

# The Delray Democrat

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## American Exceptionalism Is Dead. Republicans Killed It

*Rob Resnick*

American Exceptionalism has been around for generations. Conceptually it represents that the US is a beacon to the world for democracy and a shining example to the world of how to operate the complexities of a democratic republic. Many would go so far as to say this includes the belief in American infallibility, that we do no wrong. However you define this, Republicans have killed it. We are NOT currently a shining example of democracy.

Putting aside challenges of extreme gerrymandering, voter suppression, and vitriolic politics for the moment as part of a much broader conversation, although clearly relevant here as well, we need to focus on the transformation of the Republican party into the MAGA-fueled, QAnon, White Supremacist, Insurrectionist organization it has become. Recent primary results further demonstrate the ensuing peril. Extremist candidates have fared well in primaries across the nation and at all levels of government.

The Republican Party has been overwhelmed by these extremists. It no longer explores or stands for ideologies such as economic policy, defense policy, or the panoply of critical issues government must address for the people it serves.

The party is now consumed by dishonesty and deception. It supports violent insurrection, stands for election denial and claims of fraud, despite a pronounced lack of evidence in any state or realistic claim of impact on any state result. In fact, the rare demonstrated acts of fraud were perpetuated on behalf of Trump himself. Facts

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Also in This Issue

*Don't Expand the Supreme Court; Impeach Some Justices As Unfit..... 3*

*Republicans' 50-Year Assault on Education, Teachers, and History...4*

*Recent Letters.....6*

*Biden's Big Economic Engine That Could .....7*

*See you in September ....7*

*Membership.....8*

## Upcoming Meeting

September 8, PBC State Attorney Dave Aronberg



## Democrats Deliver Republicans Put Party Before People, Country, and Planet

*Michael K. Cantwell*

After Senate Democrats passed America's largest-ever investment in combatting climate change, Paul Krugman asked, "Did Democrats Just Save Civilization?" The jury is still out, but it is undeniable that Republicans continue to do their best to thwart efforts to prevent the climatic disaster that scientists predict and that is unfolding before our eyes,.

The climate bill follows on the heels of three major legislative accomplishments in the last two months:

- the first gun safety legislation in nearly three decades;
- the biggest expansion of veterans' benefits in over three decades, which would provide medical care for veterans exposed to toxic chemicals
- the CHIPS Act, investing in microchip production to make America more competitive with China and reduce our reliance on foreign sources for a vital component used by the defense industry.

Fifteen Republican senators supported the gun bill, but both Rubio and Scott opposed it and not a single Republican voted for the climate bill. It is heresy in Trump's Republican Party to view climate change as anything more than a Chinese hoax.

Indeed, McConnell warned Schumer that Republicans would block CHIPS unless he gave up efforts to pass a climate bill. *Let's unpack that: if Democrats tried to address an existential threat to the planet, Republicans would put America's defenses at risk.*

A climate bill seemed dead after Manchin nixed yet another proposal, so Schumer introduced CHIPS, and it passed with Republican support. After Manchin came back to the table, Schumer announced a revised climate bill, and Republicans tried to kill CHIPS in the House. When that failed, they withdrew support for the veterans' bill, relenting only after veterans began sleeping on the Senate steps. Republicans will always put party before people, country, and planet.

*(Continued from page 1)*

are irrelevant to today's Republicans. In Trump's brazen image, party faithful repeat blatant lies to the point they overcome underinformed, susceptible constituents. They play upon fear and sow mistrust to undermine democratic institutions they plan to replace with a new White Christian Nationalist brand of fascism.

If the primary results are any indication, the Republican Party now stands for stealing elections through lies, discarding properly cast votes for opponents, insurrection, pushing outrageous extremism while denying basic freedoms from those demographically or ideologically different, and replacing democracy with authoritarianism. Such candidates used to be relegated to the fringe, discounted, and even silenced. Now they win elections and garner media attention to prop up their bogus campaigns. Right wing media actively supports these candidates and their brand of authoritarian terror.

This seems like a dystopian future drama on Netflix, but it is a very real, existential threat we face. We no longer have two political parties offering a binary choice of ideology to frame national policy. We have the center-left Democratic Party as virtually the lone alternative to the neo fascist Republican Party seeking to create an American autocracy. If they are successful, we will cease to be a democracy. The freedom and liberty that we fought to establish throughout history will be vaporized. Opposition to the new White Christian nationalism will become illegal with all power consolidated by the Republican loyalist internal security machine. If this doesn't scare you, you need to pay attention. This will be the death of American Exceptionalism. We will cease to be a democracy, cease to uphold basic freedom for our people, and no longer serve as an example to anyone, other than an example of how to lose a democracy.

Viktor Orban was a keynote speaker at this year's Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC), an annual marquee Republican event. Orban has abused his authority as Hungary's Prime Minister, consolidated power, outlawed a free press, limited the rights of his people, advanced racial purity, attacked immigrants, and imitated other fascist, nationalist propaganda. This is the man Republicans chose to honor, and with a standing ovation. Of all accomplished individuals at home and abroad, they specifically invited an individual working hard to dismantle a democracy, subjugate a free people, and echo Nazi Germany rather than the free world that we fought hard to create since World War II and the fall of the Iron Curtain. Beyond shameful.

While Orban was being celebrated, many Republican officials who did nothing more than faithfully execute their sworn duties are being soundly defeated and replaced by unqualified, inexperienced, dangerous extremists. Long time, steadfast conservatives who followed the law, appeared under subpoena, and testified truthfully under oath are being punished. In Trump's MAGA world, they were supposed to betray their oaths and lie for him. Even further, candidates must commit to employing the new Republican machinery to steal elections, even so far as "de-certifying" the 2020 election, despite no legal or Constitutional mechanism to do so, not to mention no factual basis whatsoever. If you support democracy and the rule of law, you can't win a Republican primary.

In previous years, such extremist candidates would be swept away in general elections by independent voters overwhelmingly rejecting them and reasonable, responsible Republicans staying home or voting for a different candidate. For example, Delaware Senator Chris Coons, when he first ran for Senate, was "destined" to be soundly defeated by Delaware's Republican Congressman. In a shocking surprise, the congressman lost the primary to a woman who in her commercials referred to herself as a "witch." Voters rejected this inexperienced weirdo and wound up with one of the finest senators we have today. Unfortunately, in today's world, there is a much lesser chance of a similar result and much greater chance of a dangerous, unqualified extremist winning. A deranged witch could become a Republican senator.

Currently, legitimate Republican candidates who lose to the unfit extremists embrace them. This is reprehensible. They know the danger these candidates pose to democracy, freedom, and proper governance. They need to refuse to endorse or support in any way these extremists, or at least stay quiet. Unless there is a consequence of nominating such dangerously unqualified, unfit, individuals, they will keep winning primaries. All responsible voters must oppose these candidates, period, or we lose our democracy.

When candidates choose party, especially when represented by unqualified extremists, over country, we lose our democracy. When voters choose fear and authoritarianism over the rule of law, we lose our democracy. Patriotism is putting country first. Patriotism is standing up for true liberty and freedom for all, not political power. Patriots do not support insurrection or violence. If Republicans continue to win espousing their White Christian Nationalism, we will lose our democracy. American Exceptionalism will be dead. Republicans will have killed it.

# Rather Than Adding More Justices to the United States Supreme Court, Some Justices Should be Impeached As Unfit. Here Is Why

*Rabbi Barry Silver, Esq.*

The Supreme Court justices selected by Donald Trump have shown themselves unfit for that exalted office by decisions that reject nearly 50 years of precedent on abortion, and the separation of church and state in America, that provide the mentally deranged with assault weapons and that permit the ravaging of our planet by stripping government agencies of the power to prevent excesses of greed and exploitation. These activist justices replace the will of the people with judicial fiat, ignoring the proper role of the judicial branch.

These justices should also be impeached because they are the fruit of the poisonous tree, selected by a twice impeached insurrectionist, not based on their qualifications to serve justice, but rather due to their willingness to serve Trump's nefarious ends. Trump's insurrection against the United States government sought to install himself as a fascist dictator, deriving his power from racist vigilantes like the Proud Boys and the Oath Keepers. He calls his movement "America First," which was a pro-Nazi movement in the 1930's whose goal was to keep America out of WWII so the Nazis could complete their diabolical annihilation of the Jews and conquer the world. America First is the English equivalent of Deutschland Uber Alles and even today consists of white supremacist racist thugs.

Moreover, all of Trump's nominees should be impeached for lying in confirmation hearings when they said that they would follow Roe v. Wade. Instead of following this solid precedent, they followed a sordid President. Beginning with President Reagan, who famously said "Government is not a solution to our problem, government is the problem", the Republican Party has sought to sabotage and subvert American government from within. They appoint oil and gas executives to run environmental agencies, health industry tycoons to monitor health care and abolished the Department of Science so that they could make decisions based on raw political power rather than facts and evidence to

help the rich get richer at the expense of the American people and future generations.

The apotheosis of this cynical effort to destroy democracy is Donald Trump, who showed his contempt for American government when he bragged that even though he is a billionaire he does not pay taxes because he is smart. Thus, he encourages others to not pay their taxes either. If everyone followed his example, there would be no government. Trump leads the MAGA movement, which after January 6 now stands for "mutinous anarchists governing America". He also sought to weaken or abolish NATO and the UN to thwart international cooperation to create a better world.

Trump abused women, then bragged about it and then called these women liars when they came forward. He selected justices on the Supreme Court who would codify his abuse of women into law by ending the right to abortion in America. The decision to overturn Roe v. Wade and to emasculate the EPA does not reflect justice, it merely shows that every woman that Trump has laid his hands upon, including Lady Justice and Mother Earth, has been debauched and degraded.

I am also a "doubting Thomas" when Clarence Thomas said he had no opinion on Roe v. Wade to get confirmed. He too should be impeached for failing to recuse himself when he was the lone dissenter in a case that ordered Trump to turn over records of his co-coup plotters which included Thomas' wife.

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, a refugee from Nazi Germany said, "In a free society, some are guilty, but all are responsible". Let us learn from the past and speak up while we still can, to demand the impeachment of these dangerous, unfit and unqualified judges in order to restore justice in America and to protect life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all people.

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**Editorial Board:** Michael K. Cantwell (Editor), Sandra Elaisen-Cantwell, David Kulick, Char Lane, June Neal, and Rob Resnick.

# Republicans' 50-Year Assault on Education, Teachers, and History

Michael K. Cantwell

As if speaking not just to his contemporaries but to our own time as well, Thomas Jefferson warned of the need for an educated populace if democracy was to endure:

In every government on earth is some trace of human weakness, some germ of corruption and degeneracy, which cunning will discover, and wickedness insensibly open, cultivate, and improve. Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves therefore are its only safe depositories. And to render even them safe their minds must be improved to a certain degree.

An uneducated citizenry is easier to manipulate and less likely to think independently or question authority. Republicans fear an educated citizenry for the same reason Jefferson found it essential.

An educated citizenry also provides a country with a competitive advantage. America first established a compulsory, universal, tax-supported system of primary school education in 1918. Over the next quarter century, secondary schools were added, and following World War II college became available through the GI Bill to many who were not born into wealth. This increasingly educated public powered the economic engine that created The American Century.

Disgracefully, however, the tuition grants and other GI Bill benefits (such as low-interest, federally guaranteed loans that allowed White veterans to enter the middle class and create inter-generational wealth) were unavailable to Black veterans because of Jim Crow laws. Rather than being honored for their service, many became “strange fruit” hanging from Southern trees.

Pell grants and loans made college increasingly available to ordinary Americans, and raised alarm among Republican leaders. In 1970, Vice President Agnew complained that, “College – at one time considered a privilege – is considered a right today.” He added that there were “too many” Blacks in college and condemned “the violence emanating from Black student militancy.”

*At the time he was speaking, Black Panthers were feeding hungry kids breakfast before school while the FBI was assassinating Panther leaders in their beds. It was also shortly before Agnew was indicted for his own criminal activities and forced to resign in disgrace.*

Later that year, Roger Freeman, an advisor to Ronald Reagan's campaign for governor of California, warned, “We are in danger of producing an educated proletariat. That's dynamite! We have to be selective on who we allow to go through higher education.”

The two great public university systems at that time were the City University of New York and the University of California, and neither of them charged tuition. Reagan eliminated free tuition at the University of California in 1970 and six years later Gerald Ford demanded that New York City end free tuition at CUNY as a condition of bailing out the city from its financial crisis.

That didn't completely foreclose college for middle-class and lower-income students. Instead, it opened a new profit center for the banks, as we began the half-century-long march to our current unworkable situation, where some 55 million students owe some \$1.75 trillion in debt. But that's the subject for another article.

## **It's Not Only *Who* Is Educated but *How* They're Being Educated**

In 2006, long before Ron DeSantis saw racist dog whistles as a freeway to a second term, the Florida Republican Party amended the Education Law to effectively prohibit the teaching of Black history by adding this Orwellian passage:

American history shall be viewed as factual, not constructed, shall be viewed as knowable, teachable, and testable, and shall be defined as the creation of a new nation based largely on the universal principles stated in the Declaration of Independence.

The language is Orwellian because it demands the equivalence of irreconcilable opposites. War is not peace, night is not day, and slavery is the antithesis of the most iconic principle set forth in our founding document, namely, that “all men are created equal.”

A fact-based rendition of American history would teach that the new nation was built largely upon the backs of the enslaved. It would teach that America's original sin was not expiated by the Emancipation Proclamation or by Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox, but lived on in other forms: the white terrorism of the post-Reconstruction era that left the formerly enslaved little better and often worse off

*(Continued on page 5)*

than before, followed by a century of Jim Crow and a half-century of the New Jim Crow (a.k.a. “the War on Drugs”) that have prevented the descendants of the formerly enslaved from achieving anything remotely resembling equality.

The “Parental Rights in Education” bill (more raw, red meat for the wingnuts) followed soon after. Better known as the “Don’t Say Gay” law, it is another solution in search of a problem, It bans “teaching students in kindergarten through third

***But DeSantis is not content to simply prevent the teaching of a history based on actual facts. He wants to require the teaching of “alternative facts” . . .***

Finally, a fact-based rendition of American history would dispel the myth that the Civil War was fought to preserve “states’ rights.” ***The only states’ right the Civil War was fought to preserve was the right to own another human being.***

Although the amendment of Florida Education law attracted controversy at the time, it does not appear to have been enforced. The language resurfaced in a directive issued by education commissioner Richard Corcoran last year.

It coincided with Fox News’s sudden obsession with “Critical Race Theory,” a complex subject taught for decades in graduate-level seminars and never taught to students in elementary or secondary schools. Abandoning reality for the dog-whistle racism that has rewarded Republicans since Richard Nixon first announced his “Southern Strategy,” Ron DeSantis began proclaiming that he wouldn’t sit still while Florida schoolchildren were being taught to be ashamed of their Whiteness.

Republicans responded to this absurd claim by quickly passing the Orwellian-titled “Act Relating to Individual Freedom.” DeSantis is now calling it the “Stop Woke Act” in order to further inflame the knuckle-dragging Neanderthals he hopes to lead in an unholy war against the “universal principles” stated in the Declaration of Independence.

The law commands that a student “should not be instructed that he or she must feel guilt, anguish, or other forms of psychological distress for actions, in which he or she played no part, committed in the past by other members of the same race or sex.” That effectively bars the teaching of Black history. How is it possible to teach the horrors and humiliations suffered by Blacks for centuries without causing distress in all but budding sociopaths and racists? It’s not. Period.

grade about topics involving sexual orientation or gender identity,” although that has never occurred and is extremely unlikely ever to occur. For older grades, the law imposes the unconstitutionally vague requirement that lessons be “age appropriate.”

But DeSantis is not content to simply prevent the teaching of a history based on actual facts. He wants to require the teaching of “alternative facts,” that is, a history based on intentional lies and distortions. Teachers are not indoctrinating schoolchildren, but DeSantis is trying to indoctrinate teachers.

His Orwellian-titled “Civics Excellence Initiative” seeks to catechize teachers on what must be taught. Those who attended a recent three-day workshop complained that trainers sought to indoctrinate them in Christian and conservative ideology and to whitewash the history of slavery in America.

Attendees were instructed that “the colonies didn’t buy nearly as many enslaved people during the transatlantic slave trade as has been portrayed” because “most enslaved people in the country were born into slavery” – as if claiming ownership over the children of people one has purchased and holds in bondage is somehow less despicable than the act of purchasing them in the first place. They were falsely told that the Founders didn’t really intend there to be a strict wall between Church and State, something contradicted not only by history but over 70 years of Supreme Court precedent. And the Supreme Court decision striking down school prayer was compared to the Supreme Court decision that upheld segregation.

DeSantis and Republicans are intent upon rewriting history in order to raise an army of uneducated, unholy warriors for what can only be characterized as a Second Civil War. Nothing is more important than defeating DeSantis in November.

#### **Democratic Club of Delray Beach Officers and Directors**

Michael Cantwell, President; Char Lane, Vice-President; Cheryl Perry, Secretary; David Kulick, Treasurer; Robert Averack, Parliamentarian; Peter Camacho, Mary Fader, Charlie Holbrook, June Neal, and Robert Resnick, Directors; Sandra Elaissen-Cantwell, Director Emerita; and John Ramos, Directors Emeritus.

## Letters by Our Members

Writing to local papers influences NPAs gives aid, comfort and information to Democrats. Here are the latest:

**Nancy Chanin**, *Palm Beach Post*, August 5, 2022

The Palm Beach Sheriff's Office refuses to carry life-saving Narcan, claiming they are not paramedics. Go tell that to all the other police departments that already have it on hand, and ask those whose loved ones have struggled with addiction and/or lost their lives about this refusal.

As a resident of Delray Beach, who has formerly served on our city's Police Advisory Board, I am well aware of the use of Narcan in my community — the Delray Beach Police Department was the first in the county to carry the heroin antidote, and a number of lives have been saved.

In contrast to the PBSO, the Delray Police have had body cams for the past six years.

The time is long past due for our county's police force to emulate the many departments that have had one or both of the aforementioned tools in their toolbox. The PBSO needs to stop procrastinating. Not all problems are easily solved, but shouldn't we do whatever we can to save lives and promote justice?

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**Michael K. Cantwell**, *Sun-Sentinel*, July 27, 2022

The ancient Greeks warned, "Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad." Gov. Ron DeSantis has passed the first bar.

Like Icarus, he's flying too close to the sun. His COVID policies didn't "free" Floridians, they killed them. He opposed mandates and he ridiculed masking despite scientific studies establishing that the unvaccinated were 14 times more likely to die from COVID than the vaccinated and that masking reduces transmission.

His "Civic Literacy Excellence Initiative" does not "free" students. It seeks to whitewash history as teachers attending a workshop run by the state recently complained. His voter "reform" bill does not "free" the election system from "voter fraud," a chimera Republicans have invoked for decades and failed to prove for just as long. Rather, it shackles voters whose skins are the wrong color.

To quote the federal judge who found that bill (SB 90) unconstitutional, it was enacted "with the intent to discriminate against Black voters." DeSantis revels in the adulation of his base as he sets his sights on the White House, but their numbers are

insufficient to fully power his flight. If everyone who is appalled by the arrogance of this incipient autocrat registers and votes in November, we will melt the wax on his wings.

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**June S. Neal**, *Sun-Sentinel*, July 26, 2022

I applaud the Sun Sentinel's endorsement of Charlie Crist for governor — not because it cited his many contributions to the state of Florida but because it focused on the most important characteristics we need in any leader: the ability to grow, evaluate and change, guided by a strong moral compass.

"Crist, 66, has made a right-to-left political metamorphosis that is unparalleled in the history of Florida politics," the editorial said.

Why? Crist said it perfectly. "I was a Republican because Mom and Dad were. It's the same reason I'm a Methodist."

Isn't that true for every one of us, at least for a time in our lives? For some, those early affiliations remain constant. Others find different philosophies, and new ideas that settle well with their consciences and their souls. Charlie Crist has demonstrated he will lead from a core of decency and a commitment to the common good. Nothing else comes close to importance in a governor.

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**Michael K. Cantwell**, *Sun-Sentinel*, July 11, 2022

The U.S. Supreme Court is powerless to interpret whether Florida's newly enacted anti-choice law violates privacy protections of the Florida Constitution.

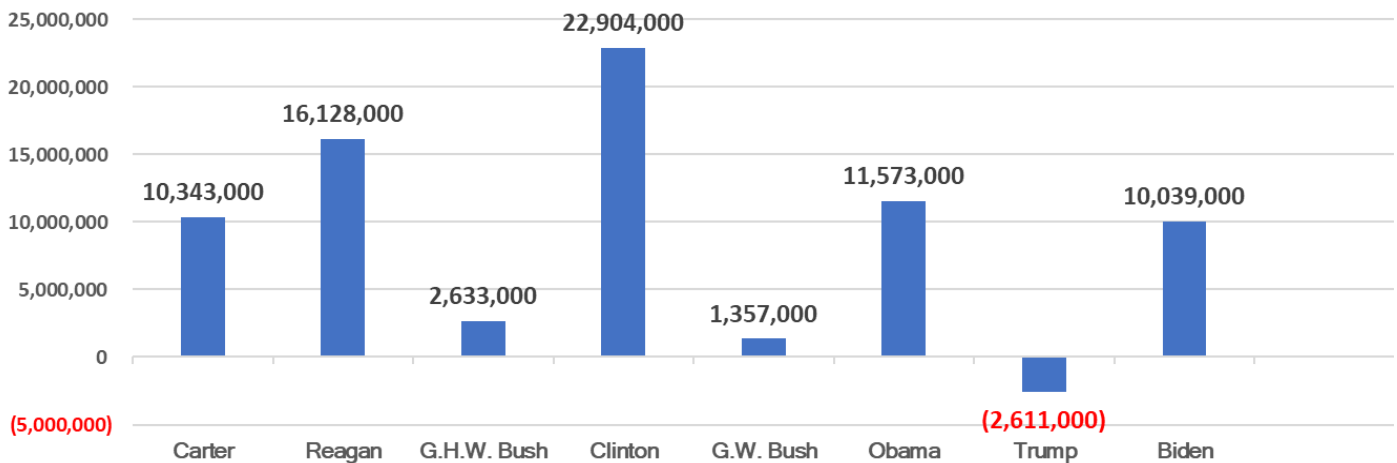
It's hornbook law that the Supreme Court cannot interpret state law or issues arising under state constitutions. It's even more intrusive for the court to intervene when the highest court of a state has ruled on a matter. That Attorney General Ashley Moody could be ignorant of such basic tenets of law is shocking. But those who claim the right to control a woman's body don't fear the outcome of the lawsuit.

The Florida Supreme Court will hear the case before it would reach the U.S. Supreme Court. The result will be the same because Gov. Ron DeSantis has done to Florida's court what Trump did to the U.S. Supreme Court — by turning a judicial body into a political body.

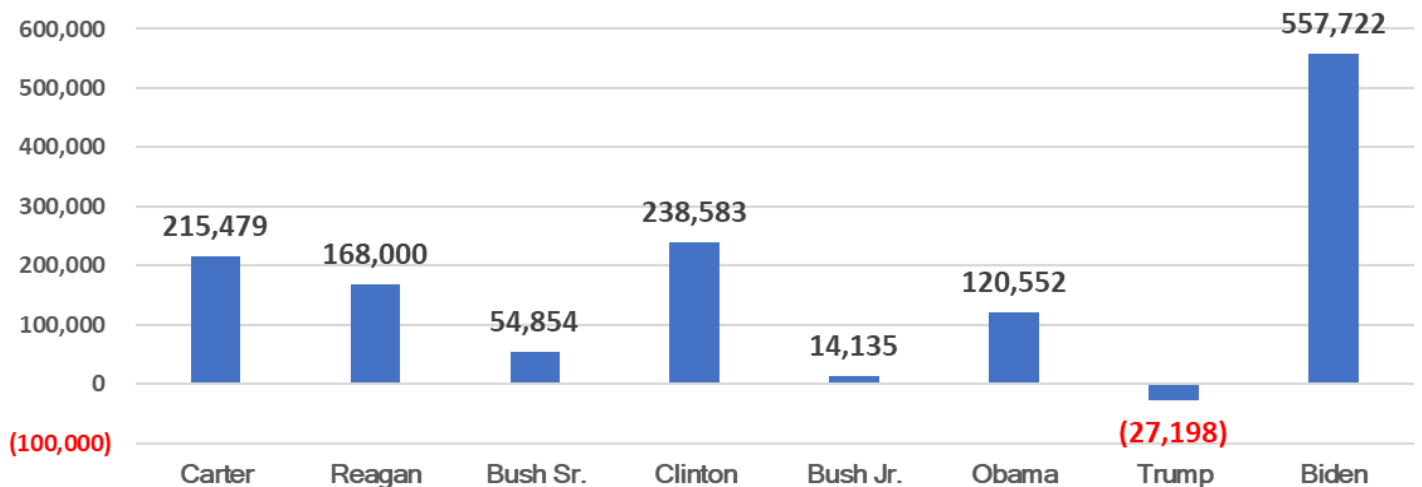
# Biden's Big Economic Engine That Could . . . In Charts

*Michael K. Cantwell*

### Total Jobs Added Over Presidency



### Monthly Average Job Gain over Presidency



## See You in September

*Michael K. Cantwell*

To those of us of a certain age, it's feeling like the summer of '74. What had been unimaginable only months earlier, following the publication of Woodward and Bernstein's first piece on Watergate, moved swiftly to a stunning conclusion – Richard Nixon waving goodbye from the helicopter that was poised to carry him into retirement and ignominy.

Given Trump's history of escaping accountability for his serial grifts and crimes, after watching him survive two impeachments for high crimes that exceeded those of Nixon, one might be forgiven for believing Trump was right to claim he could shoot someone on Fifth Avenue in broad daylight and not lose any voters.

That was before the January 6 committee began its historic public hearings. Every member has been extraordinary, none more so than the Marvelous Mrs. Cheney, perhaps the most formidable foe Trump has faced. And now the cautious, much-criticized Mr. Garland has proven himself the antithesis of Robert Mueller by promising so little and yet delivering so much. Trump may not be losing voters but he must be losing sleep.

Mrs. Cheney signed off the last hearing by promising, "See you in September." We're looking forward to it, Liz, you've been our summer love.

## 2022 Membership

*Char Lane*

If you're not a member of the Democratic Club of Delray Beach, please consider joining. If you're already a member of the Club and haven't yet renewed, please renew for 2022.

Membership is on a calendar year basis and your dues help provide funding for operational projects, such as *The Delray Democrat*, our meetings, other working supplies and signage for our sign waving events. Meetings are the second Thursday of each month, currently via zoom but we hope to resume live meetings as soon as it's safe to do so.

Our goal is to educate people as to why they should vote Democratic and use Vote-by-Mail as a critical tool in support of this goal. We need your help with our sign-waving, phone calling, postcard writing, canvassing and participating in other projects. We'll have to work hard to help keep our democracy intact and protect it from the manifesting lunacy.

We plan to help turn Florida BLUE by electing a Democratic governor (*to replace DeSantis*) and a Democratic U.S. Senator (*to replace Rubio*) in 2022.

Please visit us at [www.demclubofdelray.org](http://www.demclubofdelray.org),

Read our monthly publication *The Delray Democrat* at [www.thedelraydemocrat.com](http://www.thedelraydemocrat.com),

Visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/992741928168620>

Become a member of the DCDB by going to <https://www.demclubofdelray.org/membership> or filling out and mailing the application below or clicking on the QR scan below:



### Democratic Club of Delray Beach 2022 Membership Application and Renewal

Date \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Name/names of household members \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Community/Condo Name \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

(E-mail addresses are shared with the Palm Beach County Democratic Party so our members will be kept abreast of the latest County Democratic Activity. If you do not wish to receive this information, please initial here \_\_\_\_\_ and we will not share your E-mail address.).

Preferred method of contact: E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Text \_\_\_\_\_

Send newsletter by: E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Hand delivery \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Mail \_\_\_\_\_

I/we are in South Florida from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ each year or are a permanent resident \_\_\_\_\_.

Payment: Individual \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ Household \$35 \_\_\_\_\_ Donation \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to Democratic Club of Delray Beach and mail to P.O. Box 8224, Delray Beach, FL 33484. Thank you and welcome to our Club.

