

Tuscola County Democratic Party Newsletter

April, 2023

Volume 2, Issue 4

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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Notice of Our April Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Tuscola County Democratic Party will be held on **Thursday, April 20th, 2023**. The meeting will be held at the Brentwood, 178 Park Drive, Caro, MI. Social hour will begin at 5:30 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m.

We hope you will join us.

Highlights of Our March Meeting

Vice-chair Alex Kirsch called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. on March 16th. Sixteen members were in attendance. Alex reported on a strategy meeting held on February 11th, announced a liaison between Tuscola Dems and Voters Not Politicians, and gave us a rundown of current events. Sharon Schwab reported on a Tuscola Dems community service project to make Easter bags for residents of the Tuscola County Medical Care Community and asked for volunteers to help prepare the bags. Vicki Leland reported on the Caro Area District Library's monthly board meeting on March 13th to vote on whether or not to remove a controversial book from the shelf. She told us that the meeting was attended by over 120 Tuscola County residents, many of whom presented heated arguments for and against removing the book, and that after the meeting, the library board voted unanimously to keep the book on the shelf. Mona DeQuis reported on a similar meeting at the Lapeer District Library on March 16th and told us that their board also voted to keep the book on the shelf. Mona presented a slide show on how to implement the Michigan Democratic Party's Project 83, which seeks to encourage Democrats to organize in their local communities, recruit and train volunteers, and elect Democrats to local offices. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Happy Easter!

On April 4th, Tuscola Dems delivered Easter bags to residents of the Tuscola County Medical Care Facility. Here we are—Deb Parker, Sharon Schwab, Mona DeQuis, Sherene McCloy, Lisa Bertsch, and the Easter Bunny!



What is the Role of the Federal Government?

Democrats and Republicans have fundamentally different views regarding the role of the federal government in our lives.

The Founding Fathers wrote the Articles of Confederation in 1781 to establish and preserve the independence and sovereignty of the states, but it quickly became apparent that they went too far. The central government commanded little respect and no support from state governments who were anxious to maintain their power. It couldn't raise funds, regulate trade, or conduct foreign policy without the voluntary agreement of the states. To address these problems, the Founding Fathers met again in Philadelphia in 1787 and drafted the United States Constitution, which established a stronger federal government. After ratification by the individual states, the Constitution went into effect in 1789 and has served as the basis of the federal government ever since. Two years later, the Founding Fathers amended the Constitution with the Bill of Rights—ten amendments that restricted what the federal government could do. It could not force people to practice a certain religion, restrict what newspapers wrote or people said, stop people from congregating peacefully, and so on.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, it seemed clear that the federal government had allowed a small minority to take over the country by monopolizing the country's wealth. So, under Presidents Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Johnson, and Ulysses S. Grant, Americans expanded our understanding of what the federal government should do. Believing it must guarantee all men equal rights before the law and equal access to resources, they added to the Constitution the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery, the Fourteenth Amendment, which granted citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States, including formerly enslaved people, and provided all citizens with equal protection under the law, and the Fifteenth Amendment, which guaranteed African-American men the right to vote. (Women were not granted the right to vote until the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.)

Around the turn of the twentieth century, Americans expanded the role of the federal government yet again. It seemed the government must rein in robber barons and other greedy industrialists by regulating the ways in which they did business. The Sherman Antitrust Act was passed by Congress in 1890 to promote competition within the economy by prohibiting companies from colluding or merging to form a monopoly. The Pure Food and Drug Act was passed in 1906, the first of a series of consumer protection laws to ban adulterated or mislabeled food and drugs.

In the 1930s, Americans expanded the role of the federal government once again. Previously the responsibility for social welfare matters was left to individual states, but state governments proved reluctant to undertake costly social welfare programs. In 1935, Democrats under President Roosevelt began to use the federal government to provide a basic social safety net. President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act into law. In 1938, Congress passed the Fair Labor Standards Act, which created the right to a minimum wage, "time-and-a-half" overtime pay when people work over forty hours a week, banned the employment of children under the age

of fourteen, and prohibited those between ages fourteen and eighteen from working in dangerous jobs.

In the 1960s, Americans expanded the role of the federal government once again. In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed both the Medicare and Medicaid Act, which provided federal health insurance for the elderly and those with limited income, and the Voting Rights Act, which prohibited racial discrimination in voting.

Now we are seeing another expansion of the federal government. On March 19th, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan into law, putting \$1.9 trillion behind economic stimulus and relief proposals. On November 15th of the same year, he signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Law, putting \$1.2 trillion into so-called hard infrastructure projects: roads and bridges and broadband. On August 9th, 2022, he signed the CHIPS and Science Act, putting about \$280 billion in new funding behind scientific research and the manufacturing of semiconductors. And days later, on August 16, he signed the Inflation Reduction Act, putting billions behind addressing climate change and energy security while also raising money to pay for new policies and to reduce the deficit by raising taxes on corporations and the wealthy, funding the Internal Revenue Service to stop cheating, and permitting Medicare to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies over drug prices. In 2022, President Biden also announced that the Department of Education will cancel up to \$20,000 of student debt for Pell Grant recipients with loans held by the federal government and up to \$10,000 for other borrowers.

Expansion of the federal government's role in our lives has been fought tooth and nail by wealthy and privileged Americans, who have always preferred small government and free markets. It's no different today. Kevin McCarthy and conservative Republicans, who now control the U.S. House of Representatives, are refusing to raise the debt ceiling unless they get spending cuts in the 2023 budget. They haven't said specifically what cuts they want, but the newly appointed Republican Chair of the House Budget Committee, Jodey Arlington of Texas, has proposed cuts of more than \$1 trillion in domestic discretionary spending. The biggest single cut would be \$404 billion from Biden's proposed relief of student loan debt. Another \$381 billion would come from rescinding \$100 billion in pandemic relief funds that are in the pipeline to the states but not yet expended, combined with the elimination of \$281 billion in so-called "improper payments." Arlington also proposes to cut at least \$135 billion in social benefits for the most vulnerable Americans. Undocumented immigrants would be cut off from the Child Tax Credit by requiring Social Security numbers. Workers who qualify for Obamacare subsidies would see those capped. Workers receiving food stamps (SNAP) would be required to provide income verification and submit to work requirements. Those who receive Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) would also face work requirements. Another \$100 billion would be cut from environmental programs, including \$87 billion from spending authorized by last year's Inflation Reduction Act and another \$13 billion for the purchase of electric or low-emission buses, garbage trucks and postal vehicles, as well as reduced spending on "greenways" and trails. Republicans say that cuts to Social Security and Medicare are off the table this time, but let's not forget that in the past they have tried to make cuts to Social Security and Medicare every time they thought there might be a window of opportunity.

Protest Rally

Our representative, Lisa McClain, actively supports the scheme cooked up by Kevin McCarthy and right-wing House Republicans, who are refusing to raise the debt ceiling unless they get the spending cuts they want in the 2023 budget. Tuscola Dems will be attending a protest rally at Lisa McClain's office, located at 30 N. Broadway Street in Lake Orion, at 5:00 p.m. on April 19th. We want to remind her that her job is to work for the benefit of her constituents, not play partisan political games. We invite you to join us. For information about carpooling and other matters related to the rally, please give Deb Parker a call at (989) 673-6569.

Letter from Governor Witmer



Dear Michigander,

Earlier this month, I signed a bipartisan supplemental bill to power economic development, improve retention and recruitment in the health care workforce, lower the cost of energy efficient home repairs, and more. There are several other investments that will make a real difference in people's lives, and I am proud that we are continuing to get things done and build a brighter future for Michigan.

The supplemental bill includes funding for local infrastructure improvements that will help bring home thousands of manufacturing jobs, hospital recruitment and retention efforts to grow our health care workforce, community and neighborhood grants for communities across the state to improve quality of life, home energy rebates to lower costs of appliances and home repairs, funding to build more affordable housing, and so much more. I am proud of the legislators from both sides of the aisle who came together to make an investment in Michigan's economy, health, and families.

We are also making moves to pursue our goal of becoming 100% carbon neutral by 2050 with the MI Healthy Climate Plan. Earlier this month, the Michigan Infrastructure Office announced \$200 million in tax credits to bring home more of the clean energy supply chain, ensuring that we build more solar panels, wind turbines, and more right here in Michigan. These tax credits, which were part of my budget proposal, will support good-paying jobs while also backing clean energy infrastructure projects. This effort is bolstered by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act, which allows companies to bring clean energy supply chains back to America, shoring up our energy independence while growing our economy. Let's make sure Michigan leads the charge.

In 2022, we launched the MI Healthy Climate Plan, which has already made impactful investments:

- Billions in new investments to bring the supply chain of electric vehicles, chips, and batteries home to Michigan.
- Bipartisan budgets investing millions in climate resilient infrastructure and clean energy upgrades for state facilities, families, and small businesses.
- More than \$45 million to build up Michigan's electric vehicle charging infrastructure network and \$17 million to transition buses and heavy-duty vehicles to clean fuels and electrification.
- Millions in Michigan's Green Bank, Michigan Saves, to help families and small businesses finance clean energy, efficiency, and lead abatement programs.

I am focused on growing Michigan's economy by creating good-paying manufacturing jobs and bringing home supply chains of cars, chips, and clean energy to ensure every community can thrive. Let's keep moving Michigan forward!

Sincerely,



Gretchen Whitmer
Governor

Make
Tuscola County
a better place
to live.



*Paid for with regulated funds
by the Tuscola County Democratic Party
P.O. Box 605, Caro, MI 48723*

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