

The Delray Democrat

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An Extraordinary President and an Extraordinary Man

Michael K. Cantwell

Joe Biden has been the most effective president of my lifetime.

In three-and-a-half years, he created nearly 16 million jobs, more than any president in history other than Bill Clinton and Ronald Reagan, both of whom served two full terms. His monthly average of nearly 400,000 is more than double Donald Trump’s pre-pandemic monthly average, a time Trump was shilling that his was the greatest economy in history.

And that wasn’t even Trump’s economy; it was Obama’s — on virtually every measure, the economy during Trump’s first three years was far weaker than during Obama’s last three. Trump is incapable of creating anything of value; his only talent is destroying things of value, like truth, and like our democracy.

President Biden made good on his promise to vaccinate 200,000 Americans in his first 100 days, presided over the lowest unemployment in a half-century and the lowest Black unemployment rate ever.

He signed bipartisan bills on gun safety, veterans’ benefits and infrastructure, critical issues that had languished for decades under predecessors from both parties. His Inflation Reduction Act provides the greatest investment in green energy in history.

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Cumulative Increase June 2022 to June 2024

Wages	Inflation
8.7%	6.0%

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Rick Scott: One of the “Most Corrupt Politicians Running for Reelection”

June S. Neal

It’s been 14 years since the 2010 Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* “reversed century-old campaign finance restrictions and enabled corporations and other outside groups to spend unlimited funds on elections.”

End Citizens United is a grassroots organization that’s been fighting *Citizens United* and exposing political corruption ever since. Rick Scott tops their recently published list of “[Most Corrupt Candidates in 2024](#).”

Scott is a bland kind of guy. Postcard-flat affect. Stick-on smile. No memorable quotes. Although he served as Florida’s governor from 2010 to 2018, and was elected its junior senator in 2018, whatever name recognition he has doesn’t come

from any leadership achievements. It’s from scandal, conflicts of interest, and lies about protecting Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

But his banal mien serves him well, masking a cunning businessman who has made millions through symbiotic business/government investments. And with the use of his wife’s convenient portfolio to create the illusion of “blind trusts.”

Scott is very rich. But millions of other Americans live paycheck-to-paycheck and/or rely on Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. Scott calls these safety nets “socialism,” either ignorant or deliberating choosing to misrepresent

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the actual meaning of the term. Most likely, it's not ignorance. Scott is not stupid and attacking Democrats as socialists is effective scare-mongering. Of course, as my colleague Michael Cantwell, noted in a previous article, [The Threat Isn't Socialism. It's Fascism](#), "What Republicans call "socialism" is legislation that benefits ordinary Americans rather than the bank balances of the top 0.01 %."

The company billed the government for tests doctors never ordered, for exaggerated diagnosis codes that brought greater reimbursement and for home health care for people not qualified to receive it.

HCA [admitted](#) "submitting inflated bills and expenses to the government; exaggerating the seriousness of diagnoses to increase Medicare reimbursement; illegally structuring business deals so that Medicare picked up the cost of corporate expenses; and providing doctors with kickbacks for patient [referrals](#)."

"The fraud at Rick Scott's company hurt seniors, it hurt taxpayers, it hurt everyone," John Schilling, a former HCA accountant who worked with the FBI in 1996 through 2003, said at a 2014 press conference. "Fraud was in the DNA of Rick Scott's company from the very beginning and he was the father."

Scott has never tried to help ordinary Americans. He voted against the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which is providing Florida with more than \$6 billion in federal funds to invest in roads, bridges, public transit, ports and airports. One of Scott's first acts as governor was to refuse \$2.4 billion in federal money for a high-speed train line. He later invested with his wife in a fund that has links to Brightline, a private company building a new high-speed rail line.

Multibillion Dollar Medicare/Medicaid Fraud

Scott's notoriety began with Columbia/HCA, a multimillion-dollar chain of for-profit-by-fraud hospitals that Scott, as CEO, grew into the biggest such chain in America.

Following a massive, multi-agency federal investigation, the company pled guilty to 14 felonies and paid the government a total of \$1.7 billion in fines and damages. At the time, it was the largest Medicare and Medicaid health care fraud case in U.S. History.

The company profited off the sick and injured by bribing doctors with all kinds of swag to send their patients, not to facilities that best met their needs but to Columbia/HCA hospitals that would overcharge Medicare, Medicaid and TRICARE, the military's health care program.

Doctors were offered "free rent and office refurbishment and free drugs from hospital pharmacies. One of HCA's most controversial business practices involved providing partnership investments in company hospitals for doctors, who could then [refer patients to them](#)."

During a deposition in a separate but related case, Scott [pleaded the fifth 75 times](#).

We don't know why Scott was never indicted. Of course, that could be because the government found no wrongdoing on his part. But Scott claims he wasn't even interviewed and that seems true. So, how was he eliminated from blame if he was never questioned?

"I fought Hillarycare, and guess what happened . . . Justice came after me and attacked me and my company."

Scott has dismissed the fraud investigation as old news but resurrected it recently in a press conference outside the Manhattan courthouse where Donald Trump was being tried (and later convicted) for 34 felonies. Perhaps seeing something to be gained by adopting Trump's phony victimization, he compared the HCA Medicare fraud to the charges against Trump. As the Miami Herald [reported](#), he had earlier appeared on "Fox & Friends," where he bragged, "I fought Hillarycare, and guess what happened when I fought Hillarycare? Justice came after me and attacked me and my company."

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New York Magazine responded to Scott's "outlandish" claim by observing that, "Many prominent people from both political parties opposed 'Hillarycare' and somehow didn't find themselves or their businesses under investigation for criminal fraud." It also noted "the little matter that the record fines imposed on Columbia/HCA were part of a settlement in which the company admitted all sorts of wrongdoing."

"If only "somebody told me something was wrong."

Unbelievably, Scott claimed he would have stopped the fraud— if only "somebody told me something was wrong." Was he in a coma?

Three major federal agencies spent nine years on the massive case with the help of eight whistleblowers. One of them, John Schilling, a former HCA accountant who alerted the FBI and worked with them from 1996 through 2003 had a different view:

The fraud at Rick Scott's company hurt seniors, it hurt taxpayers, it hurt everyone . . . Fraud was in the DNA of Rick Scott's company from the very beginning and he was the father."

Although the Justice Department's final settlement with the company was announced June 26, 2003, it noted that the fraud went decades: "HCA had systematically defrauded Medicare, Medicaid and other federally funded health care programs through schemes dating back to the late 1980s."

Instead of being appalled by Scott, voters made him governor of Florida twice and then senator. He's the richest member of the US Senate. With serious conflicts of interest.

"Past Is Prologue"

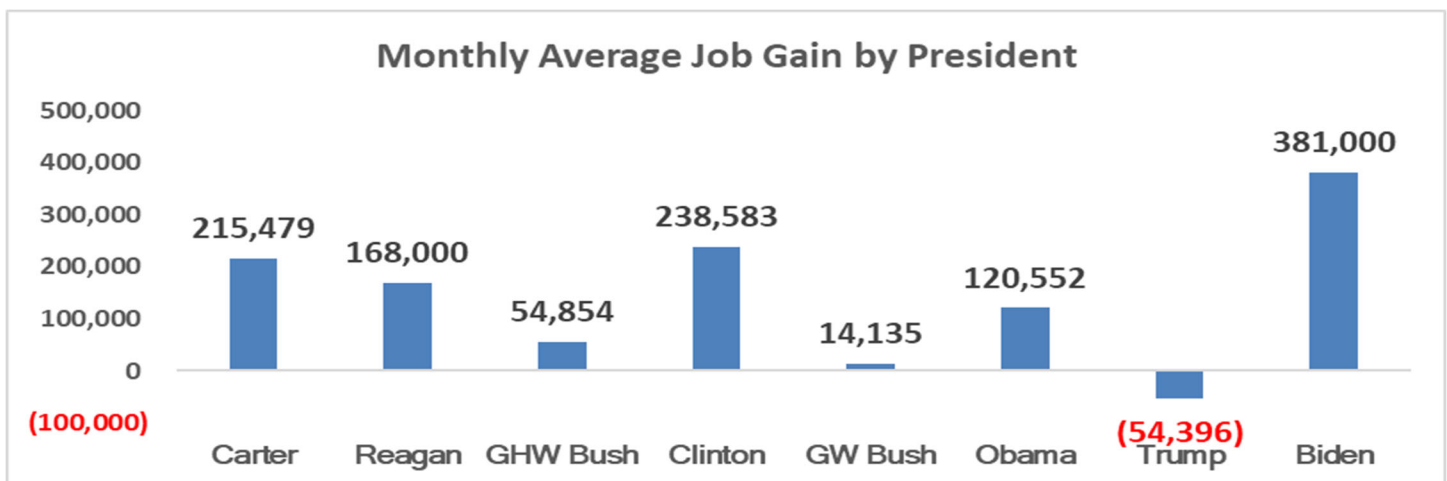
Scott is running for a second term as senator, so a dive into his symbiotic business-political ventures is essential—and illuminating.

Scott's forced resignation from HCA came with a bespoke parachute of \$300 million in stock, \$5.1 million in severance pay, and a five-year, \$950,000-per-annum consulting contract. Scott has a talent for investing, and he used his good-bye bonanza to vastly multiply his personal wealth.

While still a private citizen, and despite his HCA scandal, Scott co-founded Solantic, a chain of walk-in clinics in Northeast Florida that became the dominant group of emergency clinics in Florida.

In 2008, he decided to run for public office. He poured \$73 million into his campaign and barely beat Alex Sink. The ante was big, but he may have figured on even bigger rewards.

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Data from [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

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But he knew that serving as Florida's new governor come January 2011, he would have to answer growing accusations about conflicts of interest between his holdings and the state's business. So, just before he took office, he put his shares of Solantic into his wife's revocable trust. But critics charged that didn't qualify as the legally necessary "blind" trust because Scott could see the account.

On March 22, 2011, Scott signed an order mandating drug tests for all state employees, a profitable service Solantic could have performed, trust or not.

Then-Attorney General Bill McCollum's campaign questioned how a Scott administration would handle Solantic, which is regulated by the state Agency for Health Care Administration and hires doctors licensed by the Department of Health. Both agencies are run by the governor's [appointees](#)." So, in April of that year, Scott sold his [Solantic](#) stock to Welsh, Carson, Anderson & Stowe, a New York firm that already owned a 30% share of the company.

He continues to claim there is no conflict of interest concerning his vast investments and holdings. But his federal financial disclosure reveals, *Scott and his wife have millions of dollars invested in the same companies*. As [Politico](#) reported:

Hundreds of investments are held simultaneously in both Scott's blind trust and by Ann Scott . . . There are numerous examples of official Scott administration actions that benefit more than just Ann Scott's investments, which Rick Scott could see while in office.

Since then, Scott was reelected as governor in 2014 and elected as Florida's junior senator in 2018. He spent \$73 million of his own [money](#) (nearly 86% of the total campaign funds!) for his first gubernatorial race in 2010, yet defeated Democrat Alex Sink by only 68,000 votes or 1.2%.

He contributed even more money in 2014 to compete against Democrat Charlie Crist with even less of a return—61,000 votes—just 1%. For his Senate run in 2018, despite another massive infusion of personal cash, the race against incumbent Democratic Senator Bill Nelson was so close it needed a squirt of WD40: [0.2 percent!](#)

He's currently the top, self-funded Republican candidate, donating more than [\\$20 million](#).

These are some of the reasons why groups like [End Citizens United](#) see red, and what Floridians should remember when voting come November is, "Who will truly serve the will of the people?"

New Florida Laws: The Push Toward Evangelizing and Whitewashing Our Public Schools

June S. Neal

Effective July 1, 2024, here is the good, the bad, and the truly ugly, such as the Republicans' obsession to turn Florida into a religious autocracy, particularly their attempts to evangelize our public schools. And their contempt for truth as they pretend racial bigotry and inequality never existed.

[HB 1291](#). Prohibits "Woke" in Teacher Training (Shameful)

"Florida is where WOKE comes to die," has been Governor DeSantis's oral bumper sticker. He promised to keep Woke, and the dreaded Critical Race Theory, out of our public schools. He even signed a [W.O.K.E. law](#) "Stop the Wrongs to Our Kids and Employees [Act](#)," Easy victory, since neither were taught here.

And to ensure the phantom subjects don't find their way in, our teachers will be at the ready. Their new training "May not distort significant historical events or include a curriculum or instruction that teaches identity politics or that "systemic racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege [White] are inherent in the institutions of the United States."

As per DeSantis's many press releases and interviews, "distort" means that slavery, Reconstruction, Jim Crow, the internment of Japanese Americans, The Indian Removal Act, the decades of discrimination against Latinos and LGBTQ+ people just didn't happen.

[HB 1285](#). "Classical Education" Teaching Certificates.

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The State Board of Education will establish rules for those who wish to teach at a “classical” school, one that teaches the “development of moral character and civic virtue, the liberal arts and sciences...and is based on the classical trivium stages of grammar, logic, and rhetoric.”

Teacher applicants are *exempt from “demonstrating mastery of both general and subject knowledge, professional preparation and education competence.”* The exemptions caused teacher and Democratic Rep. Ashley Gantt of Miami-Dade County to question, “What measurement are we using to make sure that they’re qualified [and]... adhering to whatever curriculum is developed and... actually have the ability to [teach that?](#)”

But accepting people without traditional education and experience has become a way for DeSantis to deal with Florida’s severe teacher shortage, such as allowing veterans and retired firefighters without bachelor’s degrees, and others with only two-year degrees, to teach with mentors. A 2023 study by the [Learning Policy Institute](#) showed Florida to have the lowest “teacher attractiveness” rating in the nation.

[HB 1285](#). Limits the number of requests to **Ban Books** (Republicans call them “challenges”), by non-parents to one title per month. DeSantis accused “‘activist’ teachers of making a ‘mockery’ of his parental rights legislation by filing frivolous challenges. Parents (like the lunatic Moms for Liberty) have no limits. [PEN America](#), the writers’ organization that’s fighting book banning, reports that Florida is responsible for 72% of the books that have been pulled from the nation’s schools in the first half of the current school year.

[SB 1264](#). **Schools Must Teach “the evils of Communism.”** “The truth will set us free,” said DeSantis in a press release. (Yes, he really did.)

[HB 931](#). **Allows chaplains to counsel students in public schools.** Beyond the frightening, anti-democratic melding of church and state, the law doesn’t require the chaplains to demonstrate any credentials. In addition, some faiths condemn as sins suicide, homosexuality and abortion, issues that demand trained psychology or psychiatry [professionals](#) .

[HB 1317](#) **Patriotic Organizations Welcome in Public Schools.** Specifically named are Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America, Boy Scouts. Girl Scouts,

Boys and Girls Clubs of America, Civil Air Patrol, Farmers of America, Little Leagues Baseball, Marine Corps League, and the Navy SEAL Cadet Corps. However, the schools don’t have to allow in any groups that aren’t designated “patriotic.”

Politics

HB 919

Artificial Intelligence in Political Ads. Ads that depict real people person doing things that they never did must disclose the use of A.I. A violation can result in a first-degree misdemeanor charge. (Big deal. If the ad is full of lies, the damage is done.)

Health (good)

[HB 159](#). **HIV prevention in pharmacies.** Florida is among the states with the highest number of new HIV cases in the country. Now, pharmacists can prescribe and dispense medicine to prevent HIV infection after exposure if taken within 72 hours.

HB 935 — Home Health Care Services

Home health services can now be paid by Medicaid if prescribed by advanced practice registered nurses or physician assistants.

And now, for some good stuff:

[SB 544](#). **Free swimming lessons.** Florida will offer swimming lessons at no cost to families with a household income of less than \$45,180 a year and who have at least one child who is four years of age or younger, according to the Swimming Lesson Voucher Program. [Florida has the highest rate of child-drowning deaths](#), ages 1-4 and 0-9 in the nation.

[HB 187](#) **Anti-Semitism.** Defines antisemitism as calling for the deaths of Jewish people, stereotyping them and Holocaust denial.

[HB 1109](#) - **Jewish Day Schools and Preschools.** Allows security funding, as recommended by professionals.

[HB 1181](#) **Juvenile Justice.** Sets out rules for dealing with minors with illegal possession of firearms.

Oh yes, you *can’t* release balloons in the air [HB 321](#) and you *can* shoot a bear if it attacks you. [HB 87](#)

Short Cuts

Michael K. Cantwell

Envy, Fear, and Clickbait

The engine that drove the frenzy to force Biden to step down was fueled by envy, fear, and the quest for clickbait. Biden has done more good with fewer votes to spare than any Democratic president of this or the last century.

That breeds envy from those in the Obama administration who mocked him when he was vice-president and pushed him to drop out in 2016. It breeds fear in Republicans who don't want to see him finish the job.

Always Look on the Bright Side of Life 🎵🎵🎵

I know it must be a disappointment to *The New York Times* that it's a coronation rather than an open convention with the promise of the clickbait from dozens of articles reporting on the race to the nomination mere months ahead of the election that will determine whether the Republic will hold. But look on the bright side.

If you're forced to get your clickbait by reporting on the greatest threat to our Republic since the Civil War, you can be part of the struggle to save it instead of another media outlet monetizing our descent into neo-fascism.

Projection as a Psychological and Political Tool

Republicans are masters of projection, a defense mechanism that relieves psychological pressure by attributing one's own unacceptable behavior and urges to another. Republicans accuse Democrats of stealing elections through *voter fraud* because *they* steal elections through *voter suppression*. The former is virtually nonexistent while the latter is ubiquitous and very effective.

Projection also serves prophylactically as a political tool. Donald Trump's claim that Biden is mentally unfit is a form of pre-inoculation against the same claim being directed at him, a charge that has far greater basis in reality.

Our Duty to Immigrants

America bears responsibility for the fact that so many Latinxs are leaving the homes their families inhabited for generations to brave a dangerous journey to a country where they receive a hostile and heartless reception from many of the descendants of earlier waves of immigrants.

NAFTA is responsible for displacing millions of small farmers in Mexico who couldn't compete with America's Big Ag, aided by giant government subsidies. For example, Archer Daniels Midland has received subsidies totaling nearly half a billion dollars and \$2.5 trillion in loans and guarantees.

Finally, we can expect—and bear a responsibility to accept—the climate refugees who will be arriving as their countries become uninhabitable thanks to the fact that America has poured more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere than any other country

News As Entertainment

We can date the moment news started to devolve from a public service into bread and circuses. It began with Rupert Murdoch's purchase of the *New York Post*, turning a liberal New York City tabloid into a scrofulous rag.

At first, the established corporate media treated Murdoch as a country bumpkin. Then he showed them how much money could be made from broadcasting sensationalist nonsense masquerading as "news." His program "A Current Affair" was so successful that it was almost immediately copied by old money media. CBS launched "Hard Copy," which one documentary dubbed, "The National Enquirer on TV."

A Current Affair's original host Maury Povich was asked years later whether that was a "good thing," and he said, "for me personally it was a great thing."

How the Media Elects Presidents

Bill Clinton played the sax while George H.W. Bush didn't know the price of broccoli

Al Gore was stiff while you could enjoy a beer with George W. Bush

Barack Obama has a charisma and cool that even media favorite John McCain couldn't match (he would have been president if Hillary had beaten Obama in the primary).

Trump was a pathological liar, a huckster, and a serial bankrupt, but no one in the craven, clueless corporate media thought he could win and, in the words of the subsequently disgraced CBS Chair Les Moonves, "The money is rolling in."

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It also provides additional funding for the IRS to pursue wealthy tax cheats, an [effort](#) that has yielded \$1 billion in back taxes due. If funding is continued, an estimated \$851 billion will be recovered by 2034.

The IRA also removes the Bush-era prohibition on Medicare negotiating drug prices with Big Pharma. As a result, the monthly cost for insulin is now capped at \$35.

Incredibly, Biden accomplished all that with a split Senate and a 5-vote majority in the House. And even after Democrats lost the House, he outplayed Republican speakers, something neither Bill Clinton

nor Barack Obama managed when in office. During budget impasses, Newt Gingrich shut down the government twice and John Boehner's inability to control the Tea Party led to a downgrade in the government's credit rating in 2011 and a government shutdown in 2013. Moreover, Biden even outplayed Mitch McConnell, securing passage of a modified Green New Deal when everyone thought it was dead.

Biden's age and experience made that possible even as it forced him from the race. I have no doubt of Kamala's ability to finish the job of rolling back Reagan's Raw Deal just as Reagan eviscerated FDR's New Deal. ***Let's call it the Real Deal, because that is what Joe Biden is.***

Unfit: A Matched Pair

Michael K. Cantwell

Donald Trump is an existential threat to our Republican form of government and our democracy. There is no question that he lost the 2020 election or that his claim it was stolen was a barefaced and brazen lie; there is even evidence that Trump knew it was a lie. More than 60 judges, including judges appointed by Trump, rejected lawsuits asserting that the election had been fraudulently stolen.

What he could not win fairly and legally Trump sought to gain through violence and illegal schemes. He unleashed a mob on the Capitol, a mob that ran amok through Congress, a mob that erected a scaffold to "hang Mike Pence."

Pence's crime? He refused to take part in Trump's scheme to reject the slate of electors certified in each

of the seven swing states that delivered the election to Biden on the ground that there was an "alternate" slate of electors. This would have thrown the election to the House of Representatives, where Trump would have fraudulently been declared the winner.

Trump's vice-presidential pick J.D. Vance has promised that, if given the opportunity in 2028, he will do what Mike Pence refused to do in 2020. He will violate his oath of office and help steal an election.

I imagine that Vance's pledge factored heavily in Trump's decision to select him as a running mate. If two men who are so fundamentally unfit to serve in a democracy are elected, the 2024 election may be the last democratic election held in America.

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Editorial Board: Michael K. Cantwell (Editor), Char Lane (Managing Editor), Sandra Elaisse-Cantwell, David Kulick, and June Neal.

Our Mailbox (Outgoing, That Is)

Re: the July 5 Miami Herald online story, “Miami-Dade considers school chaplain program, but many school districts staying away.” How wonderfully ironic to read that Gov. Ron DeSantis’s back door attempt to foist religion on schoolchildren is meeting resistance from the very school districts one would expect to be most receptive.

Sumter County Schools Superintendent Richard Shirley represents a conservative district but is concerned that The Satanic Temple — recognized by the IRS as a religion and “known for its activism in defense of pluralism and secularism in American public life” — has offered to send its chaplains to Florida schools.

Shirley missed a “teaching moment,” as his concern was shared by the founders of our nation and is why our Bill of Rights begins with the Religion Clauses. They knew of the carnage that can come from disagreements over religion.

Michael K. Cantwell, *Miami Herald*, July 9, 2024

Thank you for your excellent editorial analysis of the Supreme Court’s anti-democratic decision to remove the authority of the federal agencies to interpret the laws they administer and give that power to the courts. We can anticipate a similar attempt to eviscerate state agencies.

I served as the Director of Communications and Consumer Education for the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection for 23 years. Our jurisdiction was broad, from unfair trade practices to food and product safety. We knew our laws intimately. Thus, when faced with deadly collapsing baby cribs, Chinese pet food contaminated with melamine or an unregistered contractor scamming the elderly, we were able to act immediately.

We acted with the intent of the law — not as a politically driven court directive.

The justices and judges appointed by Donald Trump and Gov. DeSantis are replacing laws with their personal beliefs. The Supreme Court’s Chevron decision effectively ends our system of checks and balances. Remember, justices: The Constitution created three separate, but equal, branches of government.

June S. Neal, *Sun-Sentinel*, July 20, 2024

Re “Biden Made a Courageous Choice. Democrats Must Seize the Opportunity” (editorial, July 22):

Thank you for one of the best assessments of today’s presidential race: “Mr. Biden has now done what Mr. Trump never will: He has placed the national interest above his own pride and ambition.”

I cried when President Biden released his poignant letter of resignation. Not just for the loss of his superb leadership, but because, despite the pain of incredible personal tragedies, he’s remained a role model of selflessness and decency.

He took on the weight of the American presidency following the mess left by former President Donald Trump. He also faced the constant antipathy of the Trump cult — the replacement for the old Republican Party — that follows a man with no conscience, no courage and the singular goal of crowning himself king.

Through a pandemic, Mr. Trump’s attempt to overturn the election and two foreign wars that threaten the stability of the world, Mr. Biden was able to enact some of the most consequential legislation in decades: boosting employment; lowering prescription drug prices; and making the biggest investments in clean water, energy and our infrastructure in decades.

History will compare his act of patriotism against the hypocrisy of Mr. Trump and his followers. President Joe Biden is a man for all seasons.

June S. Neal, *The New York Times*, July 22, 2024

Re “A Progressive’s Loss Signals a Shift to the Center” (front page, June 27): Notwithstanding the penchant for handicapping that permeates the article, Jamaal Bowman’s landslide loss tells us nothing about the future of “the left” or the “Squad” (scare quotes).

Not only did Mr. Bowman face “the other side’s vast resources, including a torrent of unprecedented spending by a super PAC,” but he was also burdened “by a unique collection of baggage.” Most significant, it seems that he failed to address the fact that he was more progressive than his district.

What the article does tell us, and it’s not rocket science, is that Democrats need to be running

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moderates in moderate districts and progressives in progressive districts if we want to take back the House. There's plenty of time to argue after we replace the current clown show.

Michael K. Cantwell, *The New York Times*, June 28, 2024

In his recent letter, Thomas Rubino is mistaken that President Biden's Atlanta debate performance "destroyed his presidency." Leaving aside that the fat lady is far from finished singing, nothing can or will destroy Biden's historic achievements — even if he loses in November.

In three-and-a-half years, Biden created more jobs than any president besides Bill Clinton and Ronald Reagan, both of whom served eight years. President Biden made good on his promise to vaccinate 200,000 Americans in his first 100 days, presided over the lowest unemployment in a half-century and lowest Black unemployment rate ever. He signed the first bipartisan bills in decades on gun safety, veterans' benefits and infrastructure. His Inflation Reduction Act provides the greatest investment in green energy in history. For the first time, it authorizes the government to negotiate drug prices Big Pharma charges Medicare recipients, lowering the monthly cost for insulin to \$35.

Too many Americans have been nurtured on the brazen lies of Donald Trump. Among the most outrageous is Trump's claim that Biden was the worst president in history. According to a survey of historians and political scientists released this year, Trump has it backwards. Trump was the one tied for worst, with Andrew Johnson, while Biden was rated 14th best. In the five presidential surveys in which he appeared, Trump's best showing was 41st.

Michael K. Cantwell, *Sun-Sentinel*, July 10, 2024

Florida State Sen. Ana Maria Rodriguez's June 5 op-ed, "Florida GOP has a key climate fix: Take on China," seemed, at first, to reference the bill recently signed by Gov. Ron DeSantis, which strips the term "climate change" from much of state law. "If you don't see it, it doesn't exist" is a belief system children possess before they develop "object permanence." Turns out, Rodriguez was referencing something less feckless if equally infantile, namely, blaming China. This cheap political stunt allows Republicans to bash President Joe Biden while ignoring that America is equally if not more

culpable. Since 1850, the United States has emitted 509 billion tons of carbon dioxide. This dwarfs the 284 billion tons emitted by China. Should we get a free pass on the carbon we added while industrializing?

Moreover, we are now responsible for more carbon emissions than China. The average Chinese contributes 10.1 tons of carbon pollution annually, compared with 17.6 tons for the average American. Rodriguez celebrates the progress America has made in reducing emissions but fails to acknowledge that these achievements have largely been the result of executive actions taken by Presidents Barack Obama and Biden. Ex-President Donald Trump rolled back more than 100 environment rules instituted by Obama and has pledged to do the same if re-elected. Perhaps the real climate fix would be to re-elect Biden and vote Republican climate-deniers out of office.

Michael K. Cantwell, *Miami Herald*, June 10, 2024

The July 21 Miami Herald online story, "Joe Biden is leaving the race. What does it mean for Florida?" left out some important answers. For one, it means that a President Kamala Harris will continue the programs Biden initiated for our state and critical to our future.

Florida faces historic high temperatures, rising oceans and flooded streets. Joe Biden delivered by earmarking \$8.1 billion dollars for 175 projects targeting clean water; zero-emission buses (including school buses); electric vehicle charging stations; Everglades restoration; and thousands of miles of new transmission lines to protect against power outages.

Biden ended Donald Trump's inhumane policy of tearing children from their families and putting them in cages to languish. He supported the "Dreamers."

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law earmarked about \$6.3 billion for roads, bridges, public transit, ports and airports. Today, more than a million households across the state are receiving affordable high-speed internet. Another \$13.3 billion is expected in the next five years for highways and bridges.

I am grateful to Joe Biden for his vision for America: prosperity, equality and preserving our democracy. Harris has already proven she's committed to the same goals.

June S. Neal, *Miami Herald*, July 24, 2024

Worth Quoting

“In those roles, I took on perpetrators of all kinds — predators who abused women, fraudsters who ripped off consumers, cheaters who broke the rules for their own gain. So hear me when I say, I know Donald Trump’s type.” Kamala Harris, at campaign HQ, describing her career as a prosecutor.

In fact, U.S. rates of crime and immigration have moved in opposite directions in recent years. After illegal immigration plummeted in 2020, the murder rate rose. And after illegal immigration spiked in 2021 and 2022, murders plateaued and then fell.” German Lopez, *The New York Times*, [The Myth of Migrant Crime](#).

“I think we can say with a lot of confidence that President Trump’s trade policies and immigration policies would result in price spikes.” Michael Strain, the director of economic policy studies at the right-leaning American Enterprise Institute, quoted in *The New York Times*, [“Trump Vows to Lower Prices. Some of His Policies May Raise Them.”](#)

“He is in this race; the matter is closed.” Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, quoted in *The New York Times*, in [How Biden Is Leveraging His Defiance to Try to Stem Democratic Defections](#).

“It’s time to learn a lesson from the progressive and centrist forces in France who, despite profound political differences, [came together](#) this week to soundly defeat right-wing extremism,” Bernie Sanders, [“Joe Biden for President.”](#)

What We’re Reading

David Kurtz, [‘Do Something’ Is Not A Plan Or Wise Counsel Or A Way Out](#), *Talking Points Memo*: “The greatest of these limitations is that much of political journalism is divorced from policy and the substance of politics. It’s the horserace coverage, the who’s up and who’s down, the who’s in and who’s out. And no matter how complex the topic, or carefully balanced the various competing public interests are on a given issue, or how long the history of tackling the issue in a substantive way, once it enters the realm of political journalism it goes through a reductive process that distills it to whether it’s good or bad politically. Does it help or does it hurt? And if it hurts, what are you going to do about it?”

“Once you’re in the lane occupied by political journalists, there are certain rules, customs, and expectations that subsume everything else. You’re in our lane now and you’re going to play by our rules. If all you know is politics, everything gets reduced to a craven political calculation. Actually, it’s worse than that. If all you know is political journalism, then it gets reduced to the political journalist’s projection of what politics is, what winning looks like, and who’s losing under that particular contrived set of calculations.”

Paul Krugman, [The Matrix of Consumer Discontent](#), *The New York Times*: “What we see right away is that claims that Americans are much worse off than the official numbers say fail across the board. If consumers were really hurting on average, they wouldn’t be spending so freely. They wouldn’t be telling pollsters that their personal finances were in good shape. They wouldn’t be upbeat about their own state’s economy. And if things were really bad, you’d expect them to be bad for Democrats as well as for Republicans.”

Heather Cox Richardson, [Letters from an American](#): For the radical extremists who have taken over the Republican Party, getting rid of the modern government that regulates business, provides a basic social safety net, promotes infrastructure, and protects civil rights is now gospel as they try to replace it with Christian nationalism. But that active government remains popular.”

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You don’t have to live in Delray Beach to read or write for *The Delray Democrat*. We’re also always looking for writers. Send submissions to editor@thedelraydemocrat.com.

Thank Joe Biden

The American Rescue Plan Act begins the recovery from the Trump Depression:

- Local governments given \$360 billion to keep front line public workers on the job and paid.
- Expanded and extended unemployment checks to help workers until the economy reopens.
- Over 200 million Americans are vaccinated against COVID in first 100 days, thanks to \$160 billion funding for supplies and vaccines.
- Investments in Affordable Care Act allowed more than 18 million Americans to obtain health insurance, savings tens of thousands from premature, preventable deaths.
- Increased and expanded Child Tax Credit cut child poverty by 35% in 2021.
- Helped create more jobs (6.7 million) during the first year of any presidency.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passes with 17 Republican senators voting in favor. Florida's senators vote against the bill, although they and our governor are happy to take credit for the money and services it provides.

- The largest investment in infrastructure in over a decade.
- The largest investment in clean drinking water and wastewater infrastructure in U.S. history.
- The largest investment in clean energy transmission and EV infrastructure in U.S. history.
- The largest investment in public transit in nearly six decades.
- The largest investment in bridges since the construction of the interstate highway system.
- More than 40,000 projects already off the ground.

The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act is the first gun safety legislation in nearly three decades.

The PACT Act is the biggest expansion of veterans' benefits in over three decades. The Act has already sparked \$200 billion in private investments in the United States.

The Inflation Reduction Act is the greatest investment in green energy in U.S. history. It reduces the deficit by authorizing Medicare to negotiate with drug companies, closing tax loopholes, and providing \$80 billion to the IRS for additional tax enforcement.

The CHIPS Act invests 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. The Act has already sparked \$200 billion in private investments in the United States.

The July 17, 2024, **Executive Order** will allow an estimated 500,000 undocumented spouses of American citizens and their children to remain in the United States while obtaining legal status.

Thank a Democrat

1964 Civil Rights Act
1965 Voting Rights Act
Affordable Care Act
AmeriCorps
CDC
Family and Medical Leave Act

Food Stamp Act
Freedom of Information Act
GI Bill of Rights
Medicare and Medicaid
Minimum Wage Act
National Labor Relations Act

National Science Foundation Act
National Voter Registration Act
(a.k.a. Motor Voter Act)
Social Security Act
Unemployment Compensation Act
Workers Compensation Act

2024 Membership Char Lane

It's July 2024 and the Primaries are next month on August 20, 2024, and the extremely critical General Election is about three months away on November 5, 2024. It's time for some serious work to elect Democrats up and down the ballot to save our democracy from Trump and his Project 2025 allies.

If you haven't already done so, it's time to renew your DCDB membership for 2024. Membership is on a calendar year basis and your dues help provide funding for operational projects, such as *The Delray Democrat*, our meetings, other operational supplies, and signage for our sign waving events. Meetings are at 7 PM on the third Thursday of each month at the Palm Beach County Democratic Party office, located at 220 Congress Park Drive, Suite 140, in Delray Beach. Our meetings are hybrid so you can also join via zoom. Meeting notices are sent out in the weeks before the meetings, and include Zoom links to register for and/or join the meetings and links to our various websites.

Our goal is to educate people as to the importance of voting, why they should vote Democratic and why they should use Vote-by-Mail as a critical tool in support of this goal. With all that's been going on we'll have to work exceptionally hard to help keep our democracy intact and protect it from being decimated by Trump and his cohorts.

Getting out the vote is our most important mission. You can help by making phone calls, texting, writing postcards, canvassing, or becoming a precinct leader. You can register people to vote and help people sign up or reenroll to vote by mail. You can volunteer for projects to benefit the community. There's so much work to do between now and November 2024 and we'll need your help.

If you're a member of the Democratic Club of Delray Beach and haven't already done so, please renew your membership for 2024. If you're not a member of the Club, please consider joining.

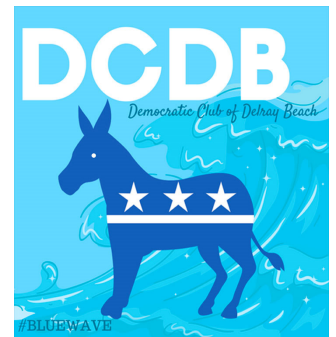
Please visit us at www.demclubofdelray.org. Read our monthly publication *The Delray Democrat* at www.thedelraydemocrat.com.

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

Become a member of the DCDB: complete and mail the Membership application or click on the QR code below. You can also give me your membership application/renewal at our meetings.



Democratic Club of Delray Beach 2024 Membership Application and Renewal



Date _____ New _____ Renewal _____
Name/names of household members _____
Address _____
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.