie, Jindal, Huckabee and Fiorina won't catch on. Paul is too extreme for the Republicans. Kasich seems too moderate and knowledgeable for the base.

On the Democratic side, Hillary is still way ahead of Bernie in the Southern States, with Bernie doing well in the Northeast. Some columnists claim Bernie is "sheepdogging" the liberals and progressives within the Party to keep them excited for party activities and organizing.

Local Party Events

Our Santa Monica Club has had compelling monthly programs at the main library, dealing

with Education, Water, and the Environment.

On November 18 the Club presents a forum on the proposed \$15 minimum wage in Santa Monica. Please attend: 7:00 pm, Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Boulevard to share your thoughts about this proposal to improve living standards in Santa Monica.

Public Education Event Recap

by Barbi Appelquist

On Wednesday, September 30, the Santa Monica Democratic Club hosted "Back to School: Public Education in our Community." The monthly membership meeting at the Santa Monica Public Library Main Branch had guest speakers State Senator Ben Allen, Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District Board Member Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein, and Santa Monica College Trustee Louise Jaffe. About 50 members attended this very informative meeting.

SMC Trustee Jaffe opened up the evening with a PowerPoint presentation detailing the 1960 Master Plan for California Education and how the state and our students are doing. She was followed by Senator Allen who continued the conversation by highlighting what the state is doing to close the achievement gap and provide opportunities to all of our students. SMMUSD School Board Member Tahvildaran-Jesswein wrapped up the presentations with a focus on what our local public schools are doing to provide these opportunities to all of our students, including the ones who have the greatest need. The evening concluded with questions from the audience and more detailed information about how Proposition 13 and Proposition 98 changed the funding of public education.

Thank you to our elected officials and all of our members who attended.

Support for Living Wage Initiative

by Mayor Kevin McKeown



Santa Monica Democrats have long championed workers' rights and the fight against income inequality. Fifteen years after business interests snatched a local living wage out the pockets of family breadwinners, Santa Monica is poised before year's end to enact a fair and just minimum wage that will set the standard for the region.

Building on progress already made at the Los Angeles City and County levels, Santa Monica has proposed not only a phased rise to \$15 an hour for the lowest paid of our local workers, but groundbreaking precedents like "union supercession," paid sick days, and a guarantee that if employers try to siphon tips with "service charges," all that money must go only to workers, including back-of-house employees in restaurants.

Santa Monica has for years required all City employees and workers for City contractors be paid an enhanced local minimum wage, currently \$15.37 an hour. Now, though, the national dialogue on extending higher minimum wages to everyone in our economy has encouraged us to bring these benefits to all the workers who make our local economy thrive.

While wage increases will phase in for most sectors of our economy, allowing businesses to adjust, Santa Monica's hospitality industry enjoys special support and protection from our community, and higher profitability due to our desirability as a travel destination. Therefore,

like Los Angeles before us, we will raise the wages of all hotel workers immediately to the same level as our City workers, contractors, and workers covered under recently approved hotel Development Agreements.

By unanimous vote, our City Council has already supported "union supercession" and thereby committed to preserving workers' collective bargaining rights.

Restaurants have been vociferous in complaining that tipped workers don't deserve a minimum wage. Some have threatened to append mandatory "service charges" to customers' bills, which uninformed patrons will almost certainly assume are a standardized "tip." If so, in Santa Monica, the Council has agreed that any money so collected must go to workers in addition to their wages, not be skimmed off by restaurant owners to compensate for their payroll increases.

Right now further outreach is underway to make sure we get all the details right in our minimum wage ordinance. We will go to a vote of the City Council in December. As your Mayor, I hope to make Santa Monica a reference city for workers' rights — and that's something of which Santa Monica Democrats can be proud.

SMDC Letter to Congressman Ted Lieu regarding the Iran Deal

July 20, 2015

The Santa Monica Democratic Club has been a strong supporter of yours for many years. Last spring, we were one of the first clubs to endorse your bid for Congress. Over the last seven months, you have proven yourself to be a hard-working and effective member of Congress, worthy of the seat formerly held by the great Rep. Henry Waxman, who represented our community for four decades.

We are writing today to express our full-throated support of the Obama Administration's historic deal with Iran, which was announced last

week. Just over a decade ago, a previous administration led the drumbeat to war in Iraq based on fabricated evidence and scare tactics. As you know, this resulted in one of the greatest foreign policy disasters in American history with its effects still being felt today throughout the Middle East. When then Senator Barack Obama campaigned for the presidency in 2007 and 2008, he made his opposition to this war a core tenant of his candidacy; he believed in war only as a last resort, and he promised to exhaust all diplomatic options first.


True to his word, the Obama Administration, along with five international partners, have negotiated an agreement that serves the vital national security interests of the United States and its allies, including Israel. The deal drastically reduces Iran's nuclear stockpile by 97% in addition to its number of centrifuges and the amount of uranium that can be enriched. Most importantly, this deal contains the most invasive inspection program that has ever been part of any international deal, and it gives us the ability to reinstate sanctions at any point if we feel Iran is violating its terms.

The Santa Monica Democratic Club, with its 280 members, believes that peace is a

fundamental progressive value. To not accept the terms of this deal would mean that Iran could continue its nuclear weapons program without the fear of crippling sanctions or intrusive inspections. Ultimately, we fear this would lead us down the inevitable path to a war with Iran, a truly unacceptable outcome.

We trust that you will evaluate the specifics of this deal over the weeks to come and are hopeful that you will ultimately support the deal. Our club looks forward to supporting you as you face reelection as well as in the years to come. We thank you for looking out for the interests of our community, and, of course, we invite you any time to address our club at a future meeting.

(Congressman Lieu eventually opposed the Iran deal. To read his full statement regarding the deal, please go to: <https://lieu.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/congressman-lieu-statement-agreement-iran>)

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