



Questions for the DNC Chair Candidates - 2017

From Democrats Abroad

Answers of Raymond Buckley

1) Why are you running for DNC Chair?

In order to achieve the America we believe in – one that provides opportunity and justice for all – we need to elect more Democrats across the country. The DNC must be radically reformed into a much more effective engine to support and strengthen the work of state and local party organizations, including Democrats Abroad. As a vice chair of the DNC, I have been frustrated by the way it operates and its focus on only presidential elections, at the expense of other critical down-ballot elections. I believe my experience as a State Party Chair, as the President of the Association of State Democratic Chairs, and as a former elected official makes me the right person at this point to make the changes that need to be made.

2) How would you describe your management style? What is your relevant organizational management experience? Would you work as a full time or part time Chair, and if part time, how would you manage?

I strongly believe that to effectively manage a large, diverse organization like the DNC, the chair needs to share decision-making and delegate responsibilities. My detailed proposals for restructuring the management of the DNC are included in my reform plan. For ten years, I have successfully led the New Hampshire Democratic Party through several winning election cycles in a purple state. I would be a full-time chair of the DNC and, for me, chairing the DNC is not a stepping-stone to some other opportunity.

3) Do you think the position should be filled by a single Chair or by two Co-Chairs, as has sometimes been done in the past?

While I would be thrilled to serve as the single Chair of the DNC, I actually believe two Co-Chairs, with one focused on message and one focused on operations, would be the best structure for the next four years.

4) What lessons should we learn from the 2016 elections and what do they mean for our strategy going forward? How are we going to attract voters who did not turn out for Democrats in 2016?

I believe the reason that New Hampshire Democrats withstood the Republican tides in both 2016 and 2014 was due to the strength of our state and local party organizations. I remain convinced that the most effective way to persuade voters is direct contact from friends and neighbors, not expensive TV ads. If I am elected Chair of the DNC, the focus of the DNC will be to strengthen state and territorial parties and Democrats Abroad.

5) What changes should be made at the DNC to make it a more effective organization?

Attached you will find my detailed plan to reform the DNC.

6) Democrats Abroad members vote in all 50 states. What are your views on implementing a 50-State Strategy? What role do you see for Democrats Abroad?

As stated above, I believe the focus of the DNC should be strengthening state and territorial parties and Democrats Abroad. Attached you will find my 15-point plan to strengthen state parties. It is clear that the effectiveness of our Get Out The Vote effort was significantly enhanced by the hard work of Democrats Abroad. In fact, this past cycle in New Hampshire we found that the number of overseas ballots equaled the win margin for New Hampshire's US Senate race. The positive impact made by Democrats Abroad was critical here – and their role should be a key feature in every state nationwide.

7) Concerning Democrats Abroad (DA):

- **How would you plan to include Democrats Abroad in the DNC's resource allocations in future election cycles?**

In my 15 point plan, I outline the details of how the DNC will greatly improve and expand support for state parties, including Democrats Abroad. In addition I would consider agreeing to allocate a percent of DNC raised monies raised abroad to Democrats Aboard and your programs.

- **Would you ensure that DA is allocated funding (like other state parties) under the State Party Program (SPP) to use for an Executive Director as well as Communications and GOTV initiatives aboard?**

Yes, under my plan Democrats Aboard (as noted above) would get allocated funding based on the percent of monies raised and would be

able to apply for grants for additional support and staff.

- **Would you agree to designate a point person within the DNC for Democrats Abroad, allowing us easy and effective interface with the Party?**

Yes, Democrats Abroad would have a full-time Executive Director at the DNC acting as a point person for membership.

8) Like voters in all states, Democrats Abroad members have concerns specific to overseas Americans. What is the best medium for state parties like us to raise these issues within the Democratic Party and see them addressed?

As Chair, I would assist in organizing an annual meeting with our elected Democratic leadership (White House and Congressional leaders) to meet with Democrats Aboard senior representatives in order to hear points of view and concerns, and improve communication and relationships overall.

9) What other remarks would you like to make to Democrats Abroad?

The importance of grassroots organizing is not something I discovered when I decided to run for DNC chair. It's been my life's work. I started out in politics as a teenage organizer for Jimmy Carter's 1976 presidential campaign. I was elected a County Chair at age 18, and since then I've worked for the Democratic Party at the local, state, and national levels in nearly every capacity. I know what it's like to be a candidate for office because I've put my name on the ballot and won. I represented the largely blue-collar mill city of Manchester both as a City Alderman and a State Representative. I believe I have the experience, skills and passion to change and lead the DNC.