

DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF WILLOW VALLEY

NEWSLETTER

July 2026

Paid for by Democratic Club of Willow Valley

Treasurer, Steve Wright

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Addressing the Issues

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I'm Not Crying

I'm Not Crying

JESS PIPER

JUN 4

I'm not one to show much emotion in public. I mean, I show a lot of love and enthusiasm, but when it comes to sadness, or god forbid, crying, I am not participating.

I was raised with a strict "no crying" policy, and I have not been able to shake my stoic inheritance, no matter the occasion.

The problem is the embarrassment I feel at crying in public. I definitely don't think it makes me any better than anyone who cries in public...it may make me worse. Makes me look cold, when I am really soft and mushy inside.

A bleeding heart liberal who can't bleed in public.

I just can't muster the courage to cry in front of folks...but there have been a few notable exceptions in my life, and many of them came when I was teaching.

I taught American Literature for years, and one of my favorite units of study was the Civil Rights Era. We are all familiar with the movement for civil rights in our country. We are also too familiar with the violence perpetrated onto Black Americans during the time.

One of the poems I taught during my Civil Rights unit was *The Ballad of Birmingham* written by Dudley Randall. The poem was written in the aftermath of the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama in which a Klan member placed dynamite in the church and killed four little girls. A truly horrific crime that Martin Luther King, Jr described as, "one of the most vicious and tragic crimes ever perpetrated against humanity."

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I'm Not Crying (cont'd)

"Mother dear, may I go downtown
Instead of out to play,
And march the streets of Birmingham
In a Freedom March today?"

"No, baby, no, you may not go,
For the dogs are fierce and wild,
And clubs and hoses, guns and jails
Aren't good for a little child."

"But, mother, I won't be alone.
Other children will go with me,
And march the streets of Birmingham
To make our country free."

"No, baby, no, you may not go,
For I fear those guns will fire.
But you may go to church instead
And sing in the children's choir."

She has combed and brushed her night-dark hair,
And bathed rose petal sweet,
And drawn white gloves on her small brown hands,
And white shoes on her feet.

The mother smiled to know her child
Was in the sacred place,
But that smile was the last smile
To come upon her face.

For when she heard the explosion,
Her eyes grew wet and wild.
She raced through the streets of Birmingham
Calling for her child.

She clawed through bits of glass and brick,
Then lifted out a shoe.

"O, here's the shoe my baby wore,
But, baby, where are you?"

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I'm Not Crying (cont'd)

I taught the poem every year, and every year I called on a student to read it after I presented the premise of the poem. I could not read it aloud and keep my composure — my eyes welled up during the reading, and I always walked to the back of the class in case my eyes started to leak despite my best attempts to keep them dry.

I think the mother in me can't imagine the prospect of losing a child and I could not fathom the pain the mother feels when she finds her child's shoe in the bits of glass and brick and she knows her baby is gone. Especially when the mother knew the dangers of a deeply racist country, and only relented to her child knowing she would be in a sacred place. In a church.

But she wasn't safe.

She was murdered because she lived in a hateful, racist country. And this was the part that always hurts the most — I know that we still have those fears to contend with. The Civil Rights era is still upon us. We made a little too much progress, and we are being pulled back...kicking and screaming. Back into the past. Back into the fear and pain. Back into racism and all of the terrible isms.

Make America Great Again harkens all of the ugly. It encompasses the past. It enshrines the hate.

Makes me want to rage. Makes me want to cry.

I had that overwhelming feeling this Tuesday in a moment that should have felt like a celebration. I wanted to cry instead.

I was lucky enough to be involved in a documentary a few years back. It was called "Dirt Road Democrat" and it was shot and compiled by videographer Catherine Hoffman, who worked with Kansas City PBS.

The short film turned out so well that Catherine was nominated for an Emmy. She didn't win, but the film was widely seen...even by the folks who compiled artifacts for President Obama.

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I'm Not Crying (cont'd)

My picture and a quote about rural schools are inside the Obama museum. It's pretty unbelievable to tell you the truth. The archivists reached out to me over two years ago, and I remained completely silent on the topic because I thought that there was no way I was actually going to be included in the museum, and I didn't want to embarrass myself.

Turns out — I am in it.



The Everyday People Exhibit, The Obama Presidential Museum. 6/2/26

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I'm Not Crying (cont'd)

Reader, you should know, I was never obsessed with Obama. I thought he was a fine man and a good President, but I sleepwalked through his Presidency by working two jobs and raising two kids and finishing my BA and MA. I was busy and didn't think too hard on DC politics.

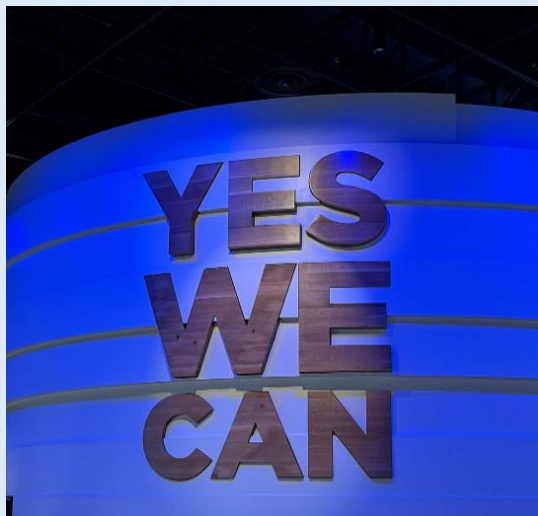
It was only after he was gone that I understood the horrors to come. It was then that I reflected on his Presidency, but especially his words. His actions. His presence. His decency.

That's what hit me in the museum. His voice is everywhere, and he isn't spewing hate. His image is projected throughout the museum with his words over the images. His speeches are shown on walls and his quotes are painted everywhere.

I felt the tears well up, and I got very uncomfortable. I was incredibly touched by the vocabulary and literacy and decency. Something I haven't heard in years.

And that's when it hit me — we are living in hell. We have been living in hell. We are in Dante's Hell. I feel like I'm in the first circle, even though I did no harm and committed no sin, but I am punished in a purgatory that won't end.

It feels like an eternity of living without hope. An eternity of separation from others and yearning. An ache for what was. A desire for normalcy and civility.



A large "Yes We Can" installation in the Museum.

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I'm Not Crying (cont'd)

I managed to keep my emotions in check for the entirety of my visit and I was so happy to be included in something so big that I had no business being included in.

The funny part is, after reflecting on our current hell and our current civil rights fights, I couldn't help but think about our future. The future we all share. The future referenced over and over and over again in the museum.

Obama was not a perfect man — I don't know any perfect people. He did seem to be laser-focused on making things better. Looking forward. Thinking positively. Trying to find something good in most folks.

And that's what I took away from my short visit to Chicago. Hope. I haven't felt it in my bones like that since...well, since 2016. I lost something that November, and I bet you did too.

We all lost something that we have been searching for since.

I didn't cry at the museum for the same reason I don't cry anywhere — I am too exhausted for the activity. I am too tired to let the tears fall. I am too busy to waste time drying my eyes.

I'm embarrassed that I am too worn out to cry.

I will continue to feel the grief and the anger and the weight of what this country has done and continues to do, but I will also carry the naive hope that I took away from the museum, if for nothing else but stubbornness.

Hope. I can feel it.

Hope. Yes, we can.

~Jess



My Parents and D-Day

My Parents and D-Day

Robert Reich

June 6



Friends,

Today [June 6, 2026] is the 82nd anniversary of D-Day — the Allied invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944. It's referred to as "D-Day" after the military term for a day when a secret combat attack or operation is planned.

It was the largest seaborne invasion in history. It began the Western Allied effort to liberate western Europe from Nazi Germany.

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My Parents and D-Day (cont'd)

Over 2,500 American soldiers, sailors, and airmen were killed during the initial amphibious assaults and airborne operations. All told, there were 4,414 confirmed Allied deaths on the first day of the invasion, which also included troops from the United Kingdom and Canada.

At the time of the invasion, my father was 30 years old, in a tank battalion readying to go to Europe. My mother was 25, working in a factory producing gas masks for the war. Some of their friends participated in the invasion. A few were paratroopers. Others were pilots. Others were soldiers.

As a small boy, I remember trying to talk with my father and my mother about D-Day. I wanted stories. The little I'd heard about it made it seem romantic and exciting. But they were reluctant to talk about it. They answered my questions in short sentences. Their voices were hurried. It was as if I was trying to open a door they'd rather keep closed. They had lost friends, relatives. D-Day, and the war it helped end, had left deep scars.

Eventually they and their generation were called America's "greatest generation" for their valor and sacrifice. They had fought fascism and won.

Now, 82 years later, we have home-grown fascism. An entire political party seems to have given up on democracy. They're supporting an ego-maniacal "strong man" who cares only about enlarging his own (and his family's) wealth and power.

His regime is marked by a degree of corruption, cruelty, and criminality never before witnessed in America's national government.

Trump's and his "war" secretary, Pete Hegseth's firing of so many top brass can be seen as a way to guarantee the loyalty of other officers to Trump rather than to America. Trump's proposal to increase the U.S. military budget by nearly 50 percent is best understood as a bribe to America's officers. He wants them to side with him if and when he tries to stay in power indefinitely.

He has already tried to turn much of America into a police state.

Public support for him is waning, and the federal courts have fought back. But it is startling and saddening how far Trump and his regime have gotten.

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My Parents and D-Day (cont'd)

What happened to the bravery and dedication of the greatest generation? What became of the sacrifices my parents and their peers made so that this nation could be free?

How and why did so many Americans succumb to neofascism?

I think it has to do with the anger so many Americans feel that they and their children haven't been able to get ahead, no matter how hard they work. Trump and other neofascists have channeled that anger toward immigrants, gays, transgendered people, Muslims, and Black people.

Democrats and progressives should be channeling that anger toward the real culprits — a wealthy elite that's used their money to gain political power and rig the economy to their benefit and against everyone else.

Another reason so many have succumbed to Trumpian neofascism is the passage of time. Eighty-two years is long enough for a nation to forget, especially a nation whose collective memory is short to begin with. Very few living Americans remember the terror and heroism of our fight against Nazi fascism. The greatest generation has mostly died off.

But we must not forget. Fascism is being born again, in America and in Europe. This time it's masquerading as white Christian nationalism, but it's as dangerous as ever.

The best way to remember and honor the men and women who risked everything for us is to fight neofascism — fight for a stronger democracy, fight for the rule of law and social justice, fight against bigotry.



"Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it incorrectly, and applying the wrong remedies."



CIVIL DISCOURSE



The Administration's Assault on the Civil Rights Community

Joyce Vance

Jun 17

Jun. 16, 2026, 4:47 PM EDT

By Joyce Vance

On June 2, the Justice Department filed a superseding indictment against the Southern Poverty Law Center, [updating one it filed in April](#). This indictment didn't add new charges or defendants. Instead, it was an attempt to correct legal errors pointed out by multiple analysts. Even a corrected indictment, though, isn't enough to fix a deeply flawed prosecution.

The SPLC case has dropped out of the news cycle because it's in that quiet period where arraignment is pending, discovery takes some time, and the Judge has been considering a few preliminary motions. Trump's slush fund corruption has knocked the case off the front burner, but the SPLC case is equally indicative of this administration's corruption, and we can't let it disappear. I hope you'll take a minute to read the piece.

It starts like this: "On June 2, the Justice Department filed a superseding indictment against the Southern Poverty Law Center, [updating one it filed in April](#). This indictment didn't add new charges or defendants. Instead, it was an attempt to correct legal errors pointed out by multiple analysts. Even a corrected indictment, though, isn't enough to fix a deeply flawed prosecution. Shortly after the original indictment, the SPLC [filed an unusual motion](#) 'to address the government's materially false statements and to enforce rules prohibiting further prejudicial extrajudicial statements.' Typically, it's the

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government that charges a defendant with making false statements. Here, the defendant was lobbing that allegation at the government.”

This is an unusual situation: the Judge denied the motion, *but only* because the government conceded error and walked back the false statement. The problem is, and we’ve seen it across this Justice Department’s “revenge docket” executed to please the proverbial audience of one, a prosecution doesn’t have to succeed to punish the person, or in this case entity, that has been indicted. The effort to intimidate and quiet voices that oppose this administration is transparent. And now, this administration is going after the civil rights community that has played such an essential role in calling it out and taking it to court: “The indictment of the SPLC is a cudgel thrown at the heart of the civil rights community.”

This is [a piece](#) that puts the prosecution in the larger context of the administration’s effort to silence loud, persistent voices, to get us all to bend the knee. Currently, I’m following the FBI’s raids on a pro-voting group in Ohio, not a national name like the SPLC, lesser known, not likely to summon as much public outrage, Kash Patel and Tood Blanche may have thought. But they are in the same vein. We should expect more of this as we draw closer to the election. And remember, they wouldn’t be going after your vote and after the people who work so hard to protect your vote, if it didn’t matter so damn much. You and your vote are powerful. This administration knows it and that’s why they are so afraid of us.

We’re in this together, Joyce



Knave or Fool? Traitorous or Demented?

Knave or Fool? Traitorous or Demented?

Trump's Strategy for the 2026 Midterms requires us to prepare now

ROBERT REICH

JUN 17



Friends,

To remind you, here's what Trump said on "Meet the Press" that aired on June 7:

"The [2020] election was rigged. It was a dirty election ... And it's happening again right now in California.... they're cheating on the election. ... they're crooked.... You know that these elections are rigged. ... Your elections in this country ... are like a third world country. Your elections are crooked."

When Trump lies with this kind of vehemence, does he sincerely *believe* what he's saying — in which case he's seriously demented?

OR does he know full well it's a lie, and part of his strategy for the 2026 midterm elections is to undermine public trust in our electoral system, especially in predominantly Democratic states and cities — in which case he's traitorous?

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Knave or Fool? ... (cont'd)

I think it's both — he's a traitor to America *and* he's seriously demented — both a knave *and* a fool.

Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche and FBI Director Kash Patel know full well that the incidence of voter fraud in America is near zero. They're playing along with Trump because, well, they're just traitors.

Blanche's Justice Department is now ramping up its investigations of supposed voter fraud across the country.

Blanche has instructed federal prosecutors to [prioritize alleged voter fraud cases](#).

Over the last year, the Justice Department has sought voter roll data from most states; sued those that have declined to comply; opened a criminal investigation into 2020 election results in Fulton County, Georgia (Trump narrowly lost Georgia that year); [subpoenaed records](#) tied to the Arizona Senate's review of Maricopa County voting; and demanded ballots from the 2024 race from Wayne County, Michigan.

A [March 2026 order](#) directed the Department of Homeland Security and the Social Security Administration to compile state-by-state citizenship lists before federal elections; instructed the Department of Justice to prioritize investigations and prosecutions of officials and private actors involved in issuing or distributing ballots to ineligible voters; and ordered new Postal Service rules for tracking mail and absentee ballots.

Yet despite the Trump regime's demands for voter roll data, at least eight federal district judges have rejected those demands. Half of those judges were appointed by Trump. The regime is appealing the decisions.

I used to work at the Justice Department, and, to the best of my knowledge, it has never had a 0-for-8 losing streak.

And let me remind you once again: *There's close to zero evidence of any voter fraud in America.*

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Knave or Fool? ... (cont'd)

California appears to be an early testing ground for Trump's voting fraud witch hunt.

Speaking to conservative radio host Glenn Beck recently, the top federal prosecutor in Los Angeles, Bill Essayli, promised “[w]e will be charging some people.” The promise would have been a violation of Justice Department policy under past procedures that barred the department from involving itself in state or local elections, but Essayli has no qualms. “It will be election fraud charges in the next ... one or two months, I believe. We need some of these results to be certified so we can prove some of the allegations.”

Essayli dispatched prosecutors to offices where ballots were being counted and has appealed for anyone with evidence of voter fraud to come forward, saying that “what we need right now are witnesses.”

Hello? The way justice is supposed to be served in America begins with investigations *followed by* allegations and *then* proof.

On social media, Essayli charges that California “has stonewalled every effort to verify that only eligible U.S. citizens are registered to vote.” He warns that his office will “not look the other way. We will investigate and prosecute,” adding that “every legal vote deserves to be counted. Every illegal vote cancels one out.”

Since taking over as the top prosecutor in Los Angeles, Essayli — a former Republican state assemblyman — has proven that his loyalty to Trump exceeds his fealty to the law. He has dropped cases against the president's allies; aggressively pursued charges against protesters rallying against the administration's immigration crackdown, only to face a string of losses; and investigated California over its policies toward transgender athletes.

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Kash Patel's FBI is participating in this dangerous charade.

Last Thursday, the FBI executed a search warrant at the office of an Ohio-based community grassroots group — the Ohio Organizing Collaborative — that works to

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Knave or Fool? ... (cont'd)

register voters.

Over 125 federal agents reportedly showed up at the homes of its employees and volunteers to interview them. The agents knocked on doors and demanded to come into their houses to get phones, without warrants. They followed people in their cars, even followed kids to school.

Last fall, Frank LaRose, a Republican serving as Ohio's top election official, referred 1,084 noncitizens who appeared to have registered in the state to the Justice Department. Federal investigators have also collected voter records in at least six Ohio counties, Reuters reported in April.

Why Ohio? It's one of the few states where a Democrat — in this case, Sherrod Brown — has a chance to flip a formerly Republican seat in the U.S. Senate.

The FBI is also probing Wisconsin. It recently attempted to interview the director of elections in Milwaukee County. Earlier this year, Minnesota's secretary of state received grand jury subpoenas seeking some voter records as part of a federal investigation into whether noncitizens are registered to vote or have unlawfully cast ballots."

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Trump, his suck-ups Blanche and Patel, and their army of prosecutorial lackeys such as California's Essayli and Minnesota's LaRose are not out to win cases against voter fraud.

Their real purpose is to create so much doubt in the minds of the American public about whether voter fraud has occurred that it becomes easier for Trump to claim — after Democrats have prevailed in the 2026 midterm elections — that they did so because they cheated. And *then* for Trump, Blanche, and Patel to contest those wins.

According to this scenario, Trump would declare that the election results were rigged, as he has in the past. He would assert that the results in specific jurisdictions—counties, cities, or states—should not be recognized. He would allege fraud and irregularities, illegal ballots, or foreign interference, including cyber activity.

In response, compliant federal authorities would require investigation of those results before they were finalized. The authorities would move to secure ballots, voting records, or related materials in contested jurisdictions, building on the actions the Trump regime has already taken.

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Knave or Fool? ... (cont'd)

While these investigations are taking place, Trump would then call on congressional leadership to proceed as if the announced results are invalid, urging the Speaker of the House to organize the chamber on the basis of a Republican majority, and encouraging similar action in the Senate, urging them to ignore any jurisdictions in which the federal government was still undertaking its review.

It's the only real strategy Trump has left — given that his war in Iran has failed, the prices of gas and food are likely to remain elevated through the midterm elections, and most working Americans are struggling far harder than they did before Trump occupied the Oval Office.

But it's a dangerous, cynical strategy that will further undermine public trust in our system of government.

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What can stop them?

Governors and mayors need to get in *front* of this and warn voters about this treachery.

They should give voters the facts about the infinitesimal incidence of voter fraud in their states and cities, show the resources they're using to stop voter fraud, and explain any anomalies (such as the length of time it took in California to determine the outcome of the primary elections).

Governors also should communicate clearly and early to their constituents that election results will be honored, that certification will proceed under state law, and that the rights of voters will be protected regardless of federal claims to the contrary. That kind of clarity can shape public expectations before a crisis, not after it.

Governors should decide now that they will certify results under state law and will not alter or withhold certification in response to federal claims. They can secure custody of ballots and direct state law enforcement to protect election materials. They should

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Knave or Fool? ... (cont'd)

prepare for the possibility that federal agents will attempt to seize ballots or voting infrastructure and define in advance how state authorities will respond.

Secretaries of state should secure chain-of-custody procedures as well as physical and digital records and prepare detailed audit documentation for immediate release. They should prepare public reporting systems that make results, audits, and underlying data rapidly accessible. Speed matters. Claims of fraud and irregularities take hold quickly; rebuttal must be quick.

State attorneys general should draft complaints now, identify jurisdictions for filing, and coordinate multi-state litigation strategies. They should prepare to challenge ballot seizures, interference with certification, emergency detentions, and federal control of election processes. They should also coordinate with local prosecutors and law enforcement to define how state criminal law applies to interference with election administration.

All this still may not be enough. Trump is a master conman. But he's also off his rocker — and part of the response to him and his bonkers claims must also be to emphasize that he's out of his mind as well as responsible for the havoc America now finds itself in — the failed foreign adventures and the affordability crisis — and therefore must not be trusted.



Warren Exposes TrumpRx Scam

At Hearing, Warren Exposes TrumpRx Scam, Blasts Trump Administration for Putting Big Pharma Over Americans' Health

TrumpRx prices are higher for one in four drugs on the website
Warren: *“TrumpRx is one more Trump scam right up there with Trump University, Trump Water, Trump Steaks.”*

Warren: *“Americans are getting crushed by health care costs, and [RFK Jr.] and Donald Trump are actually making the problem worse.”*

ELIZABETH WARREN

APRIL 22

Washington, D.C. — At a hearing of the Senate Finance Committee, U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) pressed Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Robert F. Kennedy Jr. on TrumpRx, revealing how President Trump's marquee drug pricing effort often provides higher prices for Americans while boosting Big Pharma's bottom line.

Following the Trump Administration's efforts to cut health care for millions of Americans, TrumpRx launched as a direct-to-consumer platform where Americans can purchase brand-name drugs for a cash price outside of insurance. President Trump has stated that TrumpRx has reduced prices by as much as 600%, which Senator Warren noted would “mean companies should be paying you to take their drugs.”

Despite Secretary Kennedy's assertion that “President Trump has a different way of calculating percentages,” Senator Warren highlighted the high TrumpRx prices for several specific ones. For example, TrumpRx lists the medication Protonix for \$200, but the generic equivalent, Pantoprazole, costs just \$16 at Costco. As a result, patients who use TrumpRx could easily pay more for their drugs.

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Warren Exposes TrumpRx Scam (cont'd)

Pharmaceutical companies struck deals with the Trump administration that resulted in minimal or no savings on prescription drugs while receiving substantial benefits such as 100% tariff relief, exemptions from Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) demonstration programs, and access to priority review vouchers from the Food and Drug Administration.

Senator Warren slammed President Trump's deals with Big Pharma companies: "Big Pharma makes billions of dollars in tariff relief by listing their drugs on TrumpRx, and then they don't even lower the costs on many of these drugs. That is a great deal for Big Pharma."

"Did you sign off on these sweetheart deals for Big Pharma, or was this all President Trump's idea?," asked Senator Warren, pressing Secretary Kennedy on the need for transparency regarding the agreements between the pharmaceutical companies and the Trump administration. Secretary Kennedy committed "to make the deals available."

"[Americans have] got a better than one out of four chance of paying more at TrumpRx than they would if they went to Costco," Senator Warren concluded. "That's not much of a deal for the American people."



Utopias of Violence

The Unlearned Lesson of the Iran War

Timothy Snyder June 21

This is too long for the newsletter, so we're including it as a link (click the title).

Timothy Snyder is one of the leading authorities on fascism and his little book, "On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons From the Twentieth Century" is internationally respected and taught in European universities. His words are a warning for all Americans.

Mail Voting Should Be Accessible to All

Mail Voting Should be Accessible to All Americans

As you may know, the United States Postal Service (USPS) issued a proposed rule earlier this month that would erect barriers to mail voting. The League is encouraging people to submit comments opposing the [USPS's proposal](#) regarding the transmission of mail-in or absentee ballots for federal elections.

The USPS's proposed amendments would create unnecessary barriers to voting that could prevent eligible voters from receiving and returning their mail-in and absentee ballots and could even serve to disenfranchise eligible voters who are unable to vote in person.

Under the amendments, USPS would need to verify that mailed ballots are only being sent to approved voters on a list supplied by states. This gives USPS a role in election administration that rightfully belongs to state and local election officials.

The proposal would also establish mandatory ballot-mail design and tracking requirements, including requiring states to update their mail ballots envelopes to include voter unique ballot-tracking barcodes.

Everyone agrees that election mail should be secure. But these new federal requirements will create barriers that could prevent eligible voters from receiving and returning their mail-in and absentee ballots in time to be counted.

Voting is a fundamental right for citizens that must be guaranteed. Voting by mail is part of that right and is a critical part of the election process throughout the United States.

The USPS comment period is open until July 2, 2026, at 5PM ET.

Use this form to file your comment today!

Two Simple Actions You Can Take Today

Honoring Pennsylvania's Democratic Legacy: Two Simple Actions You Can Take Today

By Nancy Morgan, Lakes Community

July 24

As Pennsylvanians, we are the heirs to a remarkable democratic tradition. Our Commonwealth played a central role in the birth of American democracy, home to the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, and to generations of citizens who have worked to make government more accountable to the people. Today, Pennsylvania once again has an opportunity to strengthen our democracy, and your voice can help make it happen.

In a recent presentation, "Democracy for Sale: How Citizens Can Fight Back," Jeff Keyser and I discussed the growing influence of money in politics, and the important role ordinary citizens can play in creating change. You can find a copy of the presentation [here](#).

We highlighted two good-governance reforms currently moving through the Pennsylvania legislature that deserve public support:

1. KEEP FOREIGN-INFLUENCED MONEY OUT OF PENNSYLVANIA ELECTIONS

HB 497 would prohibit foreign-influenced corporations from spending money to influence Pennsylvania elections. The bill recently passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support, 146-53. The next step is getting the bill introduced and advanced in the Senate. Please contact Senator Scott Martin and urge him to support [HB497](#). With just a few clicks, you can send a pre-written message. [Click here](#).

2. BAN GIFTS TO LEGISLATORS

Public officials should be accountable to voters, not to lobbyists and special interests. Several gift-ban bills have been introduced in both chambers, and now is the time to tell legislators that Pennsylvanians expect higher ethical standards. Send a quick message by [clicking here](#), urging them to pass a meaningful gift ban.

These reforms will not solve every challenge facing our democracy, but they are important steps toward restoring public trust and ensuring that elected officials remain accountable to the people they serve.

The best part? It takes less than a minute to make your voice heard. By taking action today, you can help move these bills to the Governor's desk and continue Pennsylvania's long tradition of leading the way toward a stronger, more representative democracy.

Coming Events

Understanding Our Democracy Series

Tuesday, July 21st @ 1pm in the Education Room:

“Medicare: The Consequences of the 2025 Billionaire Tax Cuts”

Nancy Mannion, our candidate for the 11th Congressional District, will join us to discuss what is happening with Medicare. Please join us ... all are welcome.

Tuesday, Aug. 18th @ 1pm in the Education Room:

“A Truly Representative Democracy”

We like to believe that we live in a representative democracy. However, it has always been a bit of a stretch. Our single member, winner-takes-all elections have never supported a truly representative democracy. But recent events have sent us off the cliff. The key changes have been driven by the Supreme Court gutting the Voting Rights Act and blessing partisan gerrymandering. And we see ongoing attacks on voting rights. We now are in a death spiral as each state works to eliminate any representation for the opposition. We will take a hard look at the problem and how can we can fix this. We hope you can join us ... all are welcome.

Events will be in the Cultural Center Education Room

Dems Club General Meetings

Tuesday, August 25 1:00 – 2:00 pm

Jess Branas, Democratic Candidate for PA 197th House District

Tuesday, September 29th 1:00 – 2:00 pm

Nancy Mannion, Democratic Candidate for US Congress

Events will be held in the Cultural Center Education Room

Dems Club Field Trips

Lancaster Food Hub

Wednesdays July 15 am & 29 pm (duplicate events)

Contact Ross Fairweather (rossfair63@gmail.com) to register.

Meeting Minutes

Democratic Club of Willow Valley
General Meeting
June 30, 2026

***These minutes will be published
in our August newsletter
as there was insufficient time
to meet the publication deadline.***

