

DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF WILLOW VALLEY

NEWSLETTER

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Paid for by Democratic Club of Willow Valley

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Addressing the Issues

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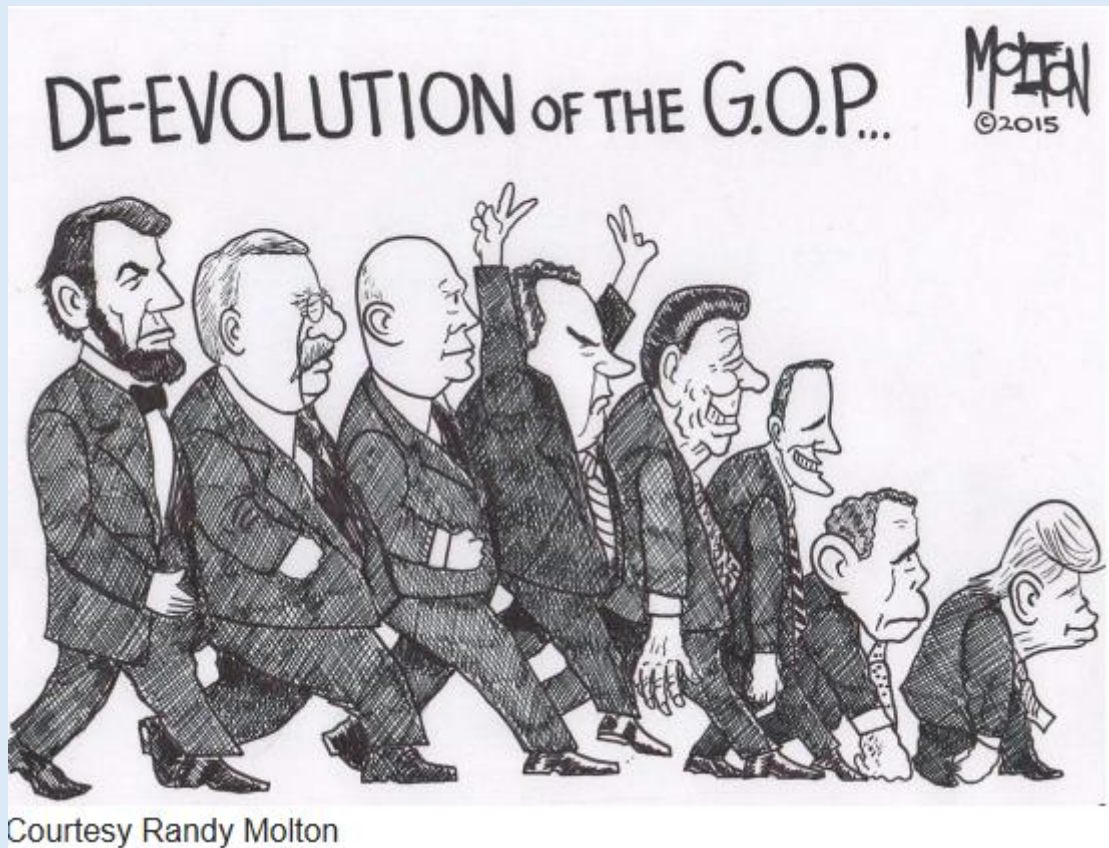
Trump Will Try to Steal the Midterms. Here's How

Trump WILL Try to Steal the Midterms. Here's How

And How We Prevent Him from Doing So

Robert Reich

July 11



Courtesy Randy Molton

Friends,

On Thursday, the Trump regime forced out the three remaining members of the Election Assistance Commission — effectively ending it.

You need to see this as part of Trump's overall strategy to take over the midterm elections, some ninety days from now. The strategy has six parts:

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Trump Will Try to Steal (cont'd)

1. Eliminate neutral watchdogs

The small Election Assistance Commission was focused on the unglamorous but important work of election administration — helping states with testing and certification of voting systems, serving as a [national clearinghouse](#) for information on how best to administer elections, and maintaining the [national mail voter registration form](#) established by the [National Voter Registration Act of 1993](#).

It had been created by Congress in 2002 after the Florida recount marred the 2000 presidential election and effectively pushed it into the Supreme Court to decide. In 2016, after Russia's election interference, the commission targeted cybersecurity, supporting states as they reviewed and improved safeguards on their voting machines.

Trump has also overseen major cuts at the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, also intended to review and improve safeguards on voting machines. The cybersecurity agency has not had a Senate-confirmed director since Trump returned to the White House.

The two major points of nonpartisan help for state and local elections officials — the Election Assistance Commission and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency — are now effectively gone.

The Trump regime says it had the right to fire the commissioners, under the Supreme Court's recent *Slaughter* decision (the name fits), which gave a president the authority to fire commissioners from what had been independent regulatory agencies. But the high court did *not* authorize Trump to eliminate an entire agency wholesale.

2. Eliminate all constraints on big money

On June 30, the Republican-appointed majority on the Supreme Court in *NRSC v. FEC* ruled against any spending limits on coordinated party expenditures. That means political parties can now spend unlimited money in direct coordination with

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Trump Will Try to Steal (cont'd)

their candidates. A donor who could give a candidate \$7,000 directly can now route a million dollars or more through the party to cover that same candidate's bills, and the candidate can solicit exactly it.

The case was filed in 2022 by JD Vance. Although those spending limits were contained in an act of Congress, the Trump regime's Justice Department refused to defend it when it reached the Court. (I used to argue Supreme Court cases before the Supreme Court and I'm hard-pressed to think of another case in which an administration has refused to defend an act of Congress before the Supreme Court.)

3. Intimidate voters

Make no mistake. ICE is intended to intimidate potential voters who have every right to vote. ICE is now arresting an average of 2,000 people a day — twice its rate just a year ago — and has three times the resources it had then. Some 70,000 people are now in detention centers.

Some of them are American citizens.

The Justice Department is also prosecuting Americans who have protested against ICE. Eight were [convicted](#) on domestic terrorism charges following an incident last year in which a police officer was shot during an anti-ICE protest outside the Prairieland, Texas Detention Center. A ninth defendant in that case, Ines Soto, was recently sentenced to [50 years in prison](#) for "providing material support to terrorists" because he had transported political pamphlets in his car.

Fifteen Minnesota protesters pled [not guilty](#) last week to conspiracy charges stemming from protests in January. Activist and healthcare worker Isaac Sant, one of the accused, said the trial was "a naked attempt to silence our voices, to squash dissent and to have a chilling effect on organizing here in the Twin Cities," which, he noted, "is not going to work."

ICE recently shot dead Lorenzo Salgado Araujo in Houston. Earlier this year, it murdered Alex Pretti and Renee Good. None of these murders is being investigated by the FBI or the Justice Department.

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Trump Will Try to Steal (cont'd)

All of this has been dressed up as immigration policy, but it has a much baser motive: to normalize the presence of federal forces deployed against civilians in Democratic cities, in preparation for federal troops monitoring polls in these cities. These will inevitably be followed by fraud investigations if, as expected, these cities nonetheless vote for Democratic candidates.

4. Investigate and arrest alleged leftist “terrorists.”

Secretary of State Marco Rubio has invited senior ministers from more than 60 countries to a meeting next week about what the Trump administration views as a major peril: the [“resurgence of transnational far-left terrorism.”](#)

The administration’s counterterrorism czar, Sebastian Gorka, has had discussions with colleagues about using foreign terrorism labels for antifa to justify going after Americans with links to the movement, a loosely knit association of far-left activists who militantly oppose fascism and right-wing ideologies, three current and former U.S. officials said.

A linkage to foreign terrorist groups “can unlock certain investigative tools,” such as surveillance, one U.S. counterterrorism official told the *Washington Post*.

5. Make it harder to vote and control how ballots are counted.

Trump’s Justice Department has already demanded voter rolls from secretaries of state. Trump is demanding that Republicans in Congress enact his so-called “Save America” act, which would impose strict ID requirements — including showing passports or birth certificates — in order to vote. And his Department of Homeland Security has warned state election officials they can face criminal penalties if non-citizens are permitted to vote.

So far, district courts have struck down Trump’s demands for voter rolls, and Republicans in Congress have not resisted his demands for the so-called Save act.

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Trump Will Try to Steal (cont'd)

6. Cast doubt on the outcome of the midterms.

Trump will use every opportunity over the next ninety days to claim that Democrats are cheating — as he did in early June when claiming on NBC News's "Meet the Press" that the California primary elections were rigged, and that NBC correspondent Kristin Welker and her network were "playing right into their hands" by questioning him about the basis for his claims that elections were "crooked" in Democratic states.

He wants to cast doubt on the outcome of the midterms and impose control over how ballots are counted, so that after Democrats win the House and possibly the Senate, Trump will demand recounts or audits.

What you can do, now:

- 1. Join with local get-out-the-vote groups to make sure everyone who's legally entitled to register to vote in your city or county is registered.**
- 2. Before Election Day on November 3, join with local get-out-the-vote groups to literally *get out the vote*. Give people rides to voting places, if they need them. Make sure they know where to vote. Help them get whatever voting information they need.**
- 3. If you become aware of any irregularities — any attempts to discourage or intimidate people who are entitled to vote from voting — alert the offices of your state attorney general and secretary of state.**
- 4. Make sure your city, county, or state Democratic organization has lawyers ready and willing to litigate illegal efforts to obstruct the vote. Every county election office should know which state officials to call and, if necessary, file an emergency complaint.**
- 5. Finally, let me also quote [Rick Wilson](#), who for many years was a Republican operative:**

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Trump Will Try to Steal (cont'd)

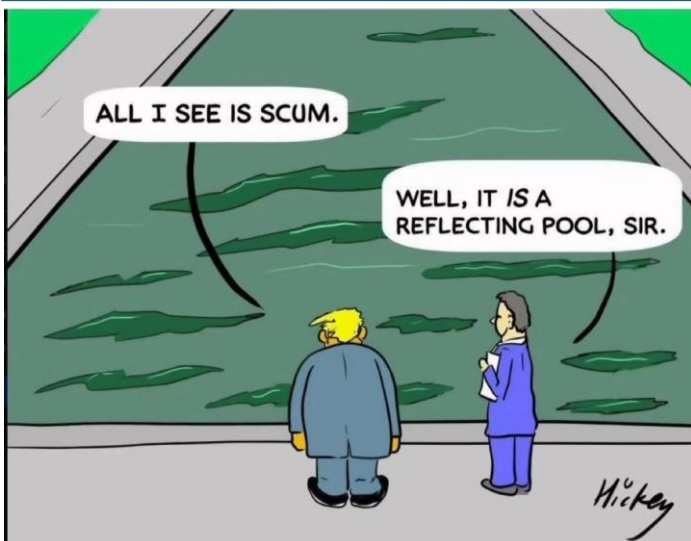
"For the love of God, stop trying to shame the Republican Party into decency. I watched this party from the inside for thirty years. There is no bottom, there is no invisible line of conscience, and there is no cavalry of Serious Republicans waiting for permission to do the right thing. The ones with even marginally functioning consciences already left.

What remains is an apparatus that responds to exactly two stimuli: power and fear of losing it. Every hour spent crafting the perfect appeal to their better angels is an hour donated to the opposition. They are not going to be shamed. They can only be beaten.

Here's the strategic core, and it's the oldest rule in the book: cheating operations work on the margins. They flip close races. They exploit recounts, certification fights, faithless officials, and friendly courts. What they cannot do, what no operation in American history has ever managed to do, is steal a landslide.

A three-point race in Wisconsin can be litigated, delayed, "investigated," and strangled in a certification meeting. An eight-point race cannot. The math of the steal collapses when the margin exceeds the degree of MAGA fuckery. ...

You have the numbers. You have the law. And you have about ninety days."



The Good, the Better and the Best for Education in PA's State Budget

The Good, the Better and the Best for Education in PA's 2026-2027 State Budget

Susan Spika

July 13

State lawmakers approved the 2026-2027 state budget over the weekend and funding for public education was, once again, the top bipartisan priority.

This didn't happen by accident. When lawmakers sat down to negotiate this year's budget, one message consistently came through across the Commonwealth: Pennsylvanians value their public schools and want them to be strong for every student, no matter their zip code.

This budget is another reminder about the power of advocacy. When parents, educators, students, school board directors, and community leaders come together around a single goal, their collective voice has the power to shape policy. Every action taken this year throughout the budget process, big or small, helped reinforce the importance of investing in PA's public schools. Whether you sent an email, attended Advocacy Day or met with your legislators in their local offices, shared information on social media, or simply had a conversation with your neighbors about your deep passion for your local public schools, your advocacy helped keep public education at the forefront of this year's budget negotiations, and for that, we say "thank you."

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Education in PA's State Budget (cont'd)

THE GOOD. A THIRD ADEQUACY SUPPLEMENT.



Pennsylvania took another step toward constitutional school funding and, with this investment and has closed one third of the adequacy gap over three years, leaving a remaining gap of \$3.3 billion.

\$564 million for adequacy and tax equity funding to help bring Pennsylvania one step closer to constitutional compliance, including the following:

\$526.4 million in new adequacy funding for districts with an adequacy gap;

\$6.4 million in additional supplements to provide a \$50,000 minimum allocation for districts without an adequacy gap;

\$32.2 million in tax equity funding.

\$50 million in Basic Education Funding for all 500 school districts that will be distributed through the Basic Education Funding formula.

\$50 million in special education funding for all 500 school districts that will be distributed through the special education formula.

THE BETTER. CYBER CHARTER REFORMS IN THE SCHOOL CODE (PA HOUSE BILL 1505).



The very good news from the School Code is that bipartisan reforms close loopholes bad actors in the cyber charter industry had exploited over the past year. We applaud the lawmakers who worked very hard on this legislation, which we hope will finally ensure that cyber charter students are safe, learning, and actually attending school.

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Education in PA's State Budget (cont'd)

Truancy

The School Code continues to require students who are habitually truant to get the approval from a magisterial judge before transferring to a cyber charter school. The code establishes a process families of habitually truant students can use to get their case before a judge and clarifies the criteria a judge may use to determine if this transfer is in the “best educational interest of the student.”

Cyber charters that enroll habitually truant students in violation of the law will **not** receive payments from school districts for these students.

Wellness checks

The legislation establishes an escalation path cybers must follow for students who miss weekly wellness checks. The law makes clear that someone from the cyber charter must actually visibly see and communicate with students in real time to ensure their health and safety.

Residency

These bipartisan reforms are wonky and detailed. [Read p. 61 of the School Code](#) if you'd like to learn more. These should **finally** ensure that taxpayers are no longer forced to pay tuition bills for cyber charter students who live outside of their district and even the state.

Unfortunately, there are no additional cyber charter savings in this year's budget. Our understanding is that lawmakers want to see the impact of two years of tuition adjustments before enacting further savings.

Rest assured, we will continue to expose the enormous amount of excess funding paid to cyber charters that they waste, and we will continue to advocate for tuition rates that match the cost of an online education. This fight is not over.

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Education in PA's State Budget (cont'd)



For the first time in a decade, state lawmakers did not increase funding for Pennsylvania's private school voucher programs. The Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) and Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) programs remain level-funded.

Until there is additional transparency that shows how the current \$575 million in tax money allocated for private school vouchers is spent and who benefits from these programs, not one additional dollar should be allocated to any voucher program, *including Trump's federal private school voucher program.*

PS: See how your state lawmakers voted on the budget and School Code bills.

[State Budget Bill \(PA HB 2400 PN 3765\)](#)

[PA Senate roll call vote final passage 44-6](#)

[PA House roll call vote on concurrence 167-35](#)

[School Code \(PA House Bill 1505 PN3764\)](#)

[PA Senate roll call vote final passage 45-5](#)

[House roll call vote on concurrence 172-30](#)



Jess Branas is having a Town Hall meeting on Thursday evening August 6th at the West Lampeter Township Building from 7:00-8:30. Please join us in learning how she plans to win the PA House 97th District over Steve Mentzer.



The People vs. Trump's Police State

The People vs. Trump's Police State

Trump's police state is growing, but communities are organizing against it.

ROBERT REICH

July 14



Lorenzo Salgado Araujo

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People vs. Trump's Police State (cont'd)

Friends,

Yesterday, Joan Sebastian Guerrero — a 26-year-old from Colombia with a wife and 3-year-old daughter — was killed by an ICE agent in Biddeford, Maine. Guerrero was authorized to work in the United States and had been issued a Social Security number, according to the Maine Immigrant Rights Coalition.

Last Tuesday, Lorenzo Salgado Araujo — a 52-year-old Mexican immigrant who had lived in Houston for 35 years, running a small business — was killed when driving to work with three other men. Agents with Immigration and Customs Enforcement began following him and shot him after they said he failed to stop his vehicle.

We may never know exactly what happened to Guerrero or Araujo because, as with Renee Good and Alex Pretti in Minneapolis, ICE's accounts of both killings have been contradicted by eyewitnesses. ICE says the victims "weaponized" their vehicles — the same excuse they used to murder Renee Good. In none of the cases were agents using body cameras.

Trump is turning America into a police state. His forces are ICE and Border Patrol, the National Guard and the U.S. Army, and the Drug Enforcement Administration and the FBI. Here's a quick summary:

1. ICE and Border Patrol (Department of Homeland Security)

From early 2025 through mid-2026, federal immigration agents have [fired on more than 20 people](#), many of whom were shot in their vehicles. At least seven of these people died. In some cases, video evidence has undermined the accounts initially provided by federal officials.

Over the same period of time, more than 50 people have died in ICE custody, often because authorities refused to treat acute medical conditions.

Meanwhile, the Justice Department is bringing charges of "domestic terrorism" against Americans who have protested against ICE.

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People vs. Trump's Police State (cont'd)

Eight people were recently convicted in Texas of "domestic terrorism" following an incident last year in which a police officer was shot during an anti-ICE protest outside the Prairieland Detention Center. A ninth defendant in that case, Ines Soto, was sentenced to [50 years in prison](#) for "providing material support to terrorists" because he had transported political pamphlets in his car; his wife, Elizabeth Soto, was also sentenced to 50 years. Seven others convicted at trial received sentences ranging from 30 years to [100 years in prison](#) for [Benjamin Song](#), a former Marine reservist convicted of attempted murder.

2. National Guard and federal troops (Department of Defense)

ICE isn't the only federal police force killing Americans. Authorities in Memphis are investigating the second fatal shooting in four days of a city resident by federal agents sent there to deal with crime and drug enforcement. Two days earlier, [two National Guard members](#) killed Tyrin Johnson, 20. At least [two other people](#) have been killed by federal agents in Memphis over the last two months.

Trump established the federal task force on crime by executive order last year, sending federal troops and law enforcement agents to Democratic-run cities that he claimed were overrun with crime. All four of the Memphis deaths have occurred in the last two months.

Federal agents and National Guard troops remain in Memphis and in Washington, D.C. On Friday, a Pentagon official said the National Guard will remain activated in Washington through Inauguration Day 2029 "until law and order are fully restored in our Nation's Capital."

3. The FBI and the Drug Enforcement Administration (Department of Justice)

The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation said that one of the shootings in Memphis was done by an agent from the Drug Enforcement Administration. The DEA, part of the Department of Justice, is targeting drug trafficking in many U.S. cities.

The FBI, also part of the Justice Department, is doing drug raids in U.S. cities. Its recent efforts include "Operation Hard Ball" this July in Los Angeles and Sacramento;

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People vs. Trump's Police State (cont'd)

"Rancho San Pedro Takedown," also this July, involving federal agents in Los Angeles; "Operation Powder Island" this July, supposedly targeting a Georgia-based network that extends to Atlanta, Jacksonville, Charlotte, Dallas, and Buffalo; and "Minneapolis Gang Takedowns" in June and July, against Minneapolis street gangs.

4. Trump's Police State: Blurring the lines

The Trump regime has blurred the lines between federal immigration enforcement, federal crackdowns on crime, and federal enforcement of drug laws. Trump has often — baselessly — equated immigrants with violent criminals, and violent criminals with drug smuggling.

This was Trump's message last October when he told American troops that he would send "more than the National Guard" into cities. "We have cities that are troubled, we can't have cities that are troubled. And we're sending in our National Guard, and if we need more than the National Guard, we'll send more than the National Guard, because we're going to have safe cities We're not going to have people killed in our cities. And whether people like that or not, that's what we're doing."

In the same speech, Trump defended U.S. military strikes against small vessels from South America suspected of smuggling drugs. So far, U.S. military strikes on such vessels have killed more than 210 people, without evidence they're involved in drug smuggling.

Some of these activities may be legitimate. What's troubling is the size and scope of Trump's federal police state — now involving ICE and Border Patrol from the Department of Homeland Security; the National Guard and the U.S. Army from the Department of Defense; and the FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, and federal prosecutors from the Justice Department.

We have no way of knowing what training these forces have received to deal with civilian populations inside the United States, who is deploying them and what criteria are being used to select places for their deployment, what controls and limits have been placed on them, and whether any of them will be deployed at polling places on November 3.

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People vs. Trump's Police State (cont'd)

It is time we got some answers. The United States has never before had a federal police force.

5. The People Respond

Many communities across the nation are organizing in response. In Minneapolis; Memphis; Washington, D.C.; Houston; Los Angeles; Chicago; Atlanta; Portland, Maine; and elsewhere, people are mobilizing to protect one another.

They are also preparing for the midterm elections. They are determined not to be intimidated. Nor will they be goaded into violence.

[Adam Serwer's words](#) from his *Atlantic* article published on January 26, just days after Alex Pretti's murder, bear repeating. They're relevant beyond Minneapolis.

"The secret fear of the morally depraved is that virtue is actually common, and that they're the ones who are alone. In Minnesota, all of the ideological cornerstones of MAGA have been proved false at once. Minnesotans, not the armed thugs of ICE and the Border Patrol, are brave. Minnesotans have shown that their community is socially cohesive—because of its diversity and not in spite of it.

Minnesotans have found and loved one another in a world atomized by social media, where empty men have tried to fill their lonely soul with lies about their own inherent superiority. Minnesotans have preserved everything worthwhile about 'Western civilization,' while armed brutes try to tear it down by force.

No matter how many more armed men Trump sends to impose his will on the people of Minnesota, all he can do is accentuate their valor. No application of armed violence can make the men with guns as heroic as the people who choose to stand in their path with empty hands in defense of their neighbors. These agents, and the president who sent them, are no one's heroes, no one's saviors — just men with guns who have to hide their faces to shoot a mom in the face, and a nurse in the back."

[Men of Mt. Rushmore – YouTube](#)

Take a few minutes to enjoy this comedic video.

Plan to Make America Affordable

A 10-Point Plan to Make America Affordable

Every candidate should pledge their support

ROBERT REICH

JULY 16

Friends,

Trump's economy is truly sh*tty for most Americans. Every time Trump or his lapdogs in Congress tell voters that the economy is terrific, they seem more out of touch.

A significant number of Democrats have won elections over the last several months — mayoral, gubernatorial, and special elections — by stressing affordability.

Democrats can show America that they can be better trusted than Republicans to bring prices down and real wages up by pledging 10 things.

Pledge to Make America Affordable Again

1. We'll eliminate Trump's across-the-board tariffs. They're import taxes that are raising the prices of just about everything American consumers buy. We'll eliminate them where their costs to consumers are far higher than any potential benefits in the form of new jobs.

2. We'll get energy prices down by ending Trump's war in Iran and shifting to renewable sources of energy.

Trump's war has increased gas prices by \$1 a gallon over most of the country. It's accomplished nothing but give Iran bargaining leverage to close the strait — which was open before the war. We'll bring down energy prices by ending the war and then reduce energy prices by shifting to renewable sources that are cheaper than fossil fuels — such as solar, wind, and biomass.

3. We'll bust up monopolies. Another major source of high prices is monopolies — especially in high tech, health care, food, and finance. We'll vigorously enforce antitrust (anti-monopoly) laws so that corporations don't have the power to raise prices. We'll bust up giant corporations. We'll bar large firms from merging or acquiring other firms.

4. We'll fight for stronger unions. Workers need more bargaining power to get higher wages. Part of the answer is stronger unions. Democrats will make it easier for them to start or join them.

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Plan to Make America Affordable (cont'd)

5. We'll raise the national minimum wage to \$20 an hour. No one who works full-time should be in poverty. And we'll raise it even higher for employees of big corporations that pay their top executives more than 200 times the typical worker.

6. We'll make housing more affordable. We'll stop private equity firms from buying up large tracts of housing and colluding on prices. We'll get rid of zoning laws that keep housing prices high. And we'll raise taxes on big corporations that drive up housing prices where they're headquartered or have major facilities, and use the funds for more affordable housing there.

7. We'll cut health care costs by making Medicare available to everyone. Giving everyone the option of buying into Medicare would bring health care costs down because it's cheaper and more efficient than private for-profit health insurance.

8. We'll get working families help with child care and elder care. Both are essential for working families who must now pay out large portions of their incomes to provide care for family members.

9. We'll give working families paid family leave. Twelve weeks of unpaid leave has proven useful but not adequate. Every other advanced country provides paid leave; the richest country in the world should too.

10. We'll raise taxes on the wealthiest to pay for this. Since Reagan, the rich have paid far lower taxes while accumulating a near-record portion of total income and wealth. It's only fair that they pay more so that the rest of America can afford what Americans need. We'll raise the top marginal tax rate to 70 percent — what it was before Reagan. We'll also impose a 0.5 percent tax on wealth in excess of \$100 million. We'll also eliminate the cap on income subject to Social Security taxes, require that the ultra-rich pay annual capital gains taxes on unrealized income, and eliminate the stepped-up basis at death.

These 10 steps are crucial for making America affordable again.



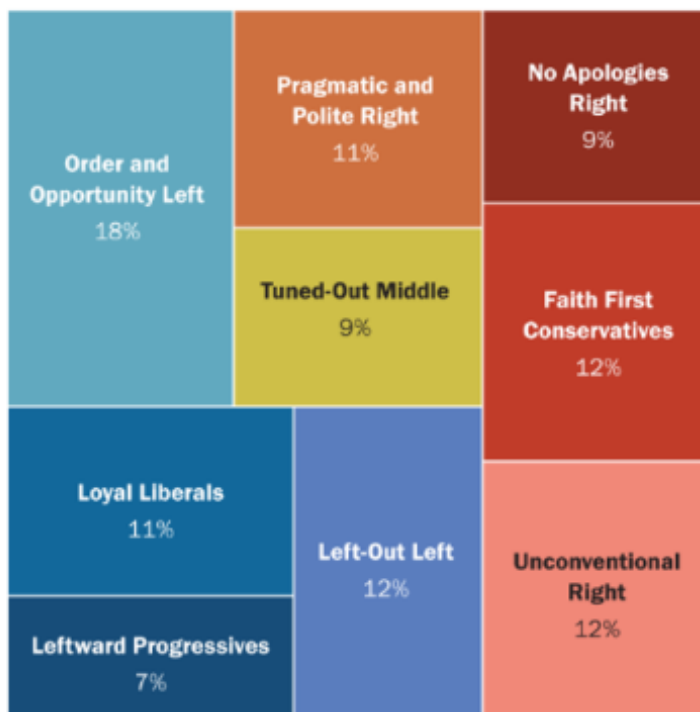
Your Political Views

Curious about where your political views fit in today's political landscape?

The Pew Research Center's new Political Typology Quiz goes beyond simple party labels to identify the group that most closely matches your beliefs and values. It's a thoughtful, nonpartisan way to learn more about your political outlook—and you may be surprised by the results. [Click here](#) to take the survey.

The 2026 Pew Research Center Political Typology

% of U.S. adults in each typology group



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 17-30, 2025.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

When the Sleeping Giant Dances

Sunday thought: When the sleeping giant dances

ROBERT REICH

JUL 26



Friends,

We have been subject to the sociopath for a year and a half — 18 months of the most loathsome, least competent, and most corrupt person to ever be president of the United States of America.

We've watched him take a meat-axe to every major institution of our democracy, draw the nation into a never-ending war, establish a murderous domestic police state, reject renewable energy in favor of the dirtiest possible fossil fuels, make billions off his presidency, and cause most Americans to become poorer and less economically secure.

But here's the good news. The sleeping giant of America is finally awakening.

Trump's poll numbers are plummeting. They're now at record lows. Even many Republicans have had enough. Progressives are winning election after election around the country.

The sleeping giant has always remained asleep until some venality becomes so noxious, some acts so disrespectful of the common good, some brutalities so noisy, that the giant has no choice but to awaken — blinking both eyes and then roaring, "What the *hell* is going on here?"

The first time I saw him awaken was during the witch hunts of Senator Joe McCarthy. He awoke again when the Ku Klux Klan tried to stop the Civil Rights Movement. Again when the Vietnam War was taking the lives of tens of thousands of Americans and millions of Vietnamese. And again when Richard Nixon threatened our system of government.

Each time the sleeping giant of America has awakened, the good sense of the American people has stopped whatever it is that awakened him. Again and again, we put the nation back on track toward democracy and social justice.

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When the Sleeping Giant Dances (cont'd)

Trump isn't gone yet, of course. He has another two and a half years. But he's on his way out. He'll soon be a cringeworthy irrelevance, a fat lame duck, excrement on the sidewalk of history.

In a few years, Trump's gilded monuments will be razed, his name removed from every building and pediment, his pathetic attempts to glorify himself turned into bad jokes, his legacy object lessons in why big money must be banned from politics and dastardly dickheads like Elon Musk kept away from the levers of government power.

Trump will still cause a great deal of damage over the remainder of his term, the way a wild pig who's been gored wreaks mayhem before it expires.

So this is no time to let down our guard or become overly confident about the coming midterm elections.

Quite the contrary. One hundred days from today must be a historic repudiation of Trump and his entire disgusting regime.

The blue wave must be a tsunami — inundating everything Trump may attempt to do to hold on to the House and Senate, overwhelming whatever lies he may tell about the election, and enveloping him in a rejection that's so unmistakable, a rebuke so unequivocal, a reproach so unambiguous as to cause the great giant of America to get up and dance.



Nixon's Tapes were never his to Hide

Nixon's Tapes Were Never His To Hide

KATIE PHANG

JUL 25

Meidas+

In 1971, then-President Richard Nixon secretly installed a voice-activated recording system throughout the White House. Hidden microphones captured Oval Office meetings, Cabinet discussions, telephone calls, even conversations at the Aspen Lodge at Camp David. By the time the system was dismantled in 1973, it had preserved nearly 3,700 hours of presidential history. Nixon believed he was creating a legacy. Instead, he created the Prosecution's Exhibit A. Then, he tried to bury it.

During the Senate Watergate Committee's investigation into the break-in of the DNC headquarters, former White House counsel, John Dean, testified that he suspected Nixon had a secret recording system. The Committee then asked Deputy Assistant to the President, Alexander Butterfield, in a closed-door meeting if he knew if such a system existed. His answer: "I'm sorry you asked...But, yes, there was a taping system that taped all presidential conversations." Three days later, Butterfield testified on live TV and confirmed the existence of Nixon's secret recording system.

On July 23rd, in 1973, Nixon refused to produce these tapes to Special Prosecutor, Archibald Cox. What's incredible is that he didn't deny their existence or their authenticity. He didn't argue that they had been manipulated or altered in any way. Nixon simply insisted that because he was the President of the United States, he, alone, could decide whether prosecutors and the courts were entitled to listen to the tapes.

That wasn't unitary executive theory on steroids. That was just obstruction of justice.

He wasn't entirely wrong. A president should, and I submit, must, receive candid advice. In some ways, confidentiality is often indispensable to governing. But, the Constitution doesn't recognize a president's unilateral authority to decide whether EVIDENCE relevant to a criminal investigation remains forever beyond the reach of the courts.

Now, at first blush, Nixon's legal defense sounded like it could pass for plausible: he argued that presidents require the ability to conduct confidential conversations. He expressed the concern that advisers could not speak candidly if every Oval Office discussion risked becoming tomorrow's headline. Executive privilege was not merely convenient; it was essential to the presidency, itself.



Lancaster Food Hub Photos



All guests at the Lancaster Food Hub are referred to as neighbors.



Top: Our hostesses Erin Conahan and Alexandra Schramm.

Right: The new daytime retreat space for their neighbors.

Bottom: The clothing Section which provides men's, women's and children's shoes and clothing at no charge to their needy neighbors.



Lancaster Food Hub Photos (cont'd)



Above: Dems Club participants listen to Alexandra explain that the day shelter provides snacks for Neighbors as well as a mailbox!



Far Left: Doug Farling told us about how they housed 80 people in their emergency shelter.
Left: Tamara Tullis describes the Clothing Bank which allows neighbors to get as much clothing as they need every six months.
Below: This lovely patio provides a private outdoor space for some much needed sunshine!



Lancaster Food Hub Photos (cont'd)



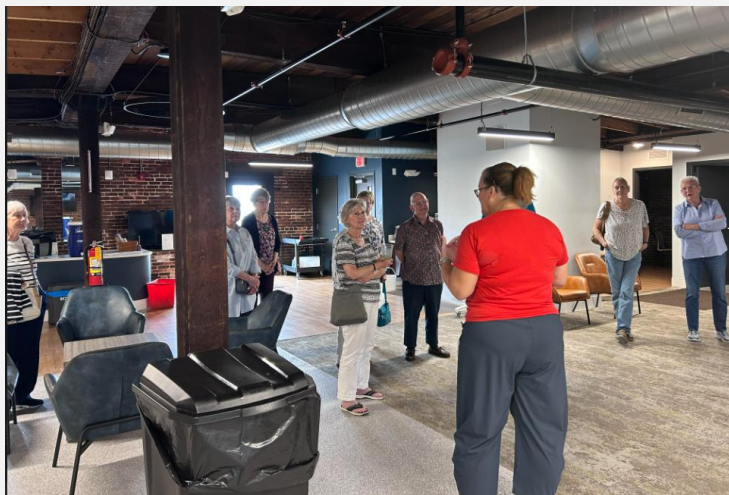
Above left: The medical room. Above right: Six bunks are provided in the day shelter for those who need some sleep. Below: Erin explains how the food distribution works. Far Below: Sign on a desk.



Lancaster Food Hub Photos (cont'd)

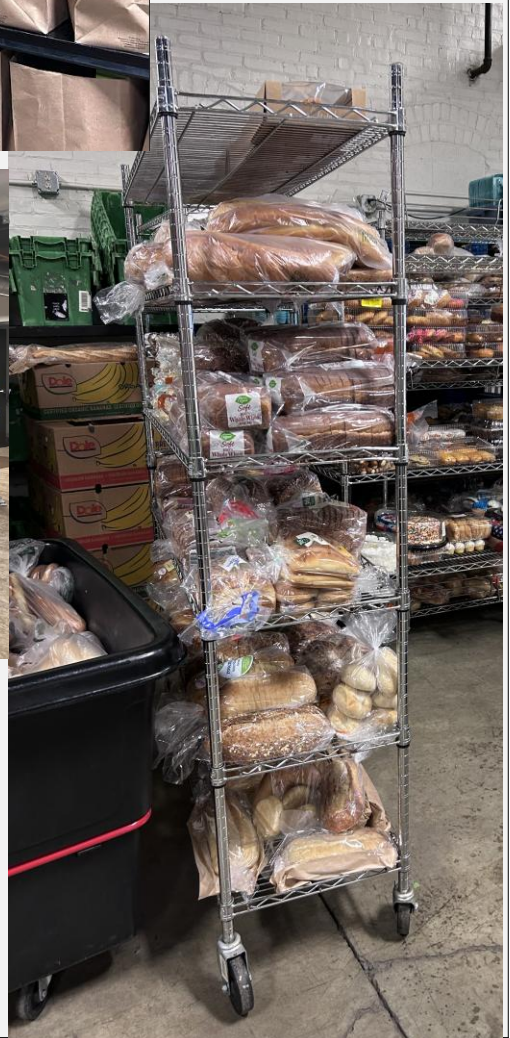


Left: These are food bags pre-loaded with food basics (cereal, rice/pasta, canned meats and vegetables, beverages).



Above: Erin discusses the pride that their “neighbors” take in the day shelter space; before they leave at the end of the day, they carefully wipe off the tables and chairs, pick up litter, and make the place presentable.

Right: After getting their basic food bag, neighbors can select their own fresh bread, desserts and dairy items.



Coming Events

Join us for a Town Hall with Jess Branas on Thurs. August 6th from 7:00 - 8:30 PM at the West Lampeter Township Bldg., 52 Village Rd, Lampeter.

Understanding Our Democracy Series

Lampeter-Strasburg Democrats Community Meeting

Sunday, August 16th @ 6 PM

West Lampeter Township Bldg, 852 Village Rd, Lampeter, PA

Understanding Our Democracy Series

Tuesday, Aug. 18th @ 1 PM 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. All are welcome. Event 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

Event will be held in the Cultural Center Education Room

Meeting Minutes

Democratic Club of Willow Valley General Meeting June 30, 2026

Jerry Henige opened the meeting at 1 p.m. and introduced guest speakers Tony Crocamo and Cindy Davidson of FairDistrictsPA.

Guest Speakers: Mr. Crocamo began with a brief overview of the work of Fair DistrictsPA, a non-partisan organization that works to stop gerrymandering and to create a redistricting process that ensures Pennsylvania citizens are represented fairly. He explained the use of the 10-year U.S. Census in determining population in each Pennsylvania district in order to redraw maps.

Gerrymandering by definition is the redrawing of political maps either to benefit or to disadvantage a political party. Because politicians hold direct control over map drawing, the process has historically resulted in partisan gerrymandering.

Problems arising from the current process include non-responsive legislators whose biggest concern is keeping their seat and too much power in the hands of party leaders and major financial donors.

As an alternative, FairDistrictsPA endorses an independent citizen group of 11 members to draw the maps. This commission puts redistricting in the hands of citizens, not legislators, and creates transparency and independence from political party influence. It also works to keep boundary lines of municipalities and county lines as to not separate communities.

Ms. Davidson continued with information that the current bills for the formation of an independent commission have stalled in the 2026 session, yet there is hope that bills will be introduced in 2027 to restart the long process of changing the way Pennsylvania maps out districts with a positive result in 2031. Citizens may help by signing the petition on the website FairDistrictsPA.com, volunteering, donating, and advocacy through calls to legislators. For more information, contact info@fairdistrictspa.com

Guest Speakers: Kate Ahmann, Lori Johnson and Karen Erb of **Bold Action Works**.

BAW is a citizens activist group seeking to inform and engage the voting public in Lancaster since 2018. At the General Meeting they asked for volunteers for one of their projects: School Watch. At a Lancaster public school such as McCaskey volunteers observe the arrival and departure of students to ensure their safety in light of the actions of ICE in the county. For those members who may wish to volunteer or to help out in any way, a signup sheet was available. More information is available at BoldActionWorks@gmail.com.

Jerry thanked today's speakers and invited them to stay for conversation after the meeting.

Meeting Minutes

Business Meeting

Treasury/Membership: Current balance is \$6,304.16.
Membership stands at 222 with dues \$5,200 and donations \$2,445.

Advocacy:

Barbara Bonanno is organizing postcard writing to begin in August or September. Those interested in writing cards may contact Barbara at tylerman397@verizon.net

Jerry proposed a weekly advocacy action to contact our State Senator Scott Martin asking him to approve a raise in Pennsylvania's minimum wage rate which now stands at \$7.25/hour. A recent House bill passed to raise the wage to \$15/hour and now heads to the Senate for a vote.

Jerry gave encouraging data about the percent of turnout in the November 2025 data for county:

District wide

Warwick 67% Dems, 54 Reps

Lampeter-Strasburg 65% Dems, 50 Reps

Precincts

L-S Lakes 84% Dems, 70 Reps

Warwick SWS 76% Dems, 62 Reps

Manheim 5702-1 76% Dems, 62 Reps

L-S Locust 74% Dems, 59 Reps

The challenges for November 2026 are to retain or increase our role as top Democratic precincts (Lakes and Locust) and to support Democratic candidates to gain Congressional seats:

Nancy Mannion for PA 11 against Lloyd Smucker

Bob Brooks for PA 07 against Ryan Mackenzie

Paige Coggnetti for PA 08 against Rob Bresnahan

Janelle Stellson for PA 10 against Scott Perry

Resident Nancy Morgan asked attendees to contact their legislators to continue to advocate for gift ban for legislators and elimination of foreign money in campaigns.

Upcoming Events

Understanding Our Democracy: Tuesdays, Cultural Center Education Room, 1 p.m.

July 21 Nancy Mannion on Medicare: The Consequences of the 2025 Billionaire Tax Cuts

August 18 "A Truly Representative Democracy" with Jerry Henige

General Meetings: Tuesdays, Cultural Center Education Room, 1 p.m.

No General Meeting in July (see Field Trips)

August 25 Jess Branas, candidate for PA House 97

September 29 Nancy Mannion, candidate for U.S. Congress

Field Trips in July tour of Food Hub of Lancaster County

July 15, late morning

July 29, mid afternoon

Contact Ross Fairweather to register rossfair63@gmail.com

Lucy Painter, Secretary