

The Delray Democrat

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What Is a Democrat?

Robert Resnick

As we look towards the 2018 midterms and beyond, the Democratic Party must campaign on its core values. Strong candidates will fit their respective districts and the priorities of their voters, but also must connect to national strategy based on these core values that unite Democrats across the nation.

Democrats have been the champions of Social Security and Medicare. While some people tire of this campaign message, imagine a world without these programs that provide such crucial protection to enable seniors to live with dignity and the care they deserve. Republicans continue to threaten these programs through privatization, diverting funds, or reducing eligibility. Democrats will protect Social Security and Medicare.

Democrats believe health care is a right for all Americans, not a luxury for those who can afford

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Restore Democracy, Vote "Yes" on Amendment 4

Michael K. Cantwell

Under the Florida Constitution, anyone convicted of a felony automatically loses the right to vote. Legislation adopted shortly after Rick Scott was first elected virtually ensures that the loss is permanent. Currently more than 1.4 million Floridians cannot vote because of a prior felony conviction.

Amendment 4 would automatically reinstate former felons after they served all terms of their sentence (with the exception of those convicted of murder or a felony sexual offense). A "yes" vote on Amendment 4 is a vote for democracy, which is why anyone who purports to be a "democrat"* will vote "yes."

At the core of democracy is the right to vote. No right is more precious to the citizen, and no right is more fundamental to the state. A government derives its legitimacy from the consent of the governed. A government that permanently deprives citizens of the right to vote cannot claim to be a functioning democracy.

Darryl Paulson, a retired professor at the University of South Florida, a fellow at the conservative Heritage Foundation, and (prior to Trump's election) a Republican, has written frequently about the need to reform Florida's felon law. His argument is both simple and sound: ["This is all about doing the right thing . . . This should be one issue both parties could unite on."](#)

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***"1. An advocate of democracy. 2. a person who believes in the political or social equality of all people."**

Toxic Racism and Infant/Mother Mortality

Sandra Elaiszen-Cantwell

Being black in America increases the likelihood that the mother, her infant, or both will not survive pregnancy. At least, that's the takeaway from [Why America's Black Mothers and Babies Are in a Life-or-Death Crisis](#), an excellent and comprehensive article by Linda Villarosa recently published in The New York Times.

Although hardly surprising to anyone aware of the racism permeating what is laughably labeled our "colorblind" society, the statistics on mortality and morbidity among pregnant black women and infants are both shocking and unconscionable:

- According to the most recent government data, black infants in America are more than twice as likely to die as white infants, "a racial disparity that is actually wider than in 1850, 15 years before the end of slavery, when most black women were considered chattel."
- High infant mortality among blacks cannot be explained away by poverty or lack of education – infants born to college-educated black parents are twice as likely to die as infants born to similarly educated white parents.
- Nor can low birth weights (a major factor in infant mortality) among African-Americans be explained away by genetic predisposition. As one study that examined the issue concluded, "For black women, something about growing up in America seems to be bad for your baby's birth weight."
- Black women are three to four times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than white women.
- Even when controlling for income and education, one study found that African-American women had higher measures of dangerous stress-associated body chemicals than white women or black men. The authors concluded: "Persistent racial differences in health may be influenced by the stress of living in a race-conscious society. These effects may be felt particularly by black women because of [the] double jeopardy of gender and racial discrimination."

In 2014, the UN Committee on Racial Discrimination called upon the United States to "eliminate racial disparities in the field of sexual and reproductive health and standardize the data-collection system on maternal and infant deaths to effectively identify and address the causes of disparities in maternal- and infant-mortality rates."

No such measures have been forthcoming.

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The Environmental Destruction Agency

Mariane Kulick

Scott Pruitt, Trump's pick to head the Environmental Protection Agency, a man who didn't think we should even have the agency, is rapidly making it into the EDA, the Environmental Destruction Agency.

There has been a good deal of publicity about Pruitt's reckless waste of public money on private airplanes and fancy furniture. These things show the measure of the man. As bad as his wanton use of his position, far worse is his reversing of the gains made during the Obama administration to protect our atmosphere and our people.

The EPA has removed regulations on air quality, chemical safety, clean water, regulation of automobile emissions, and sensible standards for power plants and factories. Now the polluters can pollute –

the unregulated frackers and ocean drillers can drill as they want.

Worst of all, Trump has pulled us out of the Paris agreement. The agreement itself is very modest, by no means strong enough to protect our future, but it is a start.

These actions will affect all of us. Climate change is real. We have allowed Trump and his lackey to destroy all that was built during the Obama years and even that was not enough. We need more regulations, not less.

The destruction of controls will affect all of us now but the biggest effect will be not on us but on our children and our grandchildren as they try to grow up on an unnecessarily damaged planet.

Restore Democracy *(Continued from front cover)*

Unfortunately, most Republicans will oppose *any* efforts to reinstate the 1.4 million citizens barred from voting in Florida due to fear that the majority will end up registering as Democrats. But, as Prof. Paulson wrote, this should be about doing the “right thing.” Maintaining the status quo is a continuing assault to democracy:

- **Florida's (mis)treatment of former felons is unrivaled in the nation and the world.** It is one of only three states that automatically strips one's voting rights after *any* felony conviction, including non-violent crimes. And following Rick Scott's election, it became the only state where former felons must wait at least five years after completing all terms of their sentence before they are eligible to apply for reinstatement.
- **Florida's voter-restoration process is intentionally cumbersome and gives unfettered discretion to Rick Scott and his “Clemency Board.”** At one clemency hearing, [a lucky former felon](#) was reinstated only moments after telling Gov. Scott that he'd voted for him. At another Scott bragged that the Board [“can do whatever we want.”](#) This cavalier attitude to one of our most cherished rights led a federal court to strike down Florida's voter-restoration process [as violating the United States Constitution](#).
- **As a consequence of Scott's unconstitutional acts, the number of former felons being reinstated in Florida has slowed to a trickle.** Less than 3000 former felons have had their rights restored during Scott's seven-plus years in office, there is a backlog of over 10,000 cases pending, and many former felons have simply stopped applying. In contrast, Republican Charlie Crist reinstated 154,000 former felons during his four years in office. Even under Jeb Bush a total of 77,000 former felons had their civil rights reinstated.
- **In sharp contrast to Florida, 37 states automatically reinstate felons who have completed their sentences.** In 19 states, this includes prison, parole, and probation, although 3 states allow people on probation to vote and 15 states restore voting rights immediately upon release from prison. Finally, in Maine, Vermont, Israel, and most European democracies people with criminal convictions *never* lose the right to vote.

This is how Florida thumbs its nose at democracy. Remember this when you vote on Tuesday, November 6. Vote “Yes” on Amendment 4 and show Scott and his minions what democracy looks like.

Foreign Wars Hurt You

David Kulick

We marched to “End the Draft”, and we succeeded. It was a pyrrhic victory though because once random kids (excluding Trump) weren’t being inducted, it made permanent war easy for the general population to ignore. We know that we’re in wars all over the world, but it’s remote without our kids having to go.

We no longer even have a clear definition of “war.” Once it was simple; we declare war, send the troops, and it ends. Now? We bomb, we kill with drones, and we use cruise missiles. We fight wars by proxy and with mercenaries, supplying the arms and cash to other groups. There’s no declaration of war and there’s no end.

A famous old sage, Marine Corps Major General Smedley Butler, wrote a pamphlet called “War is a Racket” – look it up, it’s even on You Tube. Simply put, war benefits the few at the expense of the many. As hard as it is for decent people to believe, one major reason for war is that it is tremendously profitable for multinational corporations.

But doesn’t it keep us safe? No, of course not; no one is going to invade the US. How about “terrorism”? Our actions around the world, supporting the profits of the multinational corporations, generate far more potential terrorists than they stop. Outside of giving up every scrap of privacy, there’s no way to guarantee safety. These wars create terrorists.

Our “defense” spending is greater than the next nine countries combined, and that includes China and Saudi

Arabia. Russia only comes in fourth. Those hundreds of billions of dollars per year cost us our healthcare, education, infrastructure, and our future. The Iraq war, which destabilized the entire Mideast, cost us around two TRILLION dollars. It did, however, pay huge dividends to the wealthy stockholders in “defense” companies.

There’s also a high moral cost. Can we claim the high ground when the major thing our country is good at is producing weapons and shipping them all around the world? I’m just stunned when I hear our talking heads saying that Iran can’t be allowed to influence other countries. Why not? Why is it okay for Saudi Arabia, the country that subsidizes madrasas (religious schools) that teach ‘jihad’ all over the Mideast? Saudi Arabia has one of the biggest ‘defense’ budgets in the world, but we say that Iran is problem? Remember also, it was mostly Saudis responsible for 911. However, our billionaires make a fortune on Saudi Arabia’s arm purchases. Remember the outrage over the beheadings by ISIS? Saudi Arabia did many more beheadings during that period and they’ve been doing it a lot longer.

Eisenhower warned us about the power of the military-industrial complex, and it has grown far beyond that because they now own the media as well. This linking of the industrial and military and media has created a monster that feeds on fear, on the threat of war, and on war itself. The only way to fight this enemy is to understand that our military power is the biggest danger that we, and the world, face.

HAD ENOUGH? VOTE DEMOCRATIC

HAD ENOUGH of the Republican war on the middle class?

HAD ENOUGH Republican lies about middle class tax cuts that are actually tax *increases*?

HAD ENOUGH Republican “tax reform” that transfers wealth from working Americans to billionaires, multinational corporations, and the idle rich?

HAD ENOUGH multi-trillion-dollar deficits caused by tax cuts to the wealthy and paid for by shredding the safety net?

DEMOCRATS have stood with and for middle class and working class Americans for a century. Stand with us in the midterms.

What Is a Democrat? *(Continued from page 1)*

ever increasing premiums. Republicans not only continue their efforts to take away coverage from so many families who benefited from the Affordable Care Act (ACA), they are working with the insurance industry to continue rising costs and lower coverage. Democrats will fight to restore or maintain the benefits of the ACA while continuing to expand coverage for all people.

Democrats stand for a living wage. Americans have

ways be the last resort when other measures fail.

Reasonable gun control laws are critical to protect the innocent in schools, malls, and walking down the street. Democrats support common sense measures such as banning military style weapons, bump stocks, high capacity magazines, and ensuring proper background checks so that those who should not possess firearms do not gain access. Republicans distort the truth, scaring people with propaganda that the government is coming to take away their guns. Democrats respect the 2d Amendment. The Constitution does not

“Climate change poses an existential danger to our future, and the harm of continued environmental mismanagement is an evil perpetrated against the next generations. Democrats will push for clean, renewable energy and sustainability.”

never been afraid of hard work and want to earn a living through honorable work. Democrats will fight so that working Americans can support their families. Republicans support big corporations eroding workers’ protections and care not that individuals may have to work two or three jobs to provide basic necessities for their families.

Climate change poses an existential danger to our future. and the harm of continued environmental mismanagement is an evil perpetrated against the next generations. Democrats will push for clean, renewable energy and sustainability. Clean air and clean water are basic human rights. Republicans will continue supporting coal and oil, opposing sensible and necessary environmental protection. Democrats understand that the economy of the today and the future depends on clean energy and that sensible regulations help, not hurt, American business.

Democrats stand with our men and women in uniform. We need a strong defense to protect and defend the nation, but we do not need wasteful spending. Republicans push billions to the defense industrial complex on expensive systems that often do not meet standards and come in over budget. Democrats demand that the nation that sends our service members to war must then ensure they are properly cared for when they return. The decision to go to war must al-

guarantee the right to own military style weapons, nor are such necessary to protect one’s home or go hunting.

Democrats will continue to stand for individual rights and give voice and power to those facing discrimination for race, gender, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation. Those who discriminate in housing, employment, and public commerce should be held accountable. Republicans will continue their silence and appease those who preach intolerance.

Democrats believe the economy needs to work for all Americans, not the privileged few. Opportunity should be available to those willing to work hard to achieve success. Republicans stand for a class of elite owners with little concern for average Americans. Education is the great equalizer and Democrats believe talented students should have to ability to go to college without bankrupting their families and sacrificing the future they strive to build due to insurmountable debt.

Democrats stand for much more than just opposing President Trump. Democrats stand for a better America and better tomorrow for the next generation.

Democrats stand for a society of respect and equality. Democrats stand for all of us and our families. We need to stand with them.

Worth Reading

Matt Taibbi in *Rolling Stone*: [“Can We Be Saved From Facebook?”](#) In many ways, the Facebook controversy is a canard. It's less a real crisis about Russians, the Trump election or scamsters like Cambridge Analytica than a long-overdue reckoning. Americans who for decades have been clinging to reassuring myths about the origins and purpose of the Internet are finally beginning to ask important questions about this awesome Pentagon-designed surveillance tool they've enthusiastically welcomed into their homes, bedrooms, purses and pockets.

Bill McKibben in *The Nation*: [3 Strategies to Get to a Fossil-Free America](#). The basic outlines are pretty simple. None of the strategies rely on Washington's doing anything useful. In fact, because DC has emerged as the fossil-fuel industry's impregnable fortress, our strategies look everywhere else for progress. In every case, real momentum has emerged, even in the last few weeks.

Deal Breaker, Not Deal Maker

Mariane Kulick

President Trump has cancelled the Iran Nuclear Agreement just as he did the Paris agreement on climate change. He acts without sufficient knowledge and with an inability to read and understand.

He acts only according to what he thinks will make him admired by his base. According to the United Nation's inspectors there is no accusation that the Iranians failed to live up to the agreement. His action has caused our allies to question American leadership. They plan to continue to honor the agreement. It is uncertain what the Iranian leadership will do. Certainly it will hurt negotiations with North Korea.

How can anyone have trust in agreements with us? Donald Trump is not a deal-maker. He is a deal-breaker. He cannot be trusted and he drags us down with him.

Your Choice in November

Democrats believe climate change is an urgent threat

Republicans deny there is a problem.

Democrats want to preserve and even expand Medicare

Republicans want to turn it into a voucher system for those currently not receiving benefits

Democrats want to preserve and improve the Affordable Care Act.

Republicans are destroying it, making health insurance unaffordable for 3 million Americans in 2019 and 13 million by 2027

Democrats want to raise taxes on multimillionaires and lower the deficit.

Republicans have decreased taxes on multimillionaires and multinational corporations and are adding \$1.7 trillion to the deficit

Democrats want to increase government funding for schools

Republicans have slashed public funding for schools, with funding lower in 29 states than one decade ago.

Democrats want to maximize voter participation for all Americans

Republicans use the myth of voter fraud to disenfranchise minorities

Can You Support Your Parents if They Lose Their Social Security?

Alan M. Milner

What would you do if your parents lost their Social Security? Could you afford to take care of them for the rest of their lives? For more and more younger Americans, facing huge personal debts, depleted savings, stagnant incomes, dead-end jobs, and increasing costs of living, the answer to that question is a simple "No," but the Republican party continues to attack Social Security as if it were a bad thing.

The Republicans claim that Social Security is an "entitlement." That is absolutely true but it isn't a bad thing. It is an entitlement because most people who receive Social Security earned their Social Security payments by paying the Social Security tax throughout their working lives, which means they are literally "entitled" to it because it is THEIR money.

The Republicans claim that Social Security is bankrupt. Social Security can never go bankrupt because everyone has to pay into the Social Security fund and that will keep Social Security alive indefinitely. A one percent increase in the Social Security tax would guarantee that everyone would get their full Social Security payments through the end of this century.

The Republicans want to cancel the \$2.8 TRILLION debt that the federal government owes the Social Security Trust Fund as of 2017 to offset the huge tax cut the Republicans gave to corporations and high income individuals in 2017. First, the Republicans claim that Social Security is bankrupt, and then they try to bankrupt Social Security by taking away the \$2.8 trillion Social Security Trust Fund.

The Republicans also want to "privatize" Social Security by allowing workers to invest their social security taxes in the stock market. That would give the Republicans an opportunity to eliminate the employer contributions to the Social Security Fund which would save corporations \$400 BILLION each year.

So, the next time someone tells you that Social Security won't be there for you, remember that it is there right now, taking care of the most important people in your life and, someday, it will be there to take care of you . . . if we protect Social Security. So, the next time anyone asks for your vote, ask where they stand on Social Security.

Ode to Trump

Sylvia Gruber

You may search far and wide but never will spy
A Prez who is always enmeshed in a lie*

As in:

"I've returned the good jobs to your unemployed shore
We've been patsies in trade but I've evened the score
I've cut the fake climate talk, ever a bore
And the tax cuts I gave left your pockets with more
of the money, the moola, the dough on your plates
Hey, you're almost as rich as my good friend, Bill Gates
I'm the greatest, the wisest, the best there could be
So let's hear it folks, big hosannas for me."

Yes, let's all sing out praise for the Donald we know
And work for the day when he gets the heave-ho.

“IF YOU DON’T VOTE, YOU DON’T COUNT”

“If you don’t vote, you don’t count” was both the creed and the epitaph of Vernon Ferdinand Dahmer, Sr., president of the Hattiesburg, Mississippi, NAACP, who was murdered by the Ku Klux Klan on January 10, 1966.

Democrats outnumber Republicans both locally and nationally, but we lose elections we should be winning easily because Republicans turn out in greater numbers. This is especially true in midterm elections.

If you don’t vote, you dishonor the graves of the thousands who have died fighting for the franchise. Get registered if you’re not already, make sure your friends are registered, and get out and get them out to vote.

Low turnout from Democrats last year gave Republicans the White House, but high turnout in Virginia gave Democrats the Governor’s Mansion. And high turnout in Alabama prevented the election of Roy Moore in Alabama, a man as vile and bigoted as Donald Trump.

If we don’t vote, we don’t count, and when we don’t get the vote out, we lose. But when we get the vote out, we win. It’s as simple as that.

Democratic Club of Delray Beach 2018 Membership Application

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 _____

Send newsletter by: E-mail _____ U.S. Mail _____

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

Payment: Individual \$20 _____ Household \$30 _____ Donation _____

Please make checks payable to Democratic Club of Delray Beach and mail to 15127 Jog Road, Suite 101, Delray Beach, FL 33446-1251. Thank you and Welcome to our Club.