

From: **Florice Hoffman** <florice@ocdemocrats.org>

Date: Sun, Aug 23, 2026 at 9:38 AM

Subject: No Endorsement Tracy La in the race for Garden Grove Unified School District Board of Education, Trustee Area 4.

To: Jeffrey Cárdenas <jeffrey@ocdemocrats.org>

CC: Jason Mills <jason.s.mills80@gmail.com>

Dear Central Committee Members:

I am writing to support the Endorsement Committee's recommendation of No Endorsement in the race for Garden Grove Unified School District Board of Education, Trustee Area 4. I believe I had an obligation to bring this matter to the full Central Committee because of the seriousness of the issue, its potential impact on our candidates and our Party, and the history of how the DPOC has addressed a substantially similar issue in the past. Each of you have to understand that there will be press coverage of our decision tomorrow at a time critical to taking back the House and Senate and of maintaining our Board majority on the Board of Supervisors.

I ask that members consider the full background that led to the Endorsement Committee's recommendation.

Last spring, I was asked, on behalf of the DPOC, to issue a press release condemning an eight-page social media post by Tracy La concerning Ho Chi Minh that was made on behalf of VietRISE. <https://www.instagram.com/p/DNgbBOypg2/> At the time, I did not believe that issuing such a statement was appropriate. Tracy La was no longer an ADEM delegate, VietRISE was not affiliated with the DPOC, and I believed it was important to recognize that VietRISE has done commendable work protecting and advocating for immigrants in our community.

Prior to Tracy La's endorsement interview, however, Tracy and I had a lengthy discussion about the post, the concerns it had created within the Vietnamese American community, and what she could do to address those concerns and earn the Party's endorsement. I came away from that discussion believing there might be a path forward. I hoped she would disavow or clarify the posts, acknowledge the harm they had caused, and take steps toward healing and reconciliation within the community.

Unfortunately, it became clear to me that she was not interested in taking those steps. I also became concerned about her unwillingness to work constructively with Democratic elected officials and candidates running in Garden Grove and Westminster at a time when our Party should be focused on electing Democrats across Orange County and taking back the House.

After receiving the emails from Annie Wright and Thai Viet Phan yesterday, I concluded that I could no longer remain silent about the potential consequences of an endorsement.

This issue also cannot be considered without remembering what actions the DPOC took in 2020.

In August 2020, then-North Vice Chair Jeff LeTourneau shared a Facebook post referring to Ho Chi Minh as a “liberator.” Thai Viet Phan, who was then a candidate for Santa Ana City Council, wrote to the DPOC Executive Board demanding his resignation and explaining the harm the post caused to members of the Vietnamese American community and Democratic candidates. She specifically warned that such statements could be used to reinforce attacks portraying Democrats as communist sympathizers, particularly against Vietnamese Democratic candidates. [I have attached Phan’s letter].

At that time, Chair Ada Briceño and Democratic elected officials recognized the seriousness of the situation, particularly in the context of the 2020 election. I participated in the special closed-session meeting and negotiated the resignation of Jeff LeTourneau, who was also a close friend of mine. This was not an easy decision, but I believed then that protecting our candidates, respecting the Vietnamese American community, and protecting the Party had to come before personal relationships.

The DPOC subsequently announced Jeff’s resignation publicly. In that statement, he acknowledged the trauma Ho Chi Minh’s dictatorship inflicted upon Vietnamese members of our community, apologized, and described his resignation as a first step toward “healing and reconciliation.” Chair Ada Briceño accepted his resignation and issued the attached press release.

That history matters.

We cannot have one standard when the person involved is a Party officer and another standard when the person involved is seeking the Party’s endorsement. Nor can we ignore the political consequences for Democratic candidates running in communities where the history of the Vietnam War, communism, and the experiences of refugees remain deeply personal.

The issue before us is not whether Tracy La has the right to hold or express her views. She does. Nor does a No Endorsement determination prevent any Central Committee member, Democratic activist, organization, or voter from individually supporting her candidacy.

The question before us is narrower: whether the Democratic Party of Orange County should place its institutional endorsement behind her candidacy under these circumstances.

I do not believe that we should.

The DPOC took this issue seriously in 2020 because we understood the harm it could cause to the Vietnamese American community and to Democratic candidates. The political stakes today cannot be more significant. We should apply our principles consistently and consider not only one race, but the effect our actions can have on Democratic candidates throughout Garden Grove, Westminster, Little Saigon, and Orange County.

For those reasons, I respectfully urge the Central Committee to support the Endorsement Committee’s recommendation of No Endorsement for Garden Grove Unified School District Board of Education, Trustee Area 4.

A No Endorsement vote does not prevent anyone from supporting Tracy La individually. It simply means that, given the history, the concerns raised by members of the Vietnamese American community, the

interests of our Democratic candidates, and the precedent established by our own Party in 2020, the DPOC will not provide its institutional endorsement in this race.

I respectfully ask for your support of the Endorsement Committee's recommendation of no endorsement.

Sincerely,

Florice Hoffman, Chair

Granddaughter of refugees from the former Soviet Union

Florice Hoffman, Chair DPOC

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