

Newsletter: May 2012

May Meeting: Thursday, May 24, 2012, 6:15 pm at Crow Canyon Country Club

SPEAKER: Ro Khanna, U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce 2009-2011

TOPIC: Manufacturing, Innovation and the American Economy



Ro Khanna will speak about why manufacturing is still key to America's future. He will discuss why America is still competitive in manufacturing, and policies that can help our economic growth. Ro will discuss how President Obama's economic policies are intended to foster innovation and give rise to new industries. Ro's forthcoming book on the American economy will be released in August and can be found on Amazon.com.

Ro Khanna was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and is a resident of Fremont, California. He served the Obama Administration as Deputy Assistant Secretary of

Commerce. In this capacity, Ro oversaw 109 commerce offices that helped our manufacturers export and create jobs. Ro is a member of the board of Planned Parenthood, the board of I-Gate, a volunteer for *We The People*, and board member of *Tri Valley Innovation*. He has a forthcoming book entitled, "Entrepreneurial Nation: Why Manufacturing is Still Key To America's Future." He is a graduate of the University of Chicago in Economics and a graduate of the Yale Law School.

LOCAL SPEAKER: Steve Phillips- Chair and Founder of PowerPAC



Steve will speak about PAC+, a new national social justice political action committee with chapters in 15 states across the country, including Contra Costa County. Steve Phillips is a national advocacy organization that conducted the country's largest independent expenditure effort in support of Barack Obama during the 2008 Presidential primaries. In 2010, PowerPAC raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to help Kamala Harris make history by becoming the first woman and the first person of color to be elected Attorney General.

Dinner is \$25 per person for members and their invited guests, \$30 for others.

A limited number of seats are available for those just wishing to hear the presentations-

Suggested donation is \$5

RSVP: Mail checks, made out to Jim Donnelly,
373 Century Circle, Danville, CA 94526
Or call him at (925) 570-9289

Please RSVP no later than Monday, May 21, 2012.

Note: Remember if you RSVP and no-show, you may be billed for the meal.

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Presidents Corner

It's primary election time and we have a new process to look forward to- The Open Primary. It is already having an impact on California politics. In the 15 Congressional district we are likely to have two Democrats fighting it out until November (Stark and Swalwell). The same scenario is taking place in Los Angeles where Sherman and Berman. These races will take money away from other races where a Democrat is facing a Republican in the November election. In the new 11th Assembly District, Jim Frazier, the California Democratic Party endorsed candidate is facing three other Democrats, a Republican and an Independent in the primary. He is in a tight race to see if he will be one of the two finalists who will advance to the November election, in this a traditionally Democratic district. Jim needs all of the help we can give to win a chance in the November election. There is the likelihood that no Democrat will be on the ballot in November. This outcome is what the Republican Maldonado was hoping for when he blackmailed our former Governor and the legislature into putting the open primary initiative on the ballot in 2010. Hopefully our citizens will wake up and see that the open primary is not in their best interests and we can once again get rid of it as we have done in the past.

Closer to home we have an important race for County Supervisor in the 2nd District; Tomi Van de Brooke versus Candice Anderson. I cannot stress enough how important it is for us to work to help Tomi in this primary. Unlike the other primary races, if someone gets more than 50 percent of the vote in June the election will be settled. Tomi has been endorsed by our club and all of our local democratic officials for this seat. There are many important differences between Tomi and Candice. Candice is a conservative that worked for Prop. 8, she is against marriage equality, funding for Planned Parenthood, and does not believe in Global Warming. These are only a few of the reasons we must work to defeat her in this election.

On a more encouraging note, President Obama has finally come out in support of marriage equality. He took this position even in the face of knowing that his stance would give much fodder to the far right. For this I applaud him. Last month I wrote that like others there are positions that the President has taken that I don't agree with and I was criticized for stating this position. The point I was trying to make then and I want to re-iterate again is that we don't have to agree with everything the president does to realize how important it is that we all get out and work to get him re-elected. One just has to consider the alternative, Mitt Romney who has

wholeheartedly embraced the very regressive positions of the far right of the Republican party. Here is a man who has pledged to undo the Affordable Care Act and the –Frank-Dodd financial reform act. He is a very rich person who does not have a clue how much the average American family is struggling. He is a rich man who wants to give even greater tax breaks to the rich at the expense of the rest of us. He is repeating the hawkish rhetoric of the Bush years and is all for expending our military even beyond what we have today. Our country and the planet cannot afford someone like Romney as President. I could go on and on, but I will save some for future months and I'm sure we will be bombarded by so much B.S. from the right from now until November.

We have some very interesting programs coming up in the following months I look forward to your support in making these events successful. Please save the date and plan to March with Congressman George Miller, Senator Mark DeSaulnier, Assemblywoman Joan Buchanan and your fellow Democrats in Danville's 4th of July parade. Also save the date, Saturday, September 8 for our annual SRVDC Bar-B-Que to be held at my home in Danville.

On a final note, take a moment out on Memorial Day to remember those who have given so much in service to our country. Have a good month.

Jim Donnelly- President SRVDC

“Men make history, and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better.” -Harry S. Truman

SRVDC Website

Just a reminder that our website <http://srvdems.org/> is up and running. Visit it to see upcoming events and to learn more about the activities of the club. Your comments on our web site, both positive and constructive, are appreciated. Let us know what additional information you would like to see included on the site. Brodie Hilp does a wonderful job of updating it with information of interest to us.

Local Endorsed Candidates

The San Ramon valley Democratic club has endorsed the following candidates in our local elections:

Tomi Van de Brooke-	Contra Costa County Supervisor, District 2
Joan Buchanan-	California State Assembly, District 15
Mark DeSaulnier-	California State Senate, District 7
George Miller-	U.S. Congress, District 11

The club took no endorsement position on U.S. Congress, District 15. The two Democratic candidates for this seat are:

Congressman Pete Stark
City Councilman Eric Swalwell

The California State Democratic Party has endorsed Congressman Stark for this seat. The State party has also endorsed both of the Propositions appearing on the ballot.

Be sure to get out and vote, your vote counts.

Danville 4th of July Parade

Save the date and get out your walking shoes. Once again we will be marching in the Danville parade. This year we will be joined by Congressman George Miller, State Senator Mark, DeSaulnier, Assemblywoman Joan Buchanan and members of our Democratic clubs in the area. We will also be entering a number of cars in the parade some that some may ride the route. Come on out and show our local representatives how much we support them and show the people that there are Democrats in the San Ramon Valley. The parade starts at about 9:00 Am and we should be finished around 11:00 AM. More details will follow over the next two months.

Member Editorials

Each month we invite you to present your views on about any subject you wish to discuss. This is an important way to understand what are major concerns for our members. Surely there are things going on that make your blood boil. Let it out, express your opinions here.

Reports from our Elected Officials

Congressman Jerry McNerney

Congressmen demand that Bay Delta Conservation Plan be fair and equitable

Central Valley Business Times

May 16, 2012

- Call the current delay the 'the last, best opportunity' to improve the plan
- Too many back-door deals, says congressman

The Bay Delta Conservation Plan, which could shape the course of California's history through the rest of the century and beyond, must be fair and equitable, say a group of California members of Congress.

The state has delayed releasing the controversial plan. On May 4, the Natural Resources Agency announced that environmental review documents for the Bay Delta Conservation Plan will not be ready for release by the end of June as originally planned.

Calling the most recent BDCP delay the "last, best opportunity to stand up to... unreasonable demands," Reps. Jerry McNerney, George Miller, Mike Thompson, Doris Matsui, and John Garamendi, are demanding specific steps be taken for the plan to move forward in a fair and transparent manner.

The five members from the California congressional delegation have been vocal in calling for changes to the BDCP and have demanded that any plan has significant input from the Bay-Delta region.

“We recognize that some are now calling for an immediate decision, but we believe that it is critical to get this right; a rushed and inadequate Bay-Delta planning effort will lead to increased litigation, uncertainty, and expense,” they say in letters sent Wednesday to Gov. Jerry Brown and Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar.

“I will not accept any plan for the Delta that is harmful to the farmers, families, and small business owners in the Delta region. To date, the planning process for Delta water has been unduly influenced by wealthy water contractors from south of the Delta who would steal our water, costing us millions of dollars and countless jobs,” says Mr. McNerney.

“This delay provides an opportunity for the state and federal governments to stand up to the water contractors and ensure that the BDCP includes the input of our region,” he says.

Mr. Miller says that more than five years into the process, the Bay Delta Conservation Plan still hasn’t met basic legal or scientific requirements.

“This is the last chance to fix it, and that’s why this delay is so important: it gives the scientists time to get it right,” says Mr. Miller. “The Bay-Delta’s health is key to California’s future – we can either work out a good plan that reduces reliance on the Delta, or we can end up with increased litigation, uncertainty, and expense.”

Mr. Thompson says there have been too many back-door deals that put the interests of South-of-Delta water contractors before all others.

Many of our families and small businesses that depend on the Delta would have their livelihood stripped away and the Delta’s diverse wildlife would be destroyed if these politically driven deals were put in place,” Mr. Thompson says. “Federal and state officials need to use this delay to come up with fair and transparent plan that is based on sound science so that our communities, businesses, fish, wildlife and environment in the Delta and north of the Delta are not harmed.”

Ms. Matsui says the plan must reflect due diligence and equitable treatment to all those affected. “I want to see the federal and state agencies take this opportunity to put forward a process and a plan for the Delta region that recognizes the input they’ve received not just from south of Delta interests, but north of Delta interests as well. Our state can’t afford to get this wrong,” she says.

Mr. Garamendi says that in addition to using the best available science, “we must focus on conservation, storage, and recycling to preserve our state’s ecosystems and to meet the water needs of nearly 40 million Californians.”

Congressman George Miller

Miller to be recognized by leading disability rights organization

May 1, 2012 11:06 AM

Miller to receive Kennedy Award for lifetime achievements on behalf of all people with disabilities

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Rep George Miller (D-Martinez) will be honored today by Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF) for his many years of work to advance the rights of all people with disabilities. Miller will be honored Tuesday night at the organization's 33rd anniversary celebration and will participate in a panel discussion on the disability rights movement and the challenges the disability rights movement currently faces.

Miller will receive the Edward M. Kennedy Award that honors individual lifetime achievements in advancing the rights of all people with disabilities. This award is named after its first recipient, the former senator from Massachusetts. Senator Kennedy's unwavering commitment to the rights of all Americans, including the 54 million with disabilities, has produced landmark civil rights legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Miller, appreciative of the award, thanked DREDF for their years of work advocating for civil rights for people with disabilities. "It is an honor to be recognized by the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund," Miller said of the award. "Senator Kennedy was a true champion for students and people with disabilities, and his work has made a real difference in the lives of so many. And this organization's work in the fight for civil rights for people with disabilities is an important part of the victories we've seen in the last 35 years. I have worked with good people at DREDF for decades and I will continue to work them and the entire disabilities community to support smart policies that protect and improve services for children and adults with disabilities."

Miller has a long history of fighting on behalf of people with disabilities and is a staunch supporter of civil rights for people with disabilities. Early in his career, he convened a Congressional "hearing" with protesters led by Judy Heumann and Ed Roberts at the federal Health, Education and Welfare department building (now known as HHS) in San Francisco demanding that Section 504 be implemented. At the time, Miller spoke out against proposed "separate but equal" facilities for people with disabilities.

Throughout his tenure in Congress, Miller has championed legislation of significance to people with disabilities, including the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (now known as IDEA). Working with Sen. Kennedy on what became known as the "No Child Left Behind Act," Miller insisted that schools be held accountable for the achievement of students with disabilities.

Most recently, Miller has championed the Keeping All Students Safe Act to establish minimum standards for restraint and seclusion in schools and to keep students safe in

the places where they learn. Studies show that tens of thousands of children are subject to dangerous seclusion and restraint practices in schools.

The Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, founded in 1979, is a leading national civil rights law and policy center directed by individuals with disabilities and parents who have children with disabilities.

Congressman John Garamendi

Garamendi Votes Against Escalation of Afghanistan War, Indefinite Detention, and Wasteful Spending

May 18, 2012 5:28 PM

FAIRFIELD, CA – Congressman John Garamendi (D-Fairfield, CA), a public servant for more than four decades, spent less of his office budget than more than 90% of his House colleagues, according to data released by Congress. In 2011, the Office of Congressman Garamendi spent 77.8% of its available budget, making the office more frugal than 395 of 436 offices in the House. This demonstrated fiscal restraint comes despite the need for three district offices to serve the sprawling 10th Congressional District and higher than national average costs in Northern California.

"I want to see less money spent on Congress and more resources paying down our deficit and investing in our schools, roads, health coverage, and veteran's services," Congressman Garamendi said. "I've balanced the checkbook for the family ranch. I know how to make more with less. I'm proud that we managed to stay so under budget while still maintaining robust communications with and support for 10th Congressional District residents."

In 2011 and early 2012, Garamendi hosted more than a dozen in person and telephone town halls, in addition to a resource fairs for job seekers, veterans, seniors, social services, and small businesses, and a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Workshop for counselors and mentors. In addition, Garamendi has hosted at least one town hall in 11 cities in the 10th Congressional District since entering Congress.

Congressman Pete Stark

Stark Praises Administration for Initial Action on His Call to Stop Abusive Medical Debt Collection Practices

10 May 2012 11:44

WASHINGTON -- Today, Rep. Pete Stark (D-CA), Ranking Member on the Ways and Means Health Subcommittee, issued the following statement in response to the news that the Administration has taken a first step on [his request for investigation into a debt collector](#) that allegedly has been demanding payment from patients in emergency rooms and at hospital bedsides (first reported by the [New York Times: In Congress, a Move to Look Into a Medical Debt Collector](#)).

Rep. Stark: "I'm very pleased that the Administration has quickly taken a first step to respond to my request for investigation into the potentially abusive debt collection practices being used inside hospitals. It appears that Accretive Health has been going after patients in emergency rooms and at their hospital bedsides. This is despicable behavior, but of most concern, their actions may bar patients from getting needed care and violate important patient protection laws.

"Unfortunately, Accretive cancelled a meeting last week during which we had hoped to hear their explanation. We're exploring whether their alleged practices are common within the medical debt collection sector or whether Accretive is an outlier that appears to be profiting from questionable practices. In either case, these abuses must be stopped."

Marilyn Tavenner, Acting Director of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, has [asked major hospital associations to warn their members](#) about the serious concerns and consequences of hospitals permitting debt collectors to violate the Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA). Stark was the main architect of EMTALA, which ensures patients cannot be turned away by an emergency room regardless of their ability to pay. (Click [here](#) to read CMS' letters to the [American Hospital Association](#), the [Association of American Medical Colleges](#), and the [Federation of American Hospitals](#).)

State Senator Mark DeSaulnier

DeSaulnier Meets with Joint Policy Committee

May 18, 2012

Today Senator Mark DeSaulnier, Chair of the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee (D-Concord), met with the Joint Policy Committee (JPC) to discuss the future of regional governance in the San Francisco Bay Area. At the JPC meeting at the MetroCenter Auditorium in downtown Oakland, DeSaulnier briefed the JPC Members on his legislation, Senate Bill 1149, and the need to reform regional governance.

"I look forward to working with JPC members as well as with the members of the various regional agencies and advocates for housing, transportation, business, economic development, the environment, and other regional issues. Together we can participate in an honest and forthright attempt to reform regional governance," said DeSaulnier. "Consequently, I offered to withdraw my current legislation to allow more time for all of us to have a robust public discussion about regional governance in the San Francisco Bay Area."

SB 1149 would have created the Bay Area Regional Commission to coordinate regional planning and policy decisions dealing with transportation, housing, air quality, sustainable community strategies, economic development, and other regional issues. SB 1149 represents the first proposed reforms in regional governance since the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) was created in 1970.

"I thank Senator DeSaulnier for his sincere efforts on this important issue," said John M. Gioia, District 1 Supervisor, Contra Costa County and Chair of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. "I am confident that we can identify common ground and develop critical reforms that will create a regional governance model for other California metropolitan areas."

"We all need to come together to achieve reform that is good for the entire region," said Tom Bates, Mayor of Berkeley and Chair of the Joint Policy Committee. "In the next few months we

need to see if we can work together and come up with some ideas that will enhance regional governance in the Bay Area.”

“We all agree that the San Francisco Bay Area needs a regional governance structure that meets the needs of the communities we serve,” said Julie Pierce, Clayton City Councilmember and Vice Chair of the Association of Bay Area Governments. “Our challenge will be to reform the system in a manner that not only meets the region’s short term needs, but also reflects the needs of generations to come.”

“The San Francisco Bay Area is the fourth largest metropolitan area in the nation. It is the most diverse and innovative place on earth,” said DeSaulnier. “Regional planning in our area needs to reflect that diversity and innovation. After a months-long collaborative process, our hope would be to introduce comprehensive regional reform legislation in the next Legislative Session.”

Below is a list of principles underlying DeSaulnier’s regional governance reform efforts:

1. Respect the integrity of the existing regional agencies.
2. Provide policy oversight to ensure the development of a coherent multifunctional regional plan.
3. Prepare a 20-year regional economic development plan to be integrated into the multifunctional regional plan.
4. Increase public access to the regional process at the community level.
5. Integrate regional management and reduce the duplication of overhead functions, such as human resources, procurement, and the like, to achieve cost savings.

The Bay Area is a growing region of 7.5 million people. Currently, the Joint Policy Committee (JPC) coordinates the regional planning efforts of the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) and MTC. However, the JPC has no real authority to oversee the myriad agencies of regional governance.

SB 1149 would have corrected this by eliminating the JPC and establishing the Commission in its place. The Commission would have had increased authority and would have provided a regional policymaking process to ensure that regional policies are developed within a consistent framework.

Assembly Woman Joan Buchanan

Assemblymember Joan Buchanan Appointed Chair of Special Committee on Governor’s Reorganization Plan

May 16, 2012

(Sacramento, CA)—Assemblymember Joan Buchanan (D-Alamo) announced that Assembly Speaker John A. Pérez has appointed her Chair of a new special committee that will assess the Governor’s Reorganization Plan No. 2, a plan that will reorganize several agencies and departments of the executive branch.

“The Governor has presented the Legislature with a broad proposal to streamline the administrative functions of the Executive Branch,” Buchanan stated. “I look forward to our

discussions on how to make California state government as efficient, accessible, and responsive to the needs of the public as possible.”

Assemblymember Buchanan is currently the Chair of the Budget Subcommittee on State Administration, which has held a number of hearings in the past few months to evaluate some of Governor Brown’s other proposals to reorganize the executive branch. She is also the Chair of the Select Committee on Government Efficiency, Innovation, and Technology.

The committee membership will include members with diverse expertise in the areas the Governor has proposed to reorganize. Assemblymember Katcho Achadjian (R-San Luis Obispo) will serve as Vice Chair, with Assemblymembers Bill Berryhill (R-Stockton), Roger Dickinson (D-Sacramento), Linda Halderman (R-Fresno), Isadore Hall (D-Los Angeles), Mary Hayashi (D-Hayward), Alyson Huber (D-El Dorado Hills), Kevin Jeffries (R-Lake Elsinore), Bonnie Lowenthal (D-Long Beach), V. Manuel Pérez (D-Coachella) and Norma Torres (D-Chino) filling out the rest of the special committee’s membership.

Membership Drive

Wow! It is already the end of May. Have you renewed your San Ramon Valley Democratic Club membership?? Almost 20 % of last year’s member have yet to renew, are you one of them?

We need and want your support, especially in this difficult election year. Dues are only \$25/person or \$40/family. These dues support us in presenting our programs throughout the year. Also, as this year is an election year we need your dues to help our local candidates in their efforts to get re-elected. The primary goal of the SRVDC is to aid in informing voters and concerned citizens about issues of the day and how they may impact our lives. The SRVDC serves the communities of Alamo, Blackhawk, Danville and San Ramon. We provide a vehicle for persons interested in your communities to come together for interesting and informative meetings about issues facing all of us. We provide a voter registration and information table at the Danville Farmer’s Market and other venues. We also send out a monthly newsletter presenting updates from our elected officials and provide a forum for our members to express their views.

If you are one of those members who have yet to renew their membership for this year, please do it now. It is easy, just print and complete the form below and mail it with your check to P.O. Box 1218, Danville, CA 94526

If you are not certain if you have renewed please email or call Jim Donnelly to find out your status.

Renewal or New Membership

Singly or Family Membership

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email _____

Home Phone _____ Cell phone _____

Please indicate the activities that interest you

☐ Voter Registration
☐ Fundraising
☐ Local Government
☐ Hospitality

☐ Get-out-the-vote activities
☐ Publicity
☐ Newsletter
☐ Programs & Functions

**Make checks payable to: San Ramon Valley Democratic Club
P.O. Box 1218
Danville, CA 94526**

Thanks.

Jim Donnelly