

# DAPAC DISPATCH

## Democratic Advancement Political Action Committee

Grassroots Activism for Progressive Democrats  
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### New Candidates

#### Dan Cramer, TN-07

A retired US Army helicopter pilot, Dan is running for Congress because he believes it is time for Congress to work for the American people rather than obstructing the day to day work of governing.

#### Lawrence Gaughan, VA-05

Lawrence has been an actor, director, and producer for television, film, and stage. A member of the Screen Actors Guild since 1996, Lawrence will stand and fight for fairness for the people of central Virginia.

#### Dave Koller, FL-11

Dave has worked helping people with disabilities for over 25 years. Most recently he founded and ran Developmental Service Trainers, which trains the disabled to enable them to find work and participate in the community. He is bringing his career of public service to the next level by running for Congress.

#### Mark Schauer, MI-Governor

Mark has been on the front lines, working to save the struggling economy of Michigan. He managed a nonprofit agency helping seniors and children, and helped train unemployed workers. He then became a state legislator, and a congressman, fighting back against job outsourcing.

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### The Roberts Agenda: Stack the Deck for Republicans

When John Roberts was nominated for Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, he portrayed himself as an innocent legal scholar – indeed, he explicitly invited Senators to see him as guileless. He said, “I come... with no agenda. I have no platform. Judges are not politicians... I will confront every case with an open mind... it's my job to call balls and strikes and not to pitch or bat.”

However, after confirmation, he has steadily eroded the American system of fair elections. Each of several

decisions concerning election law has been decided. We here at DAPAC are not lawyers, but we are familiar with election law, and all of these decisions clearly overturn established legal precedent. All of the decisions benefit Republicans and disadvantage Democrats. Take a look at a sampling of recent decisions:

#### ***Crawford versus Marion County, 553 US 181 (2008)***

#### **Declares laws requiring voters to provide photographic identification constitutional**

It is not a coincidence that: 1) most voters lacking photo ID are Democrats (usually poor, elderly black people) and 2) every place that has enacted a requirement for photo ID to vote is controlled by Republicans. In fact, after passing a voter ID law in Pennsylvania, that state's Republican House Majority Leader claimed that it would “allow Governor Romney to win the state of Pennsylvania.”

#### ***Citizens United versus Federal Election Commission, 558 US 310 (2010)***

#### **Declares laws restricting independent expenditures unconstitutional**

We can now see the effect of this decision, where the Koch brothers alone have spent over \$1 billion on television ads attacking President Obama. Corporations have also plunged in with hundreds of millions of dollars, in an effort to implement a plutocracy here in the United States.

#### ***Shelby County versus Holder, 570 US \_ (2013)*** **Declares federal preclearance of voting laws in historically discriminatory jurisdictions unconstitutional**

Here, Roberts wrote that, despite the unambiguous grant of power to Congress under the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment, and the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act as recently as 2006, the formula determining which jurisdictions were discriminatory was too old. Immediately after the decision, every jurisdiction previously subject to preclearance enacted more restrictive voting laws. The result: fewer Democrats are allowed to vote.

**McCutcheon versus Federal Election Commission, 572 US \_ (2014)  
Declares aggregate individual campaign donation limits unconstitutional**

The vast majority of donors to federal campaigns were not even capable of hitting the aggregate limits. It will probably not surprise you to learn that the vast majority of donors who did hit this limit donate exclusively to Republicans.

Despite his claims to impartiality, he couldn't have been a more biased umpire if he tried. Given his record as Chief Justice, his assertions of impartiality were clearly baloney. He has steadily implemented a plan to erode voting rights and assist the finances of the Republican Party. The next Republican nominee will, no doubt, also claim to be impartial. We should treat such a claim with the skepticism it deserves.

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**The Backdoor Evisceration of Social Security**

An austerity mania has gripped Washington DC over the past several years. It has resulted in cuts to unemployment benefits, food stamps and Section 8, among other programs. But it fortunately hasn't resulted in any cuts to Social Security benefits. The unparalleled effectiveness and popularity of this retirement program has insulated it from cuts. Some even call it the "third rail" of American politics.

But the third rail is getting the power shut off. Despite overhead of less than 1%, conservatives have managed to cut the Social Security Administration budget drastically. The Social Security Administration is funded entirely by its own taxes, and it is not part of the general budget. The overhead vanishing is small – only 0.8%. Some of you may have noticed that the yearly statements are not mailed anymore – they were ended in 2011. Field offices have been closed and telephone support staff have been laid off. These cuts have had serious consequences, with many retirees encountering nothing but busy signals when they attempt to sort out problems with their benefits. And the disabled may have it even tougher – it now takes over a year to get a disability hearing.

What's worse is that the cuts have no legitimate purpose but to convince people that big government

does not work. This is the Republican goal – convince people that Social Security is not meeting people's needs and increase support for privatizing the fund. The only possible conclusion is that the real purpose of the budget cuts is to erode the public support of Social Security. Eventually, after it has been crippled by cuts to the administrative budget, it would be scrapped altogether and the Republican's plan to privatize Social Security would be put in place.

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**Open Seats Mean Opportunity for Progressives**

In this year's election for the US House of Representatives, there are an unprecedented 40 open seats. These are seats where the incumbent is not running for reelection, and they tend to provide the greatest chances of a switch in party control. Without an incumbent on the ballot, voters can't fall back on a choice they may have made in the past which they tend to do.

In this election, a large majority of open seats are held by Republicans, with 25 currently held by Republicans, and only 15 held by Democrats. This means that we have an opportunity this year to take back control, and break the Tea Party Republican logjam on progressive legislation in the House. This also means our candidates need to work to get their vote out; a daunting task in a mid-term election

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