

Tuscola County Democratic Party Newsletter

December 2025

Volume 4, Issue 12

Our Goals

- Ensure honest and transparent government.
- Restore and protect our environment.
- Support strong economic growth and opportunity.
- Strengthen voter access and turnout.
- Promote affordable education and health care for all.

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There will be no meeting of the Tuscola County Democratic Party in December.

Highlights of Our November Meeting

Chair Deb Parker called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. on November 20th, at the Brentwood. Nineteen members and two guests were in attendance. Our guest speaker was Mark Totten, Democratic candidate for Attorney General of Michigan, who told us about his background, qualifications, and goals if elected to office. Treasurer Lisa Bertsch announced that we collected enough money at our recent Fall Fundraiser to fully fund two David Sierocki Memorial Scholarships in 2026. Mark Putnam told us about writing the new bylaws for the 9th Congressional District Democratic Party. Sharon Schwab reflected on our recent "No Kings" protest and Fall Fundraiser and reviewed plans for next year's road cleanup and picnic. April Osentoski told us about the recent Senior Caucus meeting in Tawas. A motion to gather and distribute food for needy families in Tuscola County was made, seconded and approved unanimously by voice vote. Vicki Leland volunteered to lead the effort. A motion to cancel our December meeting was made, seconded, and approved unanimously by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Trump Quotes

Nothing tells us more about Trump than the words that have come out of his own mouth:

About himself - "I went from VERY successful businessman to top TV Star to President of the United States (on my first try). I think that would qualify as not smart, but genius ... and a very stable genius at that!"

About the Gulf of Mexico - "We're going to be changing the name of the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of America, which has a beautiful ring to it. What a beautiful name."

About Canada – "Frankly, Canada should be the 51st state, they really should."

About Greenland - "We need Greenland very badly. Greenland has a very small amount of people, which we'll take care of, and we'll cherish them, and all of that."

About Gaza - "The US will take over the Gaza Strip possibly with the assistance of American troops, and the Palestinians living there should leave in order to redevelop Gaza into the Riviera of the Middle East."

About Jeffrey Epstein - "I've known Jeff for 15 years. Terrific guy. He's a lot of fun to be with. It is even said that he likes beautiful women as much as I do, and many of them are on the younger side."

About Project 2025 - "I have nothing to do with Project 2025. I haven't read it. I don't want to read it, purposely. I'm not going to read it."

About undocumented immigrants – "Look, we are getting some very bad people, killers, murderers, drug dealers, really bad people, the mentally ill, the mentally insane, they emptied out insane asylums into our country."

About clean energy - "You wanna see a bird cemetery? Go under a windmill sometime. It's the saddest – you've got every type of bird."

About the murder of Jamal Khashoggi - "Things happen."

About protesters – "Can't you just shoot them? Just shoot them in the legs or something?"

About political terrorists - "The other thing with the terrorists is you have to take out their families, when you get these terrorists, you have to take out their families."

About Democrats - "We have to take care of this little gnat that's on our shoulder called the Democrats."

About American cities run by Democrats – "Chicago, Baltimore, and Portland are third-world hellholes. I told Pete we should use some of these dangerous cities as training grounds for our military National Guard."

About lawmakers who reminded service members they must refuse unlawful orders – "HANG THEM!!"

What's Trump Been Up to Lately?

As Trump's popularity continues to drop, his mental acuity continues to slip, and the MAGA coalition shows signs of cracking; there's a feeling that Trump and his people are becoming unhinged.

- On November 20th, Trump's friend Steve Witkoff and his son-in-law Jared Kushner came back from a meeting in Moscow with a peace plan that gave Russia everything it wanted—including giving Crimea and most of four oblasts to Russia while forbidding Ukraine to join the NATO and limiting the size of its military—and gave Ukraine virtually nothing. As it turned out, the plan was drafted by the Russians and neither the Ukrainians nor the Europeans had been consulted.
- On November 26th, the FBI opened an investigation into the six lawmakers who made a video that reminded service members they must not obey unlawful orders. Trump's people asserted that Trump has never given an unlawful order, so the lawmaker's video in effect encouraged service members to disregard lawful orders and thus was "sedition," punishable by death.
- On November 27th, an Afghan national shot two members of the West Virginia National Guard less than half a mile from the White House. Trump's immediate response was to bar all Afghans from entering the country, halt the asylum process for all migrants in the US, and begin reexamining the green cards of everyone from a third world country.
- On November 29th, the *Washington Post* reported that prior to a September 2nd attack on a boat supposedly carrying drugs off the coast of Venezuela, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth issued an order "to kill everybody." A missile shattered the boat and set it afire. Afterward, two survivors were spotted clinging to the wreckage. Pursuant to Hegseth's directive, Admiral Mitch Bradley ordered a second strike, which blew the two men apart in the water. The consensus among international law experts is that we are not at war with drug traffickers, despite Trump's claim, and even if we were, an order to kill defenseless survivors clinging to smoldering wreckage would be a war crime.
- On November 29th, Trump, who calls himself a relentless foe of drug runners, granted a full pardon for Juan Orlando Hernández, former president of Honduras, who was found guilty last year by an American jury of orchestrating a drug trafficking scheme that flooded the US with more than 400 tons of cocaine.
- ICE has been arresting thousands of people in raids, at checkpoints, at courthouses, at airports, at green card interviews, and outside workplaces and schools. According to a spokeswoman for the Department of Homeland Security, "DHS is targeting the worst of the worst criminal illegal aliens, including murderers, rapists, gang members, pedophiles and terrorists." On December 4th, the *New York Times* reported that, in fact, fewer than five percent of those arrested had ever been convicted of a violent crime, and fewer than thirty percent had ever been convicted of any crime.

What's Going on at DHS?

In 2001, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was created by Congress in response to the September 11th attacks. The department has multiple missions. In addition to enforcing immigration laws, it is responsible for protecting the president, preventing terrorism, securing our borders, sea rescue, safeguarding roads, airports, and cyberspace, responding to natural and man-made disasters, and training law enforcement personnel.

A recent *New York Times* investigation has found that Trump's people have shifted thousands of DHS employees from their normal duties to work on immigration enforcement, turning the agency into what some are calling the "Department of Deportation." Reassigned DHS employees are now spending much of their time looking up the addresses of undocumented immigrants, compiling lists of student protesters, driving detainees to lockups, and making arrests at traffic stops, big-box store parking lots, and immigration courts.


The pressure to deport more people began almost as soon as Trump took office. When deportation numbers failed to meet Trump's targets, Kristi Noem, Secretary of Homeland Security, and Stephen Miller, chief architect of Trump's deportation program, warned DHS employees that no job at the department would be safe if deportations didn't pick up.

There have been consequences:

- DHS agents investigating sexual crimes against children have been shifted to the immigrant crackdown for weeks at a time, hampering their pursuit of child predators.
- A DHS probe into the black market for Iranian oil sold to finance terrorism has been slowed down for months because of the shift to immigration work, allowing tanker ships and money to disappear.
- DHS experts who distribute intelligence reports about terrorism, active shooter incidents, and other threats have had to focus more on immigration enforcement, so they are now sending out far fewer intelligence briefings to government officials and local law enforcement authorities.
- The Coast Guard is diverting aircraft normally used for drug interdiction and search-and-rescue to the transport of immigrants between detention centers.
- DHS efforts to combat human smuggling and sex trafficking have been sidelined after investigators were reassigned to deportation efforts.
- To make room for the thousands of new deportation officers being hired by ICE, the DHS law enforcement training academy has had to suspend many of its training programs, including those of the Secret Service, the Army Criminal Investigative Division, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, and the Energy Department's Office of Secure Transportation, which is responsible for safely moving nuclear weapons.

About This Newsletter

This newsletter is published monthly. It is sent by email to members of the Tuscola County Democratic Party and is posted on our website, <https://www.tuscoladems.com>. Members are encouraged to submit articles for the newsletter. Please limit your submissions to 800 words or less and email them by the first of the month to Chuck Stockwell at cwstockwell@gmail.com



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