

# The Delray Democrat

It's Not Socialism, It's Democracy\*

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Donald Trump won Florida easily because substantial numbers of voters believed the absurd accusation that Joe Biden is a socialist. Republicans are hoping to maintain control of the Senate by spewing similar lies in Georgia, and we can expect Ron DeSantis and Marco Rubio to spout the “S” word ad nauseam in 2022, regardless of their challengers.

And why not? It's a winning strategy so long as voters have no idea what “socialism” is, and more importantly, what it is not.

At its core, socialism involves collective or governmental ownership of the means of production and distribution of goods. Nothing Joe Biden (or even Bernie Sanders) has advocated even remotely approaches such a dramatic reorganization of society.

History teaches that whenever Democrats introduce a program to benefit ordinary Americans, be it under FDR's New Deal or LBJ's Great Society, Republicans have screamed “socialism.” They are more accurately seen as efforts “to promote the general Welfare,” something that is as American as apple pie.

Americans come to depend upon and appreciate these measures, while Republican prophecies of impending doom are soon exposed as hysterical nonsense. Franklin Delano Roosevelt created more jobs than any American president and protected workers from destitution in their “sunset years.” Yet when Social Security was introduced, Republicans claimed it would “enslave workers” and “prevent business recovery.”

Ronald Reagan warned that if Medicare passed, “you and I are going to spend our sunset years telling our children, and our children's children, what it once was like in America when men were free.” Instead, senior citizens now spend their retirement years less burdened by fears that they will be unable to afford medical coverage.

The Affordable Care Act has helped provide health insurance to 20 million previously uninsured Americans, thus saving tens of thousands of lives. Americans soon learned that it did not create “Death Panels,” as Republicans claimed, but rather saved tens of thousands from premature deaths. The real Death Panelists are the Republican governors (like Rick Scott and Ron DeSantis) who refuse the virtually free federal funds available under the ACA to expand Medicaid to millions more Americans.

Joe Biden will enter the White House during the worst public health crisis in a century and the worst economic collapse in three-quarters of a century. A New York Times poll found

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overwhelming support for Democratic proposals to address these twin crises: 72% of respondents support a \$2 trillion stimulus package, 67% support a government-run health insurance plan, and 66% support a \$2 trillion plan to increase the use of renewable energy and build an energy-efficient infrastructure.

Will Republicans work with Democrats to promote the general welfare or will they continue to thwart the will of the American public? They can call it socialism, but it's really democracy.