

DAPAC DISPATCH

Democratic Advancement Political Action Committee

Grassroots Activism for Progressive Democrats

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Get Ready for Disruptive Change

by Tom Cramer

The economy is headed toward a large upheaval before the next election. It is caused by a large decline in the price of oil. The large banks thinking the demand for oil would continue to rise forever have trillions of dollars of oil loans on their balance sheets that are soon to go bad. The value of these loans is five times the amount of housing loans that went bad during the last Great Recession around 2008. The banks are in denial, ignoring the large decline in demand. Developed nations are rapidly moving to renewables. The US is far behind but moving ahead. China is moving rapidly off fossil fuels. They are opening up one new hydroelectric plant a week and are expanding the use of solar and wind far more rapidly than we are.

With this disruption in the economy, many millions of middle and low-income people will lose their jobs putting their families at risk. We already have the worst income inequality since at least 1910 which was well documented by Thomas Piketty. Recent studies from the Pew Research Center demonstrate a complete vanishing of the middle-class in a few years. Also, economic inequality deepened after not being addressed during the aftermath of the Great Recession. This led to the middle-class putting in Donald Trump who is exploiting a fascist-leaning agenda.

We progressives have to be ready to act or the country will slip further to the hard right to real fascism. DAPAC is ready to recruit and educate a new generation of progressive young people to lead

the country. Please join us and we will emerge as a progressive value-based country. We progressives need your valuable support now.

Pennsylvania House Elections

by Chris Cramer

In 2010, Republicans used their control of both houses of the state legislature as well as the state supreme court to redraw Pennsylvania's congressional district map.

Republicans continued to win most House seats consistently despite the high number of Democrats being registered to vote. 18 Democrats sued in protest of the gerrymandered state and the lack of fairness of such a blatant stunt. Despite Republicans' best efforts, the US Supreme Court refused to stop new Congressional maps being redrawn in Pennsylvania.

But last year, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, with a new Democratic majority installed with the help of DAPAC, overturned the Republican map, and redrew lines in a fairer manner.

"Today's Supreme Court ruling was a victory for Pennsylvania voters who will now be able to cast ballots for congressional candidates in districts not unconstitutionally manipulated to make them uncompetitive," said Micah Sims, Common Cause Pennsylvania's executive director.

Trump may have won the state by a shoestring in 2016 in the state, but thanks to the

redistricting, it is now a more even playing field during the 2018 elections. A record four women - all Democrats - were elected to the US House from Pennsylvania.

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DAPAC BATTLE CRY: TAKE BACK OUR COURTS!

By Tom Wallace Lyons

Child molesters and ozone depleting environmental polluters have two things in common. Both seem to have little concern about the threat they pose to the future of the world's children. Both are, at least to some extent, held in check by the courts.

But polluters may soon catch a break courtesy a judiciary whose ideological toxicity could enable the fossil fuel industry to bestow upon tomorrow's children an unprecedented legacy of environmental degradation already manifest in the fires that have seared California. Even if *Roe vs. Wade* is not overturned, today's courts may allow legislative obstacles that effectively deny women the control of and arguably the ownership of their bodies.

Call it the Great Progressive Failure.

Most progressives have failed to realize the danger posed by the

nomination and confirmation of judges chosen for views likely to trend conservatively away from the constitutional rights of individuals and toward the interests of big business.

The latest judicial attack on our democracy comes from Judge Reed O'Connor who struck down the Affordable Care Act. Writing for *THE NEW YORK TIMES* about Judge O'Connor, Manny Fernandez states that O'Connor's "rulings illustrate the ways in which the federal and district courts have become *POLITICALLY WEAPONIZED* as Republicans and Democrats alike try to handpick judges they see as ideologically friendly to their cases." (italics mine)

But I believe Republicans are a lot more guilty than Democrats. They blocked Obama's nominations. There is the stolen Supreme Court seat that should have been filled by Merrick Garland. And Brett Kavanaugh makes it onto the Supreme Court even as a vast amount of information about him remains suppressed.

Our democracy is menaced on many fronts: There is the Electoral College, The gerrymander, voter suppression, demographics that favor conservatives, collusion, dark money. **And let's not forget Bush Vs. Gore.**

What do progressives have? We have Trump, who may be his own worst enemy because he is so obviously corrupt. **And we have EACH OTHER.**

Hopefully DAPAC can help drive a powerful backlash to wrest our courts away from the religious and conservative right. Hopefully it will be possible to secure a judicial selection process that will ensure the separation of powers envisioned by the founding fathers.

But how? We must fight to take back the Senate and win the presidency. This will put an abrupt halt to the damage Trump and his Republican cohorts have inflicted on our judiciary. If we become sufficiently powerful, we may have a way to further repair the damage to our judiciary. We might be able to create new seats on the federal courts and the Supreme Court. This controversial move would counteract the assault on our judiciary courtesy the nomination and confirmation of right wing life time judges, some of whom have not even rated bar association approval.

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Education -- Public vs Charter

by Brenna Dawkins

Is public education in danger? What kind of damage has our education system sustained under the hand of Betsy Devos? What ABOUT charter schools? Let's take a look...

Public schools are exactly that, funded by and for the public using funds allotted by the state. Public schools accept anyone. They don't discriminate. They don't charge a student to attend. They are standardized and most all are unionized or have associations. 24% of charter schools close due to mismanagement. Charter schools are often run by for profit organizations, are not unionized, and do not adhere to the standards set by the state but by that particular charter. Also the teachers in a charter school do not have to be certified as they do in public schools so you have to put your trust in whom the charter members choose to hire to teach your children. In addition, charter schools favor more affluent families who can afford to transport their children to successful charters.

Devos comes from a homeschooled background. She doesn't have much if any experience with the public school system and so therefore has no business deciding what is best for public schools. Everything she says and does somehow comes back to non-traditional schooling methods. There is only so much money allotted and if students are to get ahead the voucher system is NOT the way to do this. Funding for vouchers takes money away from public schools and places it in charter/private schools where parents must make up the difference. This erodes the quality of public schools.

Devos does not care for our students. She is looking to take money away from public schools as she is the champion of charter/private/homeschools. She is stripping away students civil rights protections. DeVos rescinded 72 guidance documents that protect students with disabilities not to mention the rights of LGBTQ students and persons of color.

Education is important in sustaining America and keeping our nation strong and viable. Devaluing education and turning it into a political pawn is a disservice to all Americans. We need to improve our education system by providing more funding, creating standardization that makes sense, and providing equal educational opportunities for all.

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Climate Change

by Brenna Dawkins

Whether you believe climate change is a hoax or not isn't stopping the science behind finding the truth.

Two Degrees is a pretty slim margin of error. But that's the given point of no return for global temperatures to rise and cause irreparable harm worldwide. There's no two sides as far as science is concerned. It either is a thing or isn't and so far science is proving the case for climate change. There is no denying the Dust Bowl in America had been exacerbated by human activities.

The fact remains that this period of 1901-2016 is the warmest in the history of modern civilization. There is no convincing alternate explanation for this fact. The last time the global atmospheric CO2 levels were this high was 3 million years ago! The last few years have seen record breaking extremes of weather events. The last 3 years have been the warmest ever! Long-term temperature observations are the best evidence we have of a warming planet.

Reduction in coal and fossil fuels will greatly slow the rapid shift to the point of no return. It was foolhardy and shortsighted of Trump to pull America out of the Paris Agreement. It is dangerous to dismiss the findings of the Climate Report simply because it doesn't align with your parties' ideologies or your 'gut' as Trump has often toted.

There has to be a world-wide effort to stem both the dangerous rise of climate change and the campaign of misinformation in trying to discredit something the naysayers clearly don't want to nor have any inclination to understanding. It's time to wake up to the fact that America is a part of rest of the world and must act accordingly. Shutting itself off from it's allies because it doesn't want to be bothered to make any drastic changes for the sake of everyone's betterment is only self-defeating.