



25th Legislative District



Democratic Focus



FORMER TACOMA MAYOR BILL BAARSMA
WAS THE GUEST SPEAKER AT THE 25 LDD SENDOFF DINNER .
HERE HE IS CHATTING WITH
ELLEN ZULAUF AND JERRY BECKENDORF.

NOTICE OF MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING
Will be back at the Puyallup Library
at 7PM on Monday February 3rd.
Rick Talbert will be the guest speaker.

25TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT DEMOCRATIC (LDD) OFFICERS

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Website. For latest info or copies of FOCUS check out 25th LDD Website at: 25dems.org
www.25dems.org

MEETINGS

Mon 3 Feb 25th LDD General Meeting at 7 PM Puyallup Library. Guest Speaker will be Rick Talbert!



FEB DEADLINE
FOR FOCUS Sat 15 Feb for articles, pictures, etc.

Mon 24 Feb E-Board meets at 7 PM at Fire Station 66.

Mon 3 Mar 25th LDD General Meeting at 7 PM at Puyallup Library.



Mar 15 Sat DEADLINE FOR FOCUS articles, pictures, etc.

Mon 31 Mar E-Board meets at 7 PM at Fire Station 66.

Mon 7 Apr 25th LDD General Meeting at 7 PM at Puyallup Library.



Sat 12 Apr DEADLINE for FOCUS articles, pictures, etc.

Chair's Comment

Ed Herde

Here we are heading into another election year with state legislator and congressional offices up for election. But before we get too far ahead let's remember the February school ballot measures for which we have just received our ballots. The levy committees could use help getting out the vote so please inquire with your school district about phone banking and other opportunities to help. You don't want your levy to fail by 1 vote!

The big issue on the plate of the Democrats this year is finally income equality. Having been pushed by the grass roots for years it looks like the party leadership has finally heard the masses. Governor Inslee proposed an increase in the state minimum wage in his State of the State address. Several Democratic congress members have been pushing for a national minimum wage increase the last couple years and now president Obama seems to be more serious about it also. Some one-dimensional thinkers in the media will tell you that the minimum wage helps only a small percentage of the workers. This is not so. There is a multiplier effect for low wages also. When the wages at the bottom of the income spectrum go up those extra dollars are spent. Some of those dollars are spent at places where middle wage workers are employed thereby increasing the income of those middle wage workers, or causing more middle wage workers to be hired. I know it hurts Republicans to think multi-dimensionally, but this is fact.

There are two big issues that stand to be tests of how serious the president and Democratic congress members are on income equality (we know the Republicans are not serious about it). The first test is the disappearance for good of the president's proposal for the implementation of the Chained CPI to set cost of living increases for Social Security benefits. The second test is backing off on "free" trade agreements especially the Trans Pacific Partnership that looks to be the biggest give away yet for the security, environment, living wages, and sovereignty of the United States. If the president or members of congress keep pushing either of these issues we will know that individual either does not understand what forces work against income equality, or he or she is doing a soft shoe while they cater to Wall Street and multi-national corporate interests.

Congressman Heck has not as of yet come out with his position of Fast Track Authority for the president to negotiate the Trans Pacific Partnership. Let Congressman Heck know your feelings on the TPP and Fast Track Authority.

Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP): Job Loss, Lower Wages and Higher Drug Prices

Article from Public Citizen --- Read more on the TPP at www.citizen.org/TPP

Have you heard? The TPP is a massive, controversial “free trade” agreement currently being pushed by big corporations and negotiated behind closed doors by officials from the United States and 11 other countries – Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam. In one fell swoop, this secretive deal could:

- offshore millions of American jobs,
- roll back Wall Street reforms,
- sneak in SOPA-like threats to Internet freedom,
- ban Buy American policies needed to create green jobs,
- jack up the cost of medicines,
- expose the U.S. to unsafe food and products,
- and empower corporations to attack our environmental and health safeguards.

Although it is called a “free trade” agreement, the TPP is not mainly about trade. Of TPP’s 29 draft chapters, only five deal with traditional trade issues. One chapter would provide incentives to offshore jobs to low-wage countries. Many would impose limits on government policies that we rely on in our daily lives for safe food, a clean environment, and more. Our domestic federal, state and local policies would be required to comply with TPP rules. The TPP would even elevate individual foreign firms to equal status with sovereign nations, empowering them to privately enforce new rights and privileges, provided by the pact, by dragging governments to foreign tribunals to demand taxpayer compensation over policies that they claim undermine their expected future profits.

We only know about the TPP’s threats thanks to leaks – the public is not allowed to see the draft TPP text. Even members of Congress, after being denied the text for years, are now only provided limited access. Meanwhile, more than 600 official corporate “trade advisors” have special access. The TPP has been under negotiation for five years, and the Obama administration wants to sign the deal by early 2014. Opposition to the TPP is growing at home and in many of the other countries involved.

Fast Track

An Undemocratic Path to Unfair “Trade”

Our Analysis of the Fast Track Bill --- By Public Citizen at www.citizen.org/fast-track

Fast Track was an extreme and rarely-used procedure that empowered executive branch negotiators advised by large corporations to skirt Congress and the public and use “trade” agreements to rewrite policies that affect our daily lives – from the stability of our jobs to the safety of our food. Past “trade” deals rammed through Congress under Fast Track have empowered foreign corporations to attack domestic health and environmental policies, enabled pharmaceutical firms to raise medicine prices, and equipped banks with a tool to roll back financial regulation.

Under the U.S. Constitution, Congress is supposed to write the laws and set trade policy. For 200 years, these key checks and balances helped ensure that no one branch of government had too much power. But, over the last few decades, presidents have seized those congressional powers using the Fast Track mechanism.

Fast Track has only been used 16 times in the history of our nation, often to enact the most controversial of “trade” pacts, such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Meanwhile, hundreds of less controversial U.S. trade agreements have been implemented without resort to Fast Track, showing that the extraordinary procedure is not needed to approve trade agreements.

Fast Track allowed the executive branch to unilaterally select partner countries for “trade” pacts, decide the agreements’ contents, and then negotiate and sign the agreements — all before Congress had a vote on the matter. Normal congressional committee processes were forbidden, meaning that the executive branch was empowered to write lengthy legislation on its own with no review or amendments. These executive-authored bills altered wide swaths of U.S. law unrelated to trade – food safety, immigration visas, energy policy, medicine patents and more – to conform our domestic policies to each agreement’s requirements. And, remarkably, Fast Track let the executive branch control Congress’ voting schedule. Unlike any other legislation, both the House and Senate were required to vote on a Fast Tracked trade agreement within 90 days of the White House submitting it. No floor amendments were allowed and debate was limited.

Because Fast Track’s dramatic shift in the balance of powers between branches of the U.S. government occurred via an arcane procedural mechanism, it obtained little scrutiny – until recently. Its use by Democratic and Republican presidents alike to seize Congress’ constitutional prerogatives, “diplomatically legislate” non-trade policy, and preempt state policy, has made it increasingly controversial.

A president cannot obtain Fast Track empowerment without a vote of Congress. President Clinton, renowned for trade expansion, only had Fast Track authority for two of his eight years in office due to congressional opposition. The last time Congress authorized Fast Track was in 2002, with a 3:30 am vote before a congressional recess in which the antiquated mechanism was approved by just three votes. Since 2007, Congress has refused to authorize this extreme procedure, even after its proponents tried to escape Fast Track’s bad reputation by renaming it “Trade Promotion Authority.”

As a candidate, President Obama said he would replace this anti-democratic process. But now he is asking Congress to grant him Fast Track’s extraordinary authority – in part to try to overcome growing public and congressional opposition to his controversial Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Trans-Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (TAFTA) deals. To prevent an expansion of this unfair “trade” model, Congress must not allow the executive branch to once again gain Fast Track’s undemocratic powers.



**25TH LD STATE COMMITTEE WOMAN ELLEN ZULAAUF
PRESENTED 25TH LD TREASURER LUANNE GREEN WITH
THE "LONG TERM SERVICE" AWARD**



**L TO R: LINDA ISENSON, PIERCE COUNTY DEMOCRAT
STATE COMMITTEE WOMAN, STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DAWN MORRELL AND WAYNE HAGEN, PIERCE
COUNTY DEMOCRAT VICE CHAIR ENJOY THEMSELVES
AT THE 25TH SEND OFF DINNER.**



By Joan Cronk

The send off dinner held at the Puyallup Elks on January 10th was well attended and a huge success.

Our master of ceremonies, Jerry Beckendorf, kept the interesting program moving along and entertained the crowd with some well-placed jokes and bits of information.

Bill Baarsma, former Mayor of Tacoma, was our guest speaker and gave a light hearted and informative speech about the history of local politics. State Representative Dawn Morrell updated the crowd on events in Olympia.

25th LDD Treasurer Luanne Green was presented with the 25th Legislative District Democrats Long Term Service award for her countless contributions, uncommon sense and steadfast leadership she has provided to build our party and to elect our candidates. The well-deserved award was presented by State Committee woman Ellen Zulauf.

The February 3rd meeting to be held at the Puyallup Public Library will host Pierce County City Council member Rick Talbert as our guest speaker.

Talbert was elected to the Pierce County Council in November 2010 and had served two terms on the Tacoma City Council prior to that time. He represents the 5th District of Pierce County including Midland, North Clover Creek, Eastside and South End of Tacoma, Parkland, Spanaway, Summit-Waller and Summit View area.

Talbert serves on the Rules and Operations Committee and chairs the Council's Community Development Committee. He is the co-founder of the Crystal Judson Family Justice Center.

Jerry Beckendorf reports that a Leadership Breakfast will be Monday February 3rd at 7:30 a.m. at Catins Restaurant and at that time he will report on the performance in the 2013 Legislative Session.

**25th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
FINANCIAL REPORT
WILL NOW BE AVAILABLE EACH MONTH UPON REQUEST BY
A MEMBER INSTEAD OF BEING ON THE WEBSITE.**

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES ?
DUES SHOULD BE PAID NOW FOR 2014!
Use this form to recruit friends and neighbors to join you
in helping our Democratic party.

Name: _____ Address: _____
City/ _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Precinct: _____
Email: _____

Dues: Evergreen (includes Senior, outside district, etc) \$10 per member; Rainier \$25; Chair's Voice \$50; Senators Club \$100 (can be paid in installments.)

Please send dues to: 25th LDD, PO Box 73594, Puyallup, WA 98373 or

Pay by credit card: click on <https://secureform.cloud.clickandpledge.com/20184/1/>



**Well, you should be if you want the truth about politics
by Frank Blair and Traci Kelly on their radio show
Fridays at 1200 to 1 PM on KLAY 1180 AM!**

**And if for some reason or other you miss it then go to [equaltimeradio.net](#).
Tune in or be tuned out.**

NOT A 25TH LD MEMBER? YOU ARE NEEDED

Dear Democrat,

I am writing to ask you as a past member of the 25th Legislative District Democrats organization to consider renewing your membership for 2014. In the present political climate with organized attacks on voting rights, a vibrant media, the environment, labor laws, worker safety, Social Security, Medicare and more it is important that we have funds available to help candidates and issues even at a local level. The right wing and corporate interests that are now trying to take away the advances that have kept many Americans out of poverty over the past six decades are attacking us on a state and local level because it is easier to sneak past the people with our weak local media, than it is to change national policy.

Please join or renew your membership with the 25th Legislative Democrats to help stem the tide of attacks on democratic principles. It is more important than ever to become more involved.

Sincerely,

Ed Herde, District Chair