

# Senator Feinstein Kinda Sorta Working On It



As an Executive Board member of the California Democratic Party, I was invited to attend "Breakfast with Diane" where Senator Diane Feinstein spoke



about her re-election bid. It was kind of sad to see her there fighting for the endorsement of the Party she had represented as a U.S. Senator for 24 years. She had failed to get the endorsement at the state convention and now she was being challenged again at the Executive Board meeting by Kevin DeLeon, former President Protem of the California State Senate

Many delegates felt she had become completely out-of-touch with the grassroots of the Party not having attended a state convention since 2004. In addition to being out-of-touch, she was not as progressive as Party activists felt she should have been and had voted with Republicans on a number of bills that were supported or opposed by a majority of Democrats.

Marijuana legislation was high on this list as she was the only Democrat on the Appropriations Committee to vote against the Rohrabacher/Farr amendment which prevents the Dept. of Justice from enforcing federal marijuana laws against medical marijuana patients and providers in states that have legalized its use. Over the years there was hardly a single drug prohibition law that she didn't support.



Two months after failing to obtain the State Party's endorsement at the Feb. 2018 state convention, she did an about-face on her long-standing anti-marijuana position and changed her stance to being in favor of allowing states to proceed with marijuana legalization without federal interference. That was a bold and very welcome move but it was not enough to get her into the good graces of the Party's grassroots activists and DeLeon wound up receiving the Party's endorsement.

Endorsement or not, Feinstein is expected to wallop DeLeon in the November election as she has way more money for her campaign than DeLeon and way way more name recognition. It is also unlikely many Republicans will vote for the far more progressive DeLeon as well as the many Democrats who for the last two decades have professed a great deal of admiration and respect for her many years of service and her legislative clout.

As an Eboard member, I did have a chance to speak with her briefly (and once again briefly is the watchword) at the "Breakfast with Diane." I took advantage of a momentary meeting to ask her what she could do as a U.S. Senator to get the marijuana legislation that has been bottled up by Republican leadership to the Senate floor for a vote. If this legislation ever got out of committee for a floor vote, it would almost certainly be passed given the overwhelming number of Democrats that support it and the significant minority of Republicans that also support ending marijuana prohibition.

To my question she briefly replied that this is a "difficult issue" and that she is "working on it." Then her legislative aides gently hustled me out but not before taking a picture of me with the esteemed senior Senator from California.

