



25th Legislative District
Democratic Focus



25th LDD candidates Karl Mecklenburg, Jamie Smith and Michelle Chatterton participated in the Summit-Waller Community Association Candidate Forum moderated by the League of Women Voters on October 4th.

Our **November Meeting** will be held on **Tuesday November 1st** at 7:00 pm at the Puyallup Library. We will be **phone banking** for our local candidates prior to the meeting starting at **4:00 pm**. We will be calling Democrats that have yet to return their ballots. **Dinner** will be provided.

We will be having our annual Fundraiser Dinner and Dessert Auction on Friday January 6th at the Puyallup Elks. Doors open at 6:00 pm with dinner at 7:00 pm. You can purchase tickets at 25dems.org. Tickets are \$20 per person if purchased by 12-31-16 and \$25 per person starting 1-1-17.

Contact Information to Volunteer with Local Candidates

Jamie Smith - WA State House, Seat 1 702-419-8537

www.votejamiesmith.com

www.facebook.com/votejamiesmith/

Michelle Chatterton - WA State House, Seat 2 425-221-1921

www.michellechatterton.org

<https://www.facebook.com/Friendsofmichellechatterton/>

Karl Mecklenburg – WA State Senate 253-720-7859

www.electmeck.com

www.facebook.com/electmeck

Carolyn Edmonds – Pierce County Council, Dist. 2 253-952-0301

www.carolynedmonds.com

www.facebook.com/CarolynEdmondsCouncil/

Rick Talbert – Pierce County Executive 360-359-1963

www.ricktalbert.com

<https://www.facebook.com/Citizens-for-Rick-Talbert-317591090784/>

WSDCC Meeting by Ellen Zulauf

The fall Washington State Democratic Central Committee took place in Yakima this year, convening on September 16 and 17, 2016. This year looks more hopeful for Democrats in Yakima. Hispanics in Yakima had been a majority in some districts of the city. They were kept off the council because all positions were voted at-large. This allowed the non-Hispanic population to win all seats. After a court challenge and hard work in the community to register more Hispanics, several have been elected after decades of being shut out of city government.

Chair Jaxon Ravens reported that 250,000 people attended state caucuses last spring, the largest in state history and perhaps in the nation. The State Coordinated Campaign is already working with local candidates throughout Washington to elect Democrats.

During the Democratic National Committee reports David McDonald announced that former DNC Chair Debby Wasserman-Schultz was replaced at the Convention by Donna Brazil, who set up a transition committee. Ed Cote reported we will be electing a new chair whom he hopes will be a lay person, not an elected official. Sharon Mast noticed the resurgence of unions at the Convention.

"When voter turnout is large, Democrats win"

Minutes of the 25th Legislative District Democratic Organization Member Meeting, October 3rd, 2016 Held at Puyallup Public Library

Meeting called to order by Chairman Ed Herde at 7:05 who led the flag salute.

Roll was called - Officers present: Ed Herde, Chairman; Bill Havens, Treasurer; Cliff Allo, Parliamentarian & Webster; Blaine Pearman, Membership Chair; Eric Herde, PCO Chair; Joan Cronk, Focus Editor; Ellen Zulauf, State Committeewoman; Jeremy Kamel, State Committeeman; Karl Mecklenburg, PC Rep. Pos. 1; Merv Swanson, PC Rep. Pos. 3

Approximate Attendance – 30

Candidates and campaign representatives for upcoming elections were introduced and gave updates:

- Jamie Smith – WA State House, Seat 1
- Karl Mecklenburg – WA State Senate
- Carolyn Edmonds – Pierce County Council, Dist. 2
- Dallas Roberts with Congressman Denny Heck's campaign
- Karlene Rytkonen with Senator Patty Murray's campaign

Announcement made for the Mid-County Community Center Candidate Forum for 25th LD Legislative candidates on Tuesday 10-4-16

Speaker - Tony Ventrella, Democratic candidate for Congress in Washington's 8th Congressional District

A motion from the Executive Board was presented by chair Ed Herde. The motion was to allocate \$3,000 from the 25th LD Democrats to be split evenly to the three 25th LD Democratic legislative candidates. The motion was seconded by Jerry Beckendorf. During discussion of the motion which focused on the amounts the three campaigns had collected so far, an amendment to the motion was made by Bill Hilton and seconded by Merv Swanson. The amendment was to donate \$1,250 each to the campaigns of Karl Mecklenburg and Jamie Smith, and \$500 to the campaign of Michelle Chatterton. The amendment was passed unanimously. The amended motion was passed unanimously.

Chair Herde made a request for members to help with the get-out-the-vote effort

Reports were given on the Washington State Democrats 9-17-16 quarterly meeting in Yakima

Report on the run and wrap-up of the Pierce County Democrats booth at the Washington State Fair

Announcement of 25th LD Democrats Reorganization that will take place at the Tuesday December 6th meeting at the Puyallup Library

Announcement of Friday January 6th, 2017 at 5:00 pm as the date and time of the 25th LD Democrats annual fundraiser dinner and desert auction. The dinner will be held at the Puyallup Elks Lodge

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40pm

Chairs Comment

Ed Herde

Last week we finally received an answer on an issue that has been a point of extreme frustration for many of our members. Congressman Denny Heck, who represents most of us in the 25th LD, finally told us how he will vote on the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade /treaty agreement – the TPP. We have published in this Focus Denny Heck's essay on why he reached his decision to vote NO on the existing TPP agreement. The essay is long in Focus article terms, but I hope you will take the time to read it. As Denny says, it is the second most important decision he has made in Congress.

I am happy that Denny will be voting No. I am concerned with what I believe is a narrow vision on the criteria used to judge this and other (including future) trade agreements. Denny does want to see industry return to the U.S., which is good because we cannot create wealth without manufacturing. A service economy just moves money. We must add value to raw materials to create new wealth. What is not mentioned at all in the essay is the trade deficit. Maybe it was to be implied, maybe not. The trade deficit is a much larger threat to our country than the national budget deficit. When American dollars are sent off shore to purchase consumer products the only way the trade deficit dollars can return to the U.S. is by the purchasing of U.S. assets. When too many of our companies, and too much of our real estate and infrastructure are owned by foreign entities it threatens our national security. We lose the ability to make decisions on what is best for the U.S., and must always consider our landlord's interests. Our Congressman needs to consider what incentivizes U.S. ownership to move production of consumer goods to other countries. That incentive is our low top marginal income tax rates.

We will not be able to keep U.S. capital from moving overseas until we stop incentivizing the rich to do just that. If the rich had to pay for the government services they receive while building wealth in this country they would be paying higher top tax rates. If we go back to the top marginal tax rates that we had before Reagan pushed Congress to slash those rates, the rich would not have the incentive to squeeze every drop from their fellow Americans. It's not about just compensating workers who lose their jobs, and enforcing trade provisions to bring factories back to the U.S. It is about not encouraging the rich to drain money from their businesses by letting them run off with massive untaxed earnings while we pay for roads, police and fire protection, military protection and escorts, the court system, tax incentives to locate facilities, and subsidizing low wage employees for food, healthcare, winter heating, etc. Until we stop forcing the 99% to pay for the government services used by the rich while they build their businesses and their wealth, the trade deficit and loss of jobs will remain a problem.

11-16

My views on the proposed Transpacific Partnership trade agreement (TPP)
Congressman Denny Heck 10-21-16

The TPP covers 12 nations whose aggregate economies constitute 40% of the entire world's economy. This would be, by far, our largest trade deal in history, and few issues have galvanized the emotions of advocates on both sides.

Given the attention and reactions focused on the TPP, I think it is fair to say that this is the second-most important decision I have made in Congress. Only the decision on whether to send American troops in to combat in Syria has been more difficult.

And that long, difficult journey has taught me some lessons.

In addition to figuring out what I really believe on TPP, I've learned:

Fanatical approaches can do more harm than good. You would not believe the number of people who tried to convince me to vote with them by threats or insults. A word of advice to anyone trying to persuade public officials: they are, in fact, just people. Like all of us, they don't take well to bullying or ultimatums.

Our politics is addicted to exaggeration. Some people argue with a straight face that TPP will return us to growth we haven't seen since the Internet bubble. Some say it will trigger a worldwide depression. Too many people seem to think that the person who makes the boldest prediction wins the debate. That's not how to make a rational decision, especially one this important.

Like all important issues, when I first began making my decision on TPP, I approached it in a particular way:

1. Understand the arguments on both sides, and;
2. Identify our priorities.

Understanding the arguments on both sides:

Generally speaking, opponents of TPP are concerned that it will cause American jobs to be outsourced to other lower-cost countries. They believe that previous trade agreements, like the North American Free Trade Agreement of the 1990s, did the same thing.

Advocates for TPP argue that it will, on balance, create more and better paying jobs. They also believe TPP will enable us to strengthen our ties with other nations in the Pacific and in so doing, hold China's increasing influence in check.

Identifying our priorities:

I arrived in Congress believing there are substantial benefits to trade. I still do. It is self-evident that robust trade reduces the risk of armed conflict. Countries that have an active trading relationship don't keep shooting at one another. Who couldn't use a little more peace in the world?

And I also believed trade helps the economy overall. After all, freer trade, viewed one way, is simply a market-based economy on a global scale. I believe in a market-based economy and the considerable benefits that flow from it. It is more efficient and rewards innovation. If another nation can build a better mouse trap, we all gain in the long run.

At the same time, I had real concerns about the impact of trade on parts of the U.S. economy. Outsourcing worries me.

I had serious questions:

Would the agreement prevent a production drain to other countries that have low labor standards? Who can compete with low-cost manufacturing facilities with low/no safety standards or poverty wages and child workers? Why would we even try?

Would the agreement prevent a production drain to other countries that have low environmental standards? Who can compete with low-cost manufacturing facilities that spew anything they want into the atmosphere or nearby bodies of water?

Would the agreement protect the creative works of our engineers and artists and not allow their work to be stolen and sold without reimbursement? One of America's greatest strength is its imaginative muscle.

Would the agreement create a dispute resolution mechanism (both for investors and others) that balanced fairness with an airtight protection of our own sovereignty and ability to fashion our future?

I read these sections of the agreement thoroughly. I asked experts. I listened to both sides. I had countless briefings. I've concluded that President Obama and his administration negotiated much better language here compared to previous trade agreements, much better, especially on intellectual property concerns. But they are just words on a page.

The question remains: would they be enforced?

The truth is, we don't know. Our enforcement of existing trade deals makes it look unlikely. Just recently, I saw the good news that Boeing had won another victory in its case at the World Trade Organization against illegal subsidies for Airbus. That is good news, but they're 12 years into the process and there are still more appeals to come! A little company could never afford to stay in business long enough to win, and many of the tools to help them survive long enough to pursue enforcement have been struck down. There are other places to appeal than the World Trade Organization, but the U.S. has only used them four times because they have their own drawbacks. Would the process under TPP be better? At this early stage, it's a wild guess.

The other argument frequently made in favor of TPP is geopolitical, i.e. we must do this to preempt China or risk relinquishing our influence in the region and the world. This is an important matter. Those who minimize it are not being realistic. China has large and growing trade relationships with many of the TPP countries and is part of a different regional trade agreement currently under negotiation. China has passed our ally Japan as the largest economy in the region, and China spreads that money around Asia building factories, railroads and bridges. They are winning influence around the region, and we are beginning to see them wield that influence and interfere with efforts by independent regional institutions such as the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) as they address issues like Chinese territorial claims in the South China Sea. It's a real problem, and TPP presents the prospect of a real solution. By increasing trade between the U.S. and TPP countries, we can strengthen our alliances and partnerships in East and Southeast Asia and counterbalance China. I believe in the need for a strong U.S. role in Asia, and I believe in the role trade can and does play in bringing countries closer together.

So I began the decision-making process with genuinely conflicting feelings. And then it really became difficult.

TPP itself is 5,000 pages, plus appendices. It is mind-boggling complex and written in a weird jargon that often requires experts to translate. Figuring out what it truly means is hard. Measuring the value of the good stuff versus the bad stuff is 100 times harder.

Of course, the world didn't stand still all the while I was reading this document and listening to arguments on both sides. Other stuff happened that helped me make a decision.

First was the announcement that the workers laid off after the closure of the Olympia Panel Products (OPP) mill in Shelton would be eligible for benefits under the Trade Adjustment Assistance program. As we have after past mill closures, Members of Congress and Senators from Washington banded together to lobby the U.S. Department of Labor for TAA certification. I was proud to have succeeded for my district, and hopeful for the people affected.

TAA is a lifeline for people whose lives have been upended and disrupted, whose jobs have evaporated because trade agreements and international markets are driving their employers into decline. I saw the impact of TAA in Shelton when the Simpson plant, literally next door to the OPP plant, closed last year. That year, I attended a job fair at the beautiful new transit center and approached a table of seven men who were poring over multiple forms and brochures. Turns out, they were planning on what to do with their TAA help. Six of the seven expressed genuine excitement about their futures. I left deeply moved and inspired on that day more than a year ago.

But this summer, when I got the TAA announcement for the OPP mill, I dove deeper into the facts on TAA and the results were depressing.

It turns out, that TAA is pathetically inadequate in the face of the need. Not every mill or plant or shop closure gets approved for TAA, and the cash benefits are small. There was a study this year on losses due to trade in the 2000s. It found that in the typical town with a lot of businesses that compete with China, the average resident saw their wages decline by \$500 more than the typical resident of a town with few businesses that compete with China. And of that \$500 in lost wages, TAA on average replaced about \$2.

TAA is the prime federal program intended to help workers who lose their jobs because of foreign competition, but it's completely inadequate to the task.

TAA is supposed to shore up workers and their families while they find new work, but if TAA only replaces \$2 of every \$500 of lost wages, the shops and restaurants and community around the closed factory will start to crumble as soon as the factory does. And the town spirals downward.

This phenomenon spread across much of the United States in the 2000s. From 1965 to 2000, the U.S. had held steady at around 18 million manufacturing jobs, but from 2001 to 2007, the U.S. lost almost 3 million of those jobs, and almost 2.5 million of those laid off never found work again. The number of factories idled and closed, especially in the Midwest and the Carolinas, was tremendous, and thousands of towns were hollowed out and communities left to wither. New research shows that the cause of this manufacturing job collapse was trade — not even a free trade agreement, but just normalizing trade relations with China.

These job losses may be minor in the larger picture of an economy that employs 145 million people, but they're massive on the smaller scale of individual workers, their families, and the towns.

The other thing that happened recently to impact my decision was that I read a book called *Hillbilly Elegy*. It is a profoundly moving memoir that tells this tale, the tale of the hollowing of America's industrial heartland. It was written by JD Vance, who was raised in southern Ohio and a member of a family that lived in Middletown, Ohio, as it was being gutted by the flight of manufacturing and mining jobs overseas. The breadth and depth of devastation inflicted upon people and families and neighborhoods is heartbreaking and cannot be exaggerated.

Real people. Real families. Very real broken homes.

It's not just trade that has caused this though. The Appalachian towns in *Hillbilly Elegy* have been in economic decline for decades due to a variety of factors. Publishing of books, music and newspapers has been completely upended by the Internet. Great American companies like Kodak have seen their products completely disappear in a generation. Even a perfect TPP does nothing to deal with effects of the replacement of jobs by robotics and automation. These forces are not going to abate. If anything, they will only gain momentum. We'll see more pink slips across the country, and where these industries are concentrated, we'll see more towns hollowed out.

When I think about these families, I am reminded of my father.

Dad drove a truck his entire working career save time out to fight World War II. (Mostly, he guarded Italian prisoners of war, a fact he never let my first generation Italian-American wife forget). He made a good blue collar wage thanks to the Teamsters. Mom worked as well.

Together, they bought a home, raised four children, sent any of them to college who wanted to go, had paid vacations, adequate health care, a wooden boat in the garage, and a secure retirement.

And I wonder what will happen to the 1.8 million truck drivers we have now after self-driving vehicle software and technology is perfected in the decades ahead. Will there be a job for them? Do we not have some collective responsibility to help them transition to this brave new world? Or do we consign them to a permanent and significant reduction in standard of living?

And all this talking and thinking finally snapped my principles into a new perspective.

I like markets because they make people richer and happier.

I focus on environmental and labor safeguards in trade agreements because they make people healthier and safer.

I believe in my policy priorities because I care about people, and analyzing TPP should just be a question of how it affects people.

And so I have come to a conclusion:

I will not vote in support of TPP until I have more satisfactory answers to what have become my two paramount concerns.

First, to win my support, TPP or any trade agreement will also have to contain not just appropriate standards but the means and the will to ensure their enforcement. I will know that we have reached this point when U.S. success in challenging foreign trade practices results in industries returning to American towns. There are some early signs that the Obama Administration's aggressiveness is starting to produce these results, but it's too soon to say for sure. We need to see more. Frankly, the burden is on the trade negotiators to come up with a solution.

Second, I think it is time we took some of the gains from trade, globalization and technological advancement and used them to make investments both to grow our economy faster and construct a material effort to meaningfully help the workers whose jobs and families are being sacrificed and largely ignored.

Until my two concerns are met, I will not vote for TPP either in the lame duck session or later.

In fact, I think it is time to hit both the pause and the reset buttons on trade agreements and to truly rethink how we approach this.

Trade continues to be an important part of the U.S. economy, and trade will continue to aid in the success and growth of Washington State. But we must ensure these agreements are fair, and that the success and growth doesn't leave as much corollary damage in its wake.

This will be difficult but unlike some who oppose free trade agreements under any circumstance, I am confident that it can be done and moreover, that it should be done.

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