

State Committee Report

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It occurred to me as I was writing this that it is going to be my final report as your State Committeeman, as I was elected District Leader in June and in keeping with the concept of Ryan's Rules, I did not wish to remain in both roles simultaneously. I have committed to resigning from my post as State Committeeman by year end. So this is an end to a (tiny) era. Thank you for your support for me over all this time.

I have served as State Committeeman for over a dozen years, having been elected in September 2010 in a competitive primary against Bob Ginsberg, who had previously held the post for decades until he lost it in the 2008 primary to Larry Hirsch, who subsequently moved out of state and could not continue in the role. Bob sought to retake his old post in the following cycle, and I stepped forward after several other candidates withdrew. It was a competitive primary, and I won with 55% of the vote. Bob periodically threatened to run several times after that election, but he never did.

The job, mostly ceremonial, has given me a chance to visit all three clubs in the 69th Assembly District and give reports about the State Committee. On occasion there I was able to exercise the power to vote for someone running statewide in the annual state Democratic Party conventions. My vote had more weight due to the higher turnout in the 69th AD over virtually any other district in the state -- still only about 1% or so, but enough that a good handful of us downstate members with high-voter turnout districts could place someone on the ballot without collecting signatures statewide if they got 25% of the weighted vote. Perhaps the most fraught moment was in the leadup to the 2018 gubernatorial election, when Cynthia Nixon was running for Governor as a protest to incumbent Cuomo's reactionary and centrist policies. Two clubs, Broadway Democrats and Three Parks Democrats, were overwhelmingly in favor of supporting Nixon to send a message to Cuomo. At Hofstra in the spring of 2018, when a handful of us voted for Nixon over Cuomo, you could have heard a pin drop in the room of 1,000 people as we registered our dissent one by one in a roll-call vote. I

caught flack for it from Cuomo loyalists afterwards, but then it faded once Cuomo resigned.

As State Committeeman I was also one of the founders and an officer of the Progressive Caucus. It was initially created as a reaction to the perception of misogyny and compromised leadership of the existing Reform Caucus, but it eventually grew to become the main vehicle for reform in the State Party, and most of the resolutions we vote on in the body today come from the Progressive Caucus. Sadly, the biggest issue has yet to be addressed – which is Jay Jacobs' continued leadership of the State Party and its dismal performance over the past several election cycles. That Jay is an *improvement* over previous party leaders is indicative of how awful our state organization has been for years. My work on making the NY State Democratic Party nimbler and more responsive to its constituents remains unfinished, I intend to continue the work in my role as District Leader, but someone else will have to carry it on my place as State Committeeman.

As I write this final report, I also want to reflect on the recent decision by Assemblyman Danny O'Donnell not to seek re-election. It has been an honor to work alongside him in his fight for progressive values, and I have celebrated the victories and mourned the setbacks and defeats. His presence in Albany, his independent voice, and his sense of humor will be missed and impossible to replace. I briefly considered running to succeed him in the primary next year, but the impact on my family would have been too much. As many of you know, I ran for City Council in 2021, and that campaign was hard on my family. My son is 11, and spending time in Albany fighting for the needs of this district would mean spending proportionately less time with my son, time that we would never get back. I will not be a candidate for the Assembly this cycle. But perhaps there will be another opportunity to serve in public office, and I will see how the future unfolds.

Former Assemblyman Ed Sullivan offered me a great piece of advice, which was "be prepared for luck." I was not prepared this time - but I will be for

the next one, should it emerge, in the years to come.

Thank you for all the love, advice, and support over the past dozen-plus years. It has been an honor to serve as your State Committeeman, and I look forward to working with you in 2024 as we save our democracy, reelect Biden, keep the Senate, and take back the House.