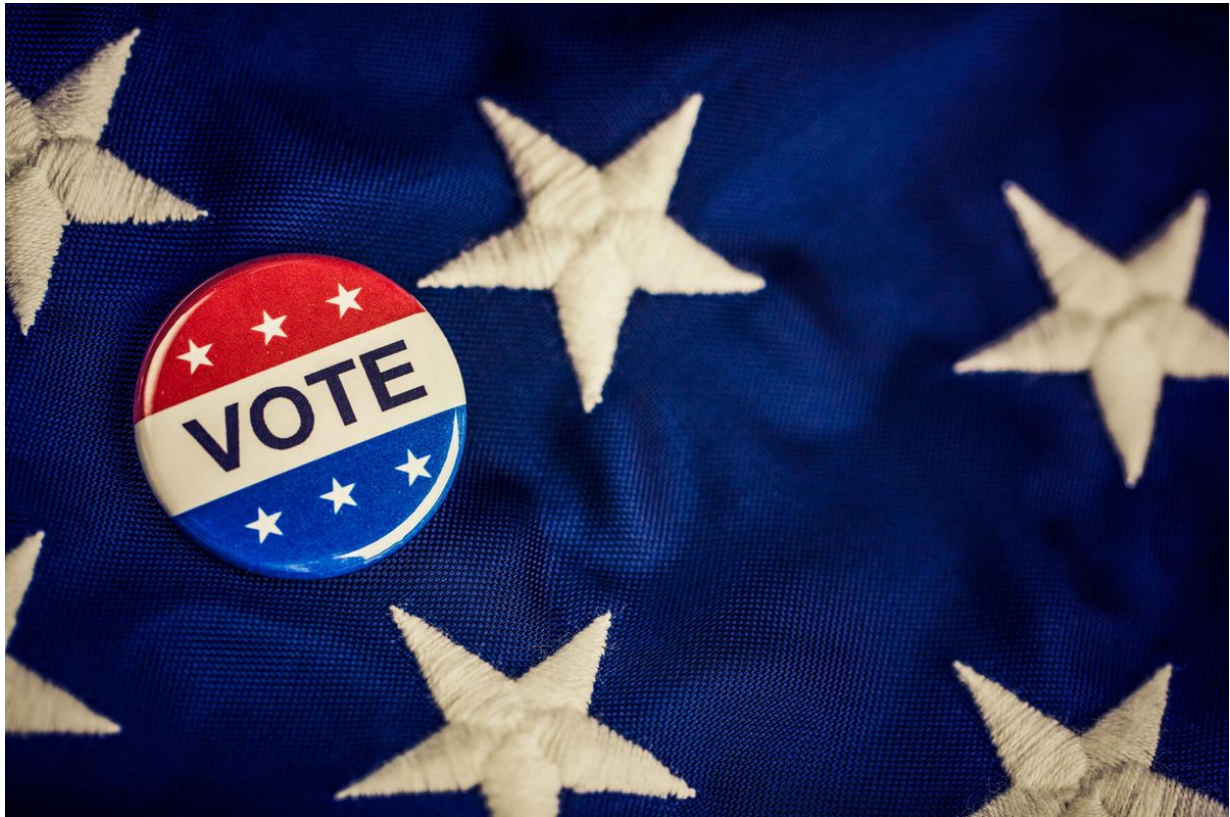


Hicks launches campaign for State Assembly

December 11, 2023



Following Assemblymember Jim Wood’s announcement that he will not run for re-election, Arcata resident and California Democratic Party Chair Rusty Hicks announced today that he is a candidate for the 2nd Assembly District.

Rusty enters the race with endorsements from former North Coast State Senator and Assemblymember Wesley Chesbro, Humboldt County Supervisor Natalie Arroyo, Arcata Councilmember Alex Stillman, Eureka Councilmember Scott Bauer, Ukiah Councilmember Juan Orozco, Trinidad Mayor Steve Ladwig, Trinity Alps Unified Schools Superintendent Jaime Green, and other local leaders and organizers.

“Rusty Hicks will offer the seasoned and experienced voice we need in Sacramento to represent our sprawling rural North Coast Assembly District,” Chesbro said. “Rusty knows us, and so I am pleased to offer him my full and enthusiastic support.”

“Rusty has a great background to serve the district, with robust policy experience on statewide issues, a background in law that’s incredibly helpful for an elected leader, and service to our nation as a veteran,”

Supervisor Arroyo said. “His lived experience in rural and urban settings can really serve this diverse district!”

“I look forward to Rusty keeping the North Coast in the forefront and working with us to gain the resources to meet our many challenges,” Councilmember Stillman stated.

“I’m proud to be an educator, a veteran, and an organizer – each down to my core,” Rusty said. “As I look around our beautiful North Coast, I see the struggles that our communities face every day. The rising cost of living, the challenges in accessing healthcare, and the constant threats to our planet. Bottom line, we face more challenges and need more help than ever before – and that’s why I’m running for State Assembly.”

The 2nd District stretches across five counties: Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, Sonoma, and Trinity. Rusty and his wife, Sandra Sanchez, live in Arcata.

In 2021, Rusty was reelected as Chair of the California Democratic Party - the nation’s largest State Party comprised of more than 10 million California Democrats. But his experience runs much deeper. He continues to serve as an Associate Professor at College of the Redwoods, teaching at Pelican Bay State Prison, doing his part to reduce recidivism. Rusty previously ran one of the largest labor councils in the U.S. and served as a Vice-President of the California Labor Federation.

In every role, Rusty has a proven record of accomplishment delivering real results for real people.

- Rusty led a successful campaign to raise the wages of millions of workers to \$15 an hour throughout California, pushing and helping spread the national Raise the Wage campaign, helping people to lift themselves out of poverty.
- He helped lead a groundbreaking ballot effort to invest in affordable and permanent supportive housing to tackle homelessness – which also provides good paying union jobs.
- As Democratic Party Chair, Rusty helped guide Proposition 1 to victory, adding the right to a safe and legal abortion to the California State Constitution.
- A believer in the power of a second chance, Rusty built a program to help formerly incarcerated workers rejoin the workforce and secure a good union job.
- Rusty has fought for and built a coalition to win greater worker protections against sexual harassment and assault for vulnerable workers in the hospitality industry.
- As a member of the Democratic Party’s Veterans Caucus, Rusty has been an advocate for veterans’ housing, education, health care, and mental health care.

In addition to his organizing work to empower working people through political action, Rusty has played a leading role in a number of important political and policy efforts. In 2008, Rusty served as the California Political Director for Obama for America.

And of course, Rusty is a Veteran of the United States Navy and deployed to Afghanistan in 2012-2013 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He is a graduate of Loyola Law School and a member of the California State Bar.