

Siskiyou Democrats Grassroots News

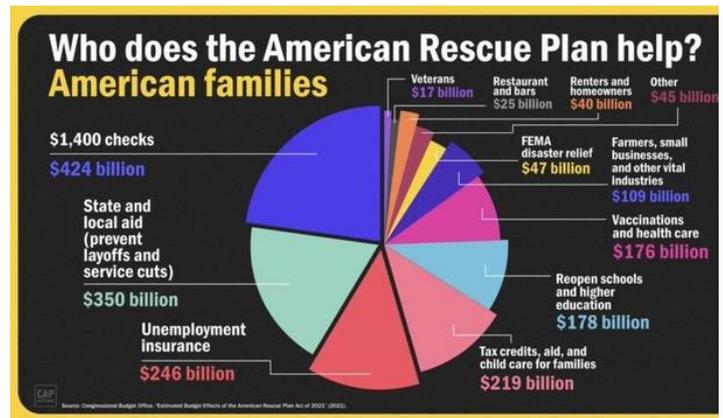
Issue #1 – January-March 2021

THIS QUARTER'S TOP STORIES for Siskiyou Dems ACTION

VICTORY! Congressional Democrats Pass Sweeping COVID Relief Package

With huge bipartisan support—from the public, that is—the bill was signed into law on March 11, 2021. Soon 85% of Americans, regardless of party, will benefit in personal financial help, rent and mortgage relief, health care cost help, safe school re-openings, vaccinations, and much more. And states and cities will finally get the federal aid they've been desperate for since COVID began.

ACTION: Doug LaMalfa voted against all of this. Let's let him hear how we feel about that! Comment on FB, email him, or call his Redding office at 530-223-5898.



VACCINE NEWS

As we all know, Siskiyou County has just achieved Tier 2 status. But many businesses and individuals continue to ignore guidelines, including restaurants with full indoor seating. Obviously, that's not helpful. On the bright side, so far Siskiyou County is delivering about 375 doses of vaccine a day, with roughly 4 new cases a day and declining hospitalizations. Tribal clinics in Yreka, Happy Camp, Orleans, and Fort Jones are offering vaccinations, as are Fairchild and Mercy hospitals as vaccine becomes available. Fairchild serves only its patients.

ACTION: Stay informed, and respectfully offer reliable sources to skeptics. This piece from the LA Times will help. Link to Siskiyou County COVID Data (updated daily): [Siskiyou COVID Data by LA Times](#)

For more information on COVID, see **page 6** for an article by Dr. Dave and Ann Herfindahl - "Light at the End of the Tunnel: COVID Advice"



IN THIS ISSUE

During 2021, the News will be published quarterly, bringing you updates on the quarter's top stories, and what we rural Californians can do to stay involved in moving Democratic values forward.

For Q1, we're stressing local action on food insecurity, bringing you information and suggestions for how you can make a difference. On the state-wide (CADEM) front, there are important elections coming up, and we provide guidance on who's running and why it matters. We also have a special election looming, a far-right recall effort against Governor Gavin Newsom, and offer insights into that. And nationally, we celebrate the passage of the ARP, and begin a series on voter suppression and what we can do to fight it.

You'll also find guidance on COVID vaccination efforts in Siskiyou County, and many sources of information, all on page 6. And for a bit of joy, on page 3, we have delightful updates from our wonderful 2020 candidates Audrey Denney and Elizabeth Betancourt. Until next quarter, stay safe and get vaccinated!

THIS QUARTER'S TOP STORIES for Siskiyou Dems ACTION (continued)

NEWSOM RECALL EFFORT

Started by Orrin Heatlie, retired Sergeant with the Yolo County Sheriff's department, the petition to recall Governor Gavin Newsom reads like a manual of Trumpian grievances. While it's been covered as a critique of Newsom's handling of the COVID crisis, in fact it stresses the welcoming of "foreign nationals" into the state. The rest is a grab-bag of right-wing gripes: too many taxes, unfair water distribution, repeal of the death penalty, attacks on gun rights, etc. etc.

CADEM, the state Democratic Party organization, is making the fight against this recall its top priority. And this is where all the organizing efforts of rural Democrats will make a huge "off-year" difference.

ACTION: We must spread the word about this grievance recall, and get out the vote when the special election is called. Siskiyou Grassroots organizers will keep you posted!

Background on the Recall: [How California's Recall Rules Could Spell Trouble for Gavin Newsom](#)

Recall Action Website: [Stop the Republican Recall](#) – website with information on who's behind the recall

VOTER SUPPRESSION, HR-1, AND REFORMING THE US SENATE FILIBUSTER

Republicans' Number One agenda is now out in the open—minority rule through voter suppression. They believe it's the only way, in an increasingly diverse America, to secure their Congressional majority and block the entire Democratic agenda. We have a 2-year window to stop them in their tracks, by passing HR-1, the For The People Act. Nothing is more important to saving our democracy than this.

The bill aims to establish national standards for voter registration and Vote-by-Mail, counter Citizens United by disclosing dark money sources, and stop partisan gerrymandering through non-partisan commissions. But this bill has no chance of passing with the filibuster in place, since HR-1 attacks the central Republican minority rule agenda. So reforming the filibuster is a must.

These issues, top priorities for the national Democratic Party, may seem remote to us lucky Californians. But they're all vital to retaining our majority in Congress and to moving forward with the Biden agenda on job creation, support for underserved areas in education, health care, and Internet access, climate change, and many other areas of great concern to rural Californians. So we must do everything we can to support fair election efforts everywhere, and California Democrats in Congress.

ACTION: First, we should let our Senators, Alex Padilla and especially Diane Feinstein, know that we support filibuster reform. (Feinstein: Phone (202) 224-3841) (Padilla: Phone (202) 224-3553) Then choose an organization to support. If you wonder how to help, Fair Fight, the voting rights organization of Stacey Abrams and Lauren Groh-Wargo, is a great place to start.

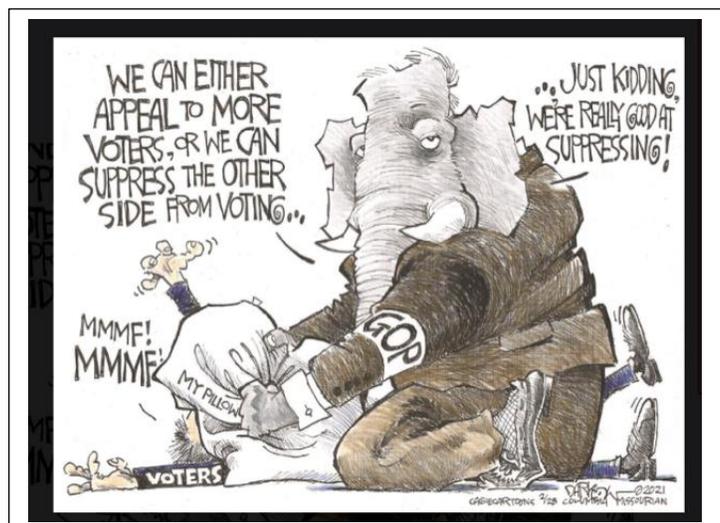
Some helpful links:

Fair Fight, Stacey Abrams' voters' rights organization:

[How to Help with the Fair Fight Group](#)

What's in HR-1: [Here's What HR 1 is](#)

In-Depth Look from the Brennan Center:
["For the People Act" – Why it must pass](#)



Updates on Audrey Denney & Elizabeth Betancourt

Audrey Denney and Elizabeth Betancourt, our great candidates for Congress and CA Assembly, are out there making big contributions to our society and our world.

From Audrey: Here's a quick update on me. I've been sleeping more since November than I have for three years! I've been working really hard on getting physically and mentally healthy after three years of going non-stop. I've applied for an appointment in the Biden-Harris administration and am hoping I get the opportunity to serve in that capacity. Send good thoughts that way! In the meantime, I'm staying busy and paying rent by doing my agricultural education consulting work and helping my best friend run her small stationery business (if you have Instagram check her out @theideaemporium).

When I'm not working I'm volunteering for Cristosal (the human rights organization in Central America I'm on the board of) and hanging out with my two perfect kitties Nash and Harper Eleanor. I miss you all very much and am looking forward to the time (hopefully soon!) when we can be together in person again and HUG! Get those vaccines!! I pray that you are all staying healthy and safe. Give yourself grace and be kind to yourself and each other... this past year has been extremely challenging (big understatement) for all of us. Hope is here – for healthier, kinder communities that can re-open and be the vibrant places we love.

From Elizabeth: Elizabeth has been “going a mile a minute” on her activities! Here's what she's been up to: chairing the Shasta DCC's Elections Subcommittee, which identifies seats for Dems to run for, and helps them in their candidacy, which she's finding big fun; running again for the Rural Caucus Chair for the Northern Region; thinking through how the Rural Caucus, and CADEM, can help us in getting more Dems in local seats; visiting with/speaking at some local activist meetings in our region, giving updates on the Rural Caucus, talking about agricultural policy, etc.; working on a collaboration with a local non-profit to get underserved youth out to the farm, and get them college credit for it: focused on Native youth, formerly incarcerated, etc.; and lots of workplan-writing, funding, recruiting, and collaboration with local organizations.

“It's been extremely uplifting work,” she writes, “imagining a future that I WANT to see, rather than fighting against what I DON'T want to see! My day job is going great: working with Tribes to designate cultural beneficial uses in CA waterways - something that's very new in our region, and has a huge potential to protect water quality for Tribes and for all Californians. Personally, I've been cooking A LOT, sewing, knitting, and embroidering. Finally, I'd appreciate your vote for Caucus Chair, all you Rural Caucus members! Thanks!” As we always suspected, this woman is unstoppable!



At right, Elizabeth Betancourt and Audrey Denney at the 2019 Fort Jones Christmas Parade. You go, girls!!

Looking Forward in 2021 – Focusing on Our Local Area

Our Siskiyou Democratic Grassroots efforts continue – even in an election “off year”. We are focusing on four key goals:

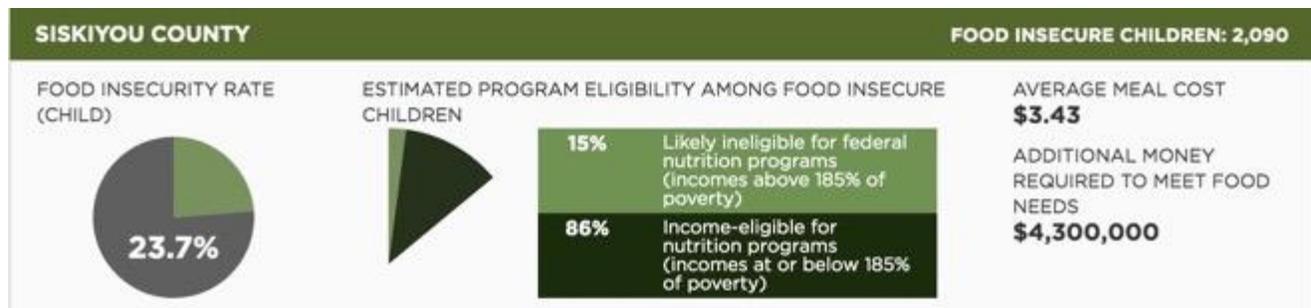
- **Young Democrats and Voter Registration** – Encouraging involvement of young Democrats in Siskiyou County in our efforts and registering voters
- **Community Involvement** – Working to support our community by assisting food banks in the county through volunteer support (see page 2 for information on food insecurity in Siskiyou County)
- **Candidate Development** – Identifying Democratic candidates for the upcoming local office elections – Board of Supervisors in June, 2022 and City Councils in November, 2022
- **Democratic Messaging** – Promoting all of the great actions Biden is taking to improve the lives of all Americans

Hungry People in Siskiyou County Need Our Help NOW!

We have a problem in Siskiyou County. Just like everywhere else in the United States, we have local residents going hungry. My guess is that you might not have been aware of the magnitude of the problem here in Siskiyou County.

In the state of California, **Siskiyou County ranks fifth highest** in the percentage of residents who have food insecurity – **about 20% or one in five** – of our county’s population. (Source: Feeding America website: <https://www.feedingamericaaction.org/the-impact-of-coronavirus-on-food-insecurity/>)

And, for **children in our county**, the rate is even higher – 23.7% or 2,090 children – are food insecure. The data below are for children in the county. They come from the Feeding America website, which calculates the numbers annually.



According to the Feeding America Network, the largest national hunger relief organization, people who live in rural areas often face hunger at higher rates, in part because of the unique challenges living remotely presents. These challenges include lack of transportation, when the nearest grocery store, food pantry, or food bank is potentially hours away; job opportunities that are more concentrated in low-wage industries; and higher rates of unemployment and underemployment.

- Rural communities make up 63% of counties in the United States, and 87% of counties with the highest rates of overall food insecurity.
- 86% of the counties with the highest percentage of children at risk for food insecurity are rural.
- Poverty is worse in rural communities than in urban communities. In 2019, 13.3% of all people in rural areas lived below the poverty line, compared to 10.0% of people in urban areas. **In Siskiyou County, the poverty rate is even higher at 17.4% (US Census 2019).**

This is why our local Siskiyou Democrats have chosen food insecurity as their key community involvement activity. We have volunteers working in north and south county groups to identify available services, and to determine ways we can help our neighbors.

Regardless of the variety and numbers of programs available in the county, the need for volunteers, cash donations, and fresh produce remains great! Still, we may have missed some programs providing services – if you know of some, please send an email to siskiyoudems@gmail.com

If you can volunteer, or provide cash or food donations, all of these Siskiyou County programs would be very appreciative.

KEY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN SISKIYOU COUNTY

Due to the great need for food assistance in our county, there are a number of organizations that need your help! Below is a list of the food assistance providers in South County, North County, and Countywide. We may have missed some providers. If you have more information, please send it to siskiyoudems@gmail.com

Food Assistance Providers	How you can help
South Siskiyou County Food Assistance Providers	
Siskiyou Food Assistance -408-6115 776 South Davis Avenue, Weed, CA 96094 https://siskiyoufoodassistance.org Contact Denise Spayd Primarily a Food Bank Food Bank Open Wednesday 11 AM – 3 PM	Volunteer opportunities Tuesdays to stock shelves, box eggs, and fill bags for drive-up distribution on Wednesday. Cash donations & fresh home garden food welcome in season. Volunteer opportunities at fund-raising events. Ray’s will donate 1% of your purchase to SiskFoodAssistance reg: https://www.gorays.com/custom_retailer/Community/
Great Northern Services 310 Boles St, Weed Contact Heather Solus 938-4115 hsolus@gnservices.org Provides a variety of community-based family services	Conducts a variety of food services throughout the county – Meals on Wheels, Senior Lunch program, daily summer free lunch, tailgate produce, USDA food commodities, and holiday baskets. Donations and volunteers for all these critical programs are welcome.
St.Anthony’s/St.VincentDePaul 530-926-3061 507 Pine Street in Mt Shasta.	Serving both Mt. Shasta and Dunsmuir, donations and volunteers are largely provided by the Catholic Church membership. Additional cash donations welcome.
Weed Community Center 161 E. Lincoln, Weed 938-4685	Senior lunch program (beginning again in April) May need volunteers.
North Siskiyou County Food Assistance Providers	
Siskiyou Community Food Bank (530) 905-1551 1601 S. Oregon St. Suite B, Yreka, CA 96097 http://www.siskiyoufoodbank.org/ Provide food primarily to individuals who meet poverty guidelines	Cash donations are always welcome (can donate through website). Share donations with others in county. Food items needed include staples, produce, toilet paper, diapers (no newborn sizes), and feminine products. Sleeping bags and blankets will be given to homeless. The food bank would like to have someone start a monthly delivery program to housebound seniors.
Yreka Food Bank (530) 643-2507 321 N Gold Street, Yreka, CA 96097	Cash donations are always welcome. Food items needed for donation include staples & produce; also toilet paper, diapers (no newborn sizes, please), and feminine products. Gifted sleeping bags and blankets are given to the homeless.
Countywide Food Assistance Providers	
Family and Community Resource Centers Michelle O’Gorman mogorman511@yahoo.com Mt. Shasta 926-1400 - Weed 938-9914 Dunsmuir 235-4400 - Yreka, Montague, Scott Valley, Happy Camp 842-1313	Cash donations welcome. Contact your local Resource Center directly about volunteer activities
An Additional Resource: Emergency Food & Shelter Program	
Funded by the federal CARES Act of 2020 and expanded by the American Rescue Plan of 2021, this program is administered by a local county oversight committee which determines funding allocations. Some of these go to the agency’s listed here, in both North and South County, to partially fund their existing programs. Besides food, EFSP has some funds for providing utility bill and rent relief.	

California Democratic Party (CADEM) Upcoming Convention

The California Democratic Party's 2021 Convention begins April 29th. These normally crowded and lively events are where party delegates from all over the state gather to elect party officers, hold caucus meetings, network, and promote internal change. It's an opportunity to hear candidates and elected officials speak, and meet with activists from labor, environmental, social justice, and other advocacy groups. This year's virtual convention will determine who will serve as officers for the state party for the next 4 years.

How does one become a voting member of the Democratic State Central Committee? The delegation to the DSCC is divided into 3 groups:

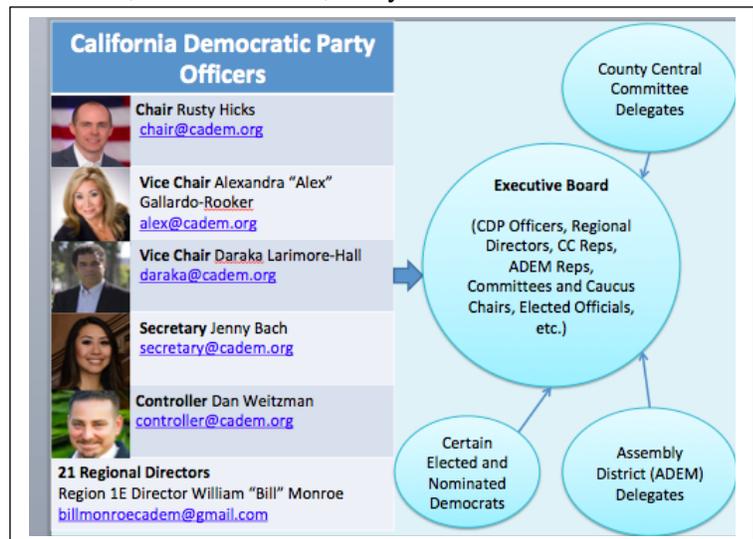
- **County Central Committee delegates**, who are elected by the members of their committees every other year;
- **Assembly District delegates**, who are elected at Assembly District Election Meetings (ADEM) in each district every other year; and
- **Elected and nominated officials** to California's constitutional offices, state legislature, and US Congress. These elected officials also have a limited number of appointees who serve as members of the DSCC.

A select number of Assembly District and County Committee delegates also serve on the state party's Executive Board (E-Board), along with Caucus chairs, Standing Committee chairs, party officers, and other party leaders. This year our DCCSC convention delegates are Alice Rogers, Katherine Shelton, Robin Richards, Dolly Verrue and Christine Balletta.

Given this mashup of representatives from districts with very different cultures, agendas, and interests, you can imagine how hard a job it is to guide CADEM toward cohesive messaging and policy positions.

So the choice of Chair this year, especially as we face a recall election challenge, is extremely important. The DCCSC has endorsed incumbent Rusty Hicks for that position. Stay tuned for more endorsements, and for news from this year's virtual convention.

At right, an organizational chart for CADEM.



Your Siskiyou County Democratic Central Committee at Work!



At our March 10, 2021 meeting, the DCCSC heard from two candidates for Vice Chair of California Democratic Party (CADEM) – David Campos and Daraka Larimore-Hall.

The CADEM delegates will be voting for state party officers at the CADEM convention at the end of April.

LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL: COVID ADVICE

By Dr. David Herfindahl and Ann Herfindahl, R.N.

Where does one start to stay knowledgeable about the COVID pandemic? Here are the best sources:

National Data: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

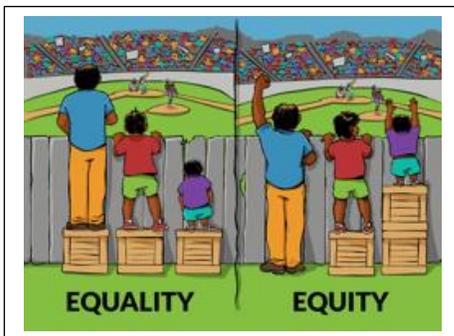
State of California Data: <https://covid19.ca.gov>

Siskiyou County Data from the State: <https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/>

Siskiyou County Dashboard and Resources: <https://www.co.siskiyou.ca.us/publichealth/page/covid-19-current-statistics>

There is a light at the end of the COVID tunnel. COVID fatigue is not an option. Here's what each of us can do to get through the tunnel faster and safer.

- Follow the official guidelines from CDC and Public Health no matter where you live. The “safer-economy” website above clearly shows what services are open and what restrictions if any are required. Follow those guidelines!
- Get vaccinated as soon as you can. It doesn't matter which vaccine is available, just DO IT. Encourage your friends and family to get vaccinated also.
- Wear a facemask. Be an example of this important behavior.
- Practice good hand hygiene, keep your distance, and avoid large crowds.
- Don't go indoors with people you aren't sheltering with. Avoid bars. Outdoor gathering is always better.



The Difference between Equality and Equity

We've heard these two terms - equality and equity - used in addressing the problems of social justice, and we thought this graphic defines them well. For example, Affirmative Action was intended to address Equity, not Equality, acknowledging that racial bias has left many in our society like this short boy— short on equal opportunities for college prep education.

What's Happening

In light of the stay-at-home requirement in California, we will not be conducting the SISKIYOU DEMOCRATIC GRASSROOTS COMMITTEE or the SISKIYOU DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL COMMITTEE meetings in person. Instead, we will be using remote access (Zoom). If you are interested in attending, please send an email to: siskiyoudems@gmail.com to request a digital meeting invitation.

The Grassroots Committee meets the first Tuesday of the month (North County) and the second Tuesday of the month (South County). The Central Committee meets the second Wednesday of the month.

Your Democratic Central Committee of Siskiyou County (DCCSC):

Officers: Alice Rogers – Chair, Abigail Van Alyn- Vice Chair, Katherine Shelton – Secretary, Robin Richards – Treasurer; Members: Neldena Anderson, Rick Green, Ann Herfindahl, Al Lugo, Larry Marks, Christine Balletta, Dolly Verrue, and Karen Zeigler. For more information, visit our website: siskiyoudemocrats.org or Facebook page: [SiskiyouCountyDemocrats](https://www.facebook.com/SiskiyouCountyDemocrats). Send mail and donations to: DCCSC, Post Office Box 4, Mt. Shasta, CA 96067.