



25th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT DEMOCRATIC FOCUS

The next meeting of the 25th Legislative District Democrats will be held Monday, May 4 at the Puyallup Public Library at 7 pm.

We will welcome two guest speakers at this meeting.

Tiffani McCoy, State Field Organizer for WAmend/ Initiative 735. Tiffani will speak on the initiative to promote amending the constitution to define people as human beings, which would have the effect of getting big money out of politics.

Secondly we will welcome Jason Puracal, Regional Campaign Representative of Carbon Washington. Jason will speak on the carbon tax initiative 732.

25th Legislative District Democratic Organization
Member Meeting, April 6, 2015
Held at the Puyallup Library

Meeting called to order at 7:08 pm by Chair Ed Herde. Ed Herde led the flag salute. Roll was called.

Executive Board Members Present: Chair Ed Herde, Vice Chair Karen Edwards, Treasurer Luanne Green, Assistant Treasurer Bill Havens, Parliamentarian & Webster Cliff Allo, Membership Chair Blaine Pearman, PCO Chair Eric Herde, State Committeewoman Ellen Zulauf, PC Dem Rep #2 Laura Groves

Agenda passed unanimously (motion by Jerry Beckendorf)

John Ladenburg spoke on the Charter Review Commission and the new County building

Questions from Luanne, Jerry, Ellen, Cliff, Ed, and Laura

Eric Herde spoke on the candidate search

Resolution to endorse Tacoma Proposition 1 - Minimum Wage Initiative passed without

opposition (Motion by Jerry Beckendorf, second by Luanne Green)

Discussion on planning for the Pierce County Democrats booth at the Washington State Fair

The Chair noted the open seats of Secretary and PC E-Board Rep. on the Executive Board

Adjourned at 8:11 pm

Democratic Focus May 2015

As Reich describes the situation of so many Americans in this article you feel that this does not sound like freedom and liberty.

Why So Many Americans Feel So Powerless

By Robert Reich from robertreich.org posted Sunday, April 26, 2015

A security guard recently told me he didn't know how much he'd be earning from week to week because his firm kept changing his schedule and his pay. "They just don't care," he said.

A traveler I met in the Dallas Fort-Worth Airport last week said she'd been there eight hours but the airline responsible for her trip wouldn't help her find another flight leaving that evening. "They don't give a hoot," she said.

Someone I met in North Carolina a few weeks ago told me he had stopped voting because elected officials don't respond to what average people like him think or want. "They don't listen," he said.

What connects these dots? As I travel around America, I'm struck by how utterly powerless most people feel.

The companies we work for, the businesses we buy from, and the political system we participate in all seem to have grown less accountable. I hear it over and over: They don't care; our voices don't count.

A large part of the reason is we have fewer choices than we used to have. In almost every area of our lives, it's now take it or leave it.

Companies are treating workers as disposable cogs because most working people have no choice. They need work and must take what they can get.

Although jobs are coming back from the depths of the Great Recession, the portion of the labor force actually working remains lower than it's been in over thirty years – before vast numbers of middle-class wives and mothers entered paid work.

Which is why corporations can get away with firing workers without warning, replacing full-time jobs with part-time and contract work, and cutting wages. Most working people have no alternative.

Consumers, meanwhile, are feeling mistreated and taken for granted because they, too, have less choice.

U.S. airlines, for example, have consolidated into a handful of giant carriers that divide up routes and collude on fares. In 2005 the U.S. had nine major airlines. Now we have just four.

It's much the same across the economy. Eighty percent of Americans are served by just one Internet Service Provider – usually Comcast, AT&T, or Time-Warner.

The biggest banks have become far bigger. In 1990, the five biggest held just 10 percent of all banking assets. Now they hold almost 45 percent.

Giant health insurers are larger; the giant hospital chains, far bigger; the most powerful digital platforms (Amazon, Facebook, Google), gigantic.

All this means less consumer choice, which translates into less power.

Our complaints go nowhere. Often we can't even find a real person to complain to. Automated telephone menus go on interminably.

Finally, as voters we feel no one is listening because politicians, too, face less and less competition. Over 85 percent of congressional districts are considered "safe" for their incumbents in the upcoming 2016 election; only 3 percent are toss-ups.

In presidential elections, only a handful of states are now considered "battlegrounds" that could go either Democratic or Republican.

So, naturally, that's where the candidates campaign. Voters in most states won't see much of them. These voters' votes are literally taken for granted.

Even in toss-up districts and battle-ground states, so much big money is flowing in that average voters feel disenfranchised.

In all these respects, powerlessness comes from a lack of meaningful choice. Big institutions don't have to be responsive to us because we can't penalize them by going to a competitor.

And we have no loud countervailing voice forcing them to listen.

Fifty years ago, a third of private-sector workers belonged to labor unions. This gave workers bargaining power to get a significant share of the economy's gains along with better working conditions – and a voice. Now, fewer than 7 percent of private sector workers are unionized.

In the 1960s, a vocal consumer movement demanded safe products, low prices, and antitrust actions against monopolies and business collusion. Now, the consumer movement has become muted.

Decades ago, political parties had strong local and state roots that gave politically-active citizens a voice in party platforms and nominees. Now, the two major political parties have morphed into giant national fund-raising machines.

Our economy and society depend on most people feeling the system is working for them.

But a growing sense of powerlessness in all aspects of our lives – as workers, consumers, and voters – is convincing most people the system is working only for those at the top.

Chair's Message

Ed Herde

It is an "Off Year Election" this year, but don't think that it is an easy year to be a responsible voter. There are more offices up for election than in even number year elections, and these elections do not get as much press as the congressional year elections. I encourage you to take a look at what local governing bodies you feel are important to you, find the candidates whom most reflect your beliefs, and help them with their campaigns. You can have a much larger effect on these races since there are fewer voters to get the candidate's message to. Also remember, the Democrats that get elected to these lower profile "non-partisan" offices will become members of the Democratic farm team that may run for higher profile offices in the future.

Offices up for election in the 25th Legislative District include: Fife City Council – 5 seats, Puyallup City Council – 4 seats, Pierce County Superior Court – 2 seats, Port of Tacoma – 2 seats, Fife School Board – 2 seats, Franklin Pierce School Board – 3 seats, Puyallup School Board – 3 seats, Central Pierce Fire Board – 1 seat, Fife Fire Board – 1 seat, Pierce County Charter Review Commission – 9 seats within the 25th LD (3 seats in each of Pierce County Council Districts 1, 2, and 5 part of which each lie within the 25th LD)

A legislative seat that is up for election that is not in the 25th LD, but has the potential to affect everyone in the state, is the 30th Legislative District House race where Carol Gregory is running to retain the seat she was appointed to this last year to finish the term of a representative who had passed away while in office. The 30th LD lies in King and Pierce Counties. The Democrats have a small majority in the House and the Republicans will be spending a lot of money trying to make that majority even smaller.

You can help candidates by doorbelling, placing signs, phone calling, throwing a neighborhood party for the candidate to meet voters, building a website or Facebook page, and numerous other things. As important as these tasks are, supporting candidates financially is equally necessary to the success of a campaign. Donations can be given directly to candidates that you know your values align with. You can also donate to the 25th Legislative District Democrats where your contribution will be grouped with other donations. After a candidate completes an endorsement questionnaire and addresses the 25th LD General membership and answers questions at an endorsement meeting, the 25th LD members decide what candidates to support financially. If you have been a paid member for at least 30 days you can take part in deciding who receives contributions. After this process you will feel good about donating to candidates you were previously not familiar with.

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**HAVE YOU PAID YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES?
DUES SHOULD BE PAID NOW FOR 2015**

Use this form to recruit friends and neighbors to join you
In helping our Democratic party

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ **E-MAIL** _____

**Dues: Evergreen (Includes Senior, outside district, etc.) \$10 per member
Rainier \$25. Chair's Voice \$50. Senator's Club \$100. (Can be paid
In installments.)**

**Please send dues to: 25th LDD, P. O. Box 73594, Puyallup, WA 98374 or pay by
credit card on <https://secureform.cloud.clickandpledge.com/20184/1>**

(Can be paid in installments)