

# **F**rancestown **D**emocratic **C**ommittee



*“Providing a forum for like minded residents to come together about issues important to them at the local, state, and national levels.”*

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# **FDC** **QUARTERLY**



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Editors: Heidi Dawidoff, Jim Bosman

## **FROM YOUR CONGRESSWOMAN**

Hello, Francestown Democrats!

Thank you for all you do to support and elect more strong Democrats in New Hampshire. It's wonderful to stand with you as we fight for our families and communities across the Granite State!

I'm committed to improving economic opportunity for all Granite Staters and every American. We know that too many of our friends and neighbors are being left behind in a system that's rigged to benefit the wealthiest and the largest corporations that can pay to get ahead. It's time we put hardworking, middle class Americans first, which is why we need to create jobs, bolster our community college system, and expand skills training options across our state.

We know we need to address the opioid epidemic so that we have the healthy, productive communities that our state deserves. I created the Bipartisan Heroin Task Force to advocate for policies to expand treatment and recovery services and help those struggling with the disease of addiction.

We need to care for our brave men and women in uniform who put everything on the line on our behalf. This is a deeply personal issue for me. My father served as a fighter pilot in WWII,

and he flew over the beaches of Normandy on D-Day before being shot down during the Battle of the Bulge. He spent the last six months of the war in a German POW Camp. If I can help one veteran overcome the wounds of war, seen and unseen, then my time has been well spent. The VA does tremendous work for our veterans but we must do more to enhance accountability, increase access, and improve care.

I'm fighting to:

- Grow our economy and create good, new jobs right here in the Granite State.
- Make sure our students can get the education they need to succeed without being crushed by debt.
- Ensure that women can make their own healthcare decisions.
- Preserve our environment and leave a healthy planet for our children and grandchildren.
- Change the culture of sexual violence that's far too common.
- Protect the progress made under the Affordable Care Act and improve our healthcare system so it works for everyone.

Republicans in Congress and Concord are not going to let up in their efforts to push policies that benefit the few instead of the many. And we can't let up either. It's easy to get discouraged - I know that firsthand. But we can't give up on this fight. Stay motivated, stay engaged, and stay active!

Onward,



Ann McLane Kuster

## LOOKING BACKWARD

President Theodore Roosevelt wrote: "Americans learn only from catastrophe, and not from experience." Sir Winston Churchill expressed a related idea: "The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you are likely to see." To learn from experience requires us to look backward, and that requires imagination.

The Great Depression of the 1920's and '30s certainly qualifies as a catastrophe. The response to the catastrophe was immediate and multi-faceted: Wall Streeters who had played fast and loose with other people's money went to prison; the Glass-Steagall Act divided commercial banks from investment banks to prevent future financial recklessness; wealthy citizens were taxed at the high rate they could afford; vast numbers of unemployed were helped through programs that put people to work; much of the work done close to a century ago stands as sturdy buildings, bridges, roads, national parks, beaches, and, of course, decorative murals still on the walls of some public buildings; young men and the country's over-farmed, dust-blown regions were saved by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

If we could learn from experience, if we could do what Americans are so reluctant to do – look backward, to study and learn from the past – we might have begun and sustained a speedy and efficient recovery from the Great Recession of this young century.

The economist Ben Friedman has written that favorable economic conditions dispose people to generosity, to acceptance of foreigners, to interest in people unlike them. Even when conditions are not yet strong but definitely improving, there is a national up-swing in generosity.

What we have experienced for several decades now is limited economic growth with severe stagnation of incomes affecting a large majority

of Americans with no increase in economic well-being except for the very wealthy at the top now taxed at lower rates than most people. Slow growth, tax breaks for the wealthy, stagnation, a steep drop in median family income – all have ushered in the widening inequality we all suffer from. Such conditions naturally, as Friedman has pointed out, infuriate those left behind, cause them to turn inward, arouse antipathy to foreigners, and prompt the desperate support of a candidate now president, who makes fantastical economic promises and stokes the fires of racism and xenophobia.

Where do we stand now? Is there any incentive anywhere to learn from past successful response to the problems we now face? Is the Congressional inertia, the seeming indifference to the problems of most constituents possibly connected to the fact that most people serving in Congress are themselves millionaires, removed from the financial struggles of their constituents? Is the Congressional willingness to rob people of the fairly decent health coverage they have under the ACA connected to the fact that all Congressional representatives' and all senators' excellent health care, which we tax payers pay for, wraps them in a safe, cozy cocoon?

FDR was a rich man. Teddy Kennedy was a rich man. Great wealth didn't keep them from sympathetic identification with the plight of the less fortunate or from coming up with good workable ideas. Both take imagination, and those two had it.

We must energetically contact our people in Congress and urge them to wake up, study their constituents' needs, and cultivate some imagination.

- Heidi Dawidoff

## ALEC

Fracestown Democrats: let me introduce you to ALEC. I'm not sure if you have already met!!! This is an organization that has deep support from various sources. Many corporations and elected officials are deeply involved – their pockets are deep.

ALEC stands for AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE EXCHANGE COUNCIL. It is a nationwide organization – officially begun in 1973 - which provides model legislation on a wide range of bills for state legislators and others who pay for the privilege. Bills that are important to the conservative agenda and that may be customized by your legislator to fit the needs of your state. You can look it up – just key in <https://www.alec.org/> in your browser and then click on Issues. You can peruse many of their top causes by scrolling through the Issues page. You can also click on a link that takes you to a listing of current and past members of ALEC and identifies their Board of Directors.

The 25-member board page shows NH Senator Gary Daniels (Senate District 11) as a current board member. The board is described as: "A dedicated team of state legislative leaders from across the country serves as the governing board of ALEC. They are among the vanguard for freedom who dedicate their time and resources to promote limited government, free markets and federalism."

I bring this up because I did not know about the ALEC organization until about 10 years ago. Before that I assumed that states all across the country magically had the same kinds of mean spirited legislation as we were seeing in New Hampshire.

An informed electorate is a powerful electorate. Even a handful of legislators under ALEC's thumb is too many. Read the list of members on the ALEC website; then look up the New Hampshire participants and let them know what you think of their partnership with this

organization that seeks to further the ALEC agenda over the needs of individuals.

- Carol R. Roberts, NH D4 Representative

## IDENTITY POLITICS

*"The most qualified candidate in a generation was defeated by the least qualified of all time." – Hadley Freeman*

*i-den-ti-ty poli-tics* - noun: a tendency for people of a particular religion, race, social background, etc., to form exclusive political alliances, moving away from traditional broad-based politics.

While it shocked the political pundits and pollsters, Americans elected a president who majorities say is unlikable, dishonest, unqualified, and has the wrong temperament.

It is very difficult to deny the last presidential election reflected a populist impulse that energized the less urban electorate in the United States. Buoyed by economic grievances, voters felt emboldened to criticize a weak immigration policy, globalization, and perceived liberal social trends. From Pennsylvania to the Dakotas, enough voters defected from their expected support of Hillary Clinton and gave Donald Trump an unanticipated Electoral College victory. Some pundits claim the Clinton campaign's focus on identity politics may have cost them the election.

**How 2012 Voters Voted in 2016 (whites only)**

	Clinton	Trump	Other	DNV
<b>Obama</b>	64%	13	3	19
<b>Romney</b>	3	78	4	15
<b>Other</b>	12	41	28	19
<b>DNV</b>	4	10	1	84

Source: Economist/YouGov Panel

The campaign failed to recognize that identity is not always a commitment to vote in a predictable manner. Often the criticism of Hillary Clinton was deflected with claims of sexism.

Fringe groups of white supremacists viewed a Trump administration as a partner in creating a country that preserved their version of white culture. Identity politics risks ignoring whole groups of people whose concerns seem silly or even offensive.

Sexism is not always a major factor when female candidates run for office. Many voters had other explanations. Most notably were the perceptions of being untrustworthy and inauthentic.

**The Gender Gap in 2016**

	Clinton	Trump
Black Women	90%	3
Black Men	83	13
Latino Women	70	23
Latino Men	62	26
White Women	42	51
White Men	31	60

Source: Economist/YouGov Panel

Donald Trump has taught his voters that the media loathes them, their values, their family, and their religion. His followers tend to believe only the things he tells them directly. Many Democrats failed to relate to people with mixed views, or they didn't think they had to. Relying on past Democratic followers, they neglected struggling rural and blue collar workers.

Political commentary has highlighted the divide between the college educated and those with no degrees. The Democratic Party has a problem with the white working class.

**Class Voting in 2016 (whites only)**

	Clinton	Trump
Men - High School	15%	80
Women - High School	26	69
Men - Some College	26	63
Women - Some College	37	53
Men - College Grad	35	55
Women - College Grad	46	49
Men - Postgrad	45	48
Women - Postgrad	58	36

Source: Economist/YouGov Panel

Crime, terrorism, poverty, a failing education system, racism, restricted access to healthcare, climate change, gender discrimination, border control, unemployment, and LGBTQ rights all need to be talked about. The challenge is to separate religion, race, class, and ethnic

background from discussions about what we think is best for America. It's hard not to take it personally when someone attacks your political views and labels you with everything else that makes up your identity. Your identity shapes your politics but they are not one and the same.

American voters have endless identities. It is up to the Democratic Party to amass a winning coalition of voters by promising to deliver progress on the issues most electors identify with. We should be asking, "*How* do we make America great?" There is much to be done: green energy jobs, climate change, universal health care, criminal justice reform, fair trade, affordable college, gun safety, Wall Street reforms, and campaign finance reform, to name a few. All politics are identity politics. Embrace them.

- Jim Bosman



*"These smug pilots have lost touch with regular passengers like us.  
Who thinks I should fly the plane?"*



## NH DEMS ANNUAL MEETING

Before the speakers had their turn on stage, Mike Rollo, chairman of the Rules Committee, introduced the recommended amendment to the constitution, which read as follows: adding gender identity; increased transparency; shared authority; checks and balances; consistency throughout the constitution. The amendment was adopted by a voice-vote majority.

Although speakers variously referred to “an atmosphere of terror” in Washington and the “incredible adversity” our representatives there are up against, it was Ray Buckley who pointed out that we are served by the “Fearsome Foursome.” Indeed, every speaker emphasized New Hampshire Democrats’ energy and effectiveness; all spoke stirring of our power to resist the evils of suppression, bigotry, and violence and strive for the fair, progressive government we stand for.

As usual, Jeanne Shaheen had the whole joint jumpin’ with her enthusiasm for the progressive ideals we stand for and she tirelessly supports. She has signed on to Medicare for All, stands up against bigotry and violence, and fights for veterans and reproductive rights all over the world. A seasoned politician, she understands the broad reach of an American senator’s field of action.

All speakers who followed - notably Annie Kuster, Maura Healey, Jason Kandor, Andru Volinsky, and Steve Marchand - were equally impassioned as was the welcoming, loudly approving crowd of delegates and their guests.

*“Donald Trump is a symptom,  
and our job is to cure the  
disease.” - Maura Healey*

The implicit message from all speakers was this: we can overcome Trump; our values may be under attack, but we are prepared to get out boldly and let everyone know what Democrats

stand for. Maura Healey asserted: “Donald Trump is a symptom, and our job is to cure the disease.” Jason Kandor, head of Let America Vote, an organization he has taken nation-wide from his home state of Missouri, told us that New Hampshire is now ground zero in the fight against voter suppression: “It’s un-American to try to stop folks from voting.” Annie Kuster has joined the fight for universal health coverage, and, smiling broadly, obviously in high spirits, told us to stand with immigrants and unions, fight against the fraudulent Voter Fraud Commission, and support her in her valiant efforts to resolve the opioid crisis. Andru Volinsky, a champion of the poor, who suffer from the inadequacies of the miserly food-stamp program that has 13% of our children insecure about the availability of daily meals, said, “Food in America is a basic right!” And Steve Marchand, gubernatorial candidate, urged us to be clear about Democratic values and not to “blur the differences between parties.”

It was a joyful, inspiring convention led by all the speakers, people full of clarity and conviction, who let us know that we have the power to speak out and get out the vote. If all those speakers, deeply committed to the political fray, are working enthusiastically for us, we should never hesitate to work with them to fight the fights of today and also to fight the same fights we thought we had fought and won already. We heard a rousing call to action. There’s no doubt how we must respond.

- Heidi Dawidoff

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**2017 Membership Dues -**

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