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## [Democrats Revitalized, Finally. The Time to Fight is Now](#)

By [Robert Weiner](#) and [Khel Gordhan](#)



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It took two weeks, but Democrats have finally gotten into gear, with a revitalized opposition to the agency closures, IG firings, and illegal personnel takeovers and other actions. Many were wondering where the legal confrontations, injunctions, and cease and desist rulings against quick and illegal administration actions are -- and now they have begun.

On February 1, the DNC Winter Meeting to elect a new Chair at National Harbor took place. In the room the energy was palpable. Communications Director Rosemary Boeglin told us, "We can't even start on time because the line is so long."

Sen. Chris Van Hollen D-MD asserted, "In the last days, Trump has posed a clear and present danger to the country. The comeback begins now!" Since then, Van Hollen stayed true to his word and led protest news conferences at the door of closure-threatened A.I.D. and elsewhere.

The Saturday Chair election vote session started only a half hour after the 10 AM scheduled time. After Chairman Jaime Harrison explained the process, former MD Governor Martin O'Malley was the first of eight candidate speakers. He brought the house down with a rising crescendo-- to the end presentation: "Our nation is in crisis. We must set up a war room to combat the lies. We must register more people to vote. This Party shall rise again!" he concluded.

Ben Wikler, the Wisconsin mastermind who flipped the state and engineered the Supreme Court majority there emphasized a "Fight for working people. The country should not be rigged against you... Health care is not a privilege-- we swept the country. Voters don't vote just on facts and figures. They vote on how someone makes you feel. The world needs the Democratic Party to get up off the mat." Wikler had the backing of Senator Schumer, Speaker Emerita Pelosi, and House Democratic Leader Jeffries.

The winner, Ken Martin, was the third speaker of the top three. He eagerly spoke on the need to rise up: "We got punched in November. It's time to get off the mat. We need a legitimate alternative to the grotesque side of the robber barons. We're on the side of families and the American people." Martin was a top Vice Chair of the DNC and had major labor support as well as over 200 signatures of DNC members --

almost enough to win -- and he captured the victory on the first ballot with 100 more than Wikler and 200 more than O'Malley. All the others got zero or close to zero. At the end of Martin's speech the audience chanted, "Yes, we Ken!"

However, Jason Paul, an attorney who ran but lost, gave the delegates some very savvy analysis that brought the room to a standstill: "Donald Trump is better at politics than all of us and everyone in this room."-- which had a bevy of national Democratic leaders. Paul continued, "He threw out Bush, Romney, and Biden. All that matters is whether you like him. It doesn't matter if you beat up cops in the Capitol. All that matters is if you like Donald Trump. He's an evil genius. It's unbelievable that he got people to think he is pro-choice" (after he got the Supreme Court to overthrow Roe) "by getting it to the states" where some are legalizing abortion.

Harrison gave Donna Brazile, a terrific organizer, and a past DNC Chair, a special place for a final pep talk: "Here you can have an open conscience. You have a place at the table. Here you can cast a free and fair vote, without retaliation!" (The crowd cheered loudly.)

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris both gave video messages supporting the voters, to substantial applause.

After the vote, Martin told the delegates, "We have one team. The fight is not here, it's for our values and against Donald Trump." On February 3, he told Rachel Maddow on MSNBC that to confront Trump's first 100 days "We need a war room to stamp out the misinformation. We have a spine, we are alive and kicking. We'll stand up in real-time to the misinformation." In agreement, Rachel responded, "Your leadership will be crucial."

Building on this momentum, elected following the Chair vote, David Hogg, the Parkland former student and now a DNC Vice Chair, who helped lead the March for our Lives, will be a major voice for young voters. He gave a brief passionate victory speech, including: "Together we can make school shooter drills history and not headlines."

Progressives regardless of party, and progressive and moderate Democrats alike, must help in every way possible in a national resistance and must encourage the Democratic leadership to keep up and intensify the fight.

*Robert Weiner and his wife Patricia Berg attended the DNC Meeting as Press. Weiner was a former spokesman in the Clinton White House and spokesman/senior staff for Cong. Claude Pepper, Ed Koch, John Conyers, Charles Rangel, Sen. Ted Kennedy, and Four-Star Gen./Drug Czar Barry McCaffrey. He won the National Press Club President's Award for recruiting young journalists as co-bylined oped writers (1000+ articles to date). Khel Gordhan is senior policy analyst at Robert Weiner Associates and Solutions For Change Foundation, and a junior at Illinois Wesleyan University.*