

March 2015

Valentine Party	1
Calendar/Better Health Insurance	2
Resolution by DDC Board	3



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## Love Your Electeds



Board member Shannon McCall did an outstanding job of decorating I-House and organizing the DDC's annual *Love your Electeds* Party. As a change from the routine potluck, the party featured a tasty sampling of "heavy hors d'oeuvres" (photo below).

This event, which provides an opportunity to acknowledge and thank our outstanding local elected leaders for their service, was attended by Sen. Lois Wolk, Assemblymember-emertus Mariko Yamada, Supervisor Jim Provenza, Yolo Guardian Cass Sylvia, and school board members Alan Fernandes and Barbara Archer (see photos). In marked contrast to the severe difficulties, which confronted all levels of government in recent years, each of our honorees reported positive developments, improvements which resulted from implementing progressive Democratic policies. In short, there is much to celebrate.



One outstanding leader who helped us successfully weather the storm, Senator Lois Wolk, indicated that she will take on two key legislative issues during her remaining term saying "...everyone should be vaccinated" and "...there must be a better way" referring to end-of life -egislation that she plans to introduce. We are very well served.



# Democratic News

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## Calendar of Events & Campaign Activities

**Tuesday, Mar. 3, 7:00-9:00 pm, Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting.** The Board conducts planning and attends to routine Club business. All members are invited to attend and participate in discussions. Blanchard Room, Davis Library.

**Saturday, May 9, 3:00-8:00 pm, Garamendi Basque BBQ.** Great food and entertainment. RSVP <[www.garamendi.org/bbq](http://www.garamendi.org/bbq)> for donations and travel information to the venue, "Touch the Earth Ranch," located near Paloma CA.

## **WORKING TOWARDS A BETTER HEALTH INSURANCE SYSTEM** *by Dan Braunstein, Vice Chair, Health Care for All - CA*



When the World Health Organization rated the national health care systems of 191 countries in terms of "fairness," the United States ranked fifty-fourth! Health care expenses due to high deductibles, copays, and limitations of insurance coverage are the largest cause of personal bankruptcies in our country. Not only is our system unfair to much of our population, it is far, far more expensive, per capita, than most countries, including Canada, Germany, Japan, France. Our reliance on for-profit insurance companies (i.e. Anthem Blue Cross, Humana, Aetna, and others), plus our national system of em-

ployment-based health insurance, are major culprits.

How can we create a change from one of the most dysfunctional health insurance systems of any developed country of the world? It is possible, both at the federal and state level. In the last few Congresses, there has been a bill (HR 676), introduced by Michigan Rep. Conyers, creating "Medicare for All, with over 40 co-authors. (Congressman Garamendi is currently not one of them.)

Medicare is a form of *single-payer* insurance system, in which a non-profit payer covers substantial medical and hospital expenses for all, according to a publicly available reimbursement schedule. Contrary to its detractors, "Single payer" is not a government-run health care system. Sutter, U. C. Davis, Kaiser, and Dignity Health (Woodland), would still run their systems independently.

True, this bill has not gone anywhere, even when Democrats controlled the House. But if enough grass-roots support emerges, plus significant business leaders get fed up with the current system, who knows?

There are grass-roots based advocacy groups working to influence change in the direction of single-payer systems through state legislation as well. In California, we have an **All Care Alliance** formed by *Health Care for All- CA*, *Physicians for a National Health Program-CA*, and *CA One-Care*.

In 2006, at the urging of Davis long-time reformer Pat Williams, I formed a Yolo County chapter of HCA. (*Continued p 3*)

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***Health Care continued from p 2***

While not one of the larger chapters in the state, the Yolo chapter has had a steady paid membership of under 40. Millie Braunstein and Jerry Marr are currently directors; I am now state vice-chair. Davis, a city with a progressive political tradition, and many professionals who have health care concerns, should have a considerably larger chapter enrollment! One can join on-line at [www.healthcareforall.org](http://www.healthcareforall.org).

Many Californians are not aware that the Affordable Care Act contains a provision allowing individual states to opt out by 2017, if they can show that they have enacted an actuarially equivalent insurance system. Californians have been working towards a single-payer bill since the 1990s. A single-payer bill was passed by our legislature in 2006 and 2008, only to be vetoed by Gov. Schwarzenegger. Assemblymember Mariko Yamada has been a co-author. When Don Saylor was mayor, he led the Davis city council to pass a resolution of support. The Davis Joint Unified School District also passed a similar resolution. Now, more support from local businesses is needed. Many long term supporters feel that this is the time for grass roots action!

**The following letter was approved by the DDC Board and sent to Senators Feinstein and Boxer and Congressman Garamendi:**

**PASSPORT (\$50+)**

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We have serious concerns about Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu addressing a joint session of Congress. This was done without the participation of the President and the Secretary of State. It is clear that the Republican leadership in Congress and the Government of Israel are using this address in an effort to embarrass the President. Please do not forget, Netanyahu directly injected himself in the 2012 presidential election and gave statements supporting the positions of Mitt Romney in an effort to defeat Obama. This address was conceived by Republicans in Congress and the ultra right wing government in Israel. As is well known the Republican Party operative, Romney supporter and now the Israeli ambassador to the US, Ron Dermer orchestrated this visit.

What is worse than this violation of diplomatic protocol is that Netanyahu's address is being designed to undermine the current negotiations between the US and Iran over the current dispute over various nuclear issues. These negotiations have the potential to lead to an agreement that could end three decades of conflict between the US and Iran. This conflict has verged on war a few times over that period.

The President and the Secretary of State have a real opportunity to bring an end to this tragic situation. We support the Administration in these efforts to normalize relations with Iran and trust Secretary Kerry and President Obama's judgment to protect America's interests. Of course, as is abundantly clear, Israel is opposed to any agreement between the United States and Iran.

In our support of President Obama, we urge you:

- i) Do not attend Netanyahu's upcoming speech before Congress.
  - ii) Give public support to Secretary Kerry's and President Obama's efforts to normalize relations with Iran.
- (For the Board of Directors of the Davis Democratic Club, Stephern Souza)

Democratic Newsletter

**Garamendi Basque  
BBQ  
Sat., May 9  
(See Calendar for  
Information.)**

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