



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF ORANGE COUNTY ANNOUNCES SELECTION OF NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - Melahat Rafiei to Assume Role Effective Immediately

The Democratic Party of Orange County, home to California 's second largest number of registered Democrats, announced today that the Party's former Political Director, Ms. Melahat Rafiei, has been selected to succeed former Executive Director Mike Levin.

Rafiei has several years' experience in Orange County Democratic politics. She has been the Area Leader of OC Democracy for America since 2003, served as Campaign Director for Jim Brandt for Congress, and was formerly the Program Director for the Orange County Voter Registration and Education Fund. Rafiei was also the recipient of the California Democratic Party's 2007 John F. Kennedy, Jr. Award.

A native of Iran , Rafiei is the Vice-Chair of the California Democratic Party's Arab American Caucus, Second Vice-President of the Iranian-American Democrats of Orange County and Vice-Chair of the National Women's Political Caucus, Orange County Chapter.

Hired as the Political Director of the Democratic Party of Orange County in December, 2006, Rafiei was named Interim Executive Director after the resignation of Mike Levin this May. A statewide search was made for a replacement Executive Director, and Rafiei was chosen from among several candidates.

According to the bylaws of the Democratic Party of Orange County, the selection of the Executive Director must be approved by 60% of the members of the body's Central Committee. Rafiei's confirmation was put to a vote at the Committee's July 23 meeting and received unanimous approval.

"I'm very pleased the Central Committee has shown its confidence in Melahat by its unanimous confirmation of her selection," said Frank Barbaro, Chair of the Democratic Party of Orange County. "Melahat has exceptional skills in the area of fundraising, volunteer coordination, outreach, finance, and communications. She accomplished a great deal during her term as Interim Executive Director and is helping us usher in a

new era for Democrats in Orange County ."

The Democratic Party of Orange County represents the interests of over 450,000 registered Democrats in the County. The Party maintains a year-round office at 200 N. Main Street , Mezzanine Level, in Santa Ana .

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If you'd like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Melahat Rafiei or Frank Barbaro, please call the party office at 714-835-5158 or email Melahat directly at Melahat@ocdemocrats.org.

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