

Tuscola County Democratic Party Newsletter

February 2025

Volume 4, Issue 2

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 February Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Tuscola County Democratic Party will be held on **Thursday, February 20, 2025**, 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 January Meeting

Chair Deb Parker called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. on January 16, 2025, at the Brentwood. Seventeen members were in attendance. Alex Krisch gave us a rundown of current events, including the confirmation hearings for Trump's cabinet nominees, the Israel-Hamas ceasefire, the California wildfires, and President Biden's farewell address. Lynn Adams told us about the Line 5 court case. Bob DeCoe talked about ways to get the Democrat's message out to Tuscola County voters, the candidates for chair of the Michigan Democratic Party, and the plans for Tuscola Dems to drive down to Detroit and attend the 2025 Spring Convention of the Michigan Democratic Party. Sherene McCloy gave us a rundown of the activities of the Party Building Committee, including plans to send out letters to inactive members. The meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.

Tuscola Dems Welcome Your Donations



To donate, simply aim the camera on your smart phone at the QR image shown here, and it will take you directly to ActBlue, where you can donate whatever amount you wish.

Thank you!

Michigan Democratic State Convention

The 2025 Spring State Convention of the Michigan Democratic Party will be held at the Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center on Saturday, February 22, 2025.

After nearly six years as chair, Lavora Barnes is stepping down and a new chair will be chosen. So far, the candidates are former state senator Curtis Hertel, a former state senator who recently lost his bid for the US House and Al “BJ” Williams, a long-time Detroit community activist. Both candidates have said that the party needs to be rebuilt from the ground up, with more focus on grassroots supporters and less on the top-down approach, which they say was the major reason for the disappointing election results last November when Democrats lost their state House majority and failed to deliver Michigan for Vice President Harris.

Mark Ludwig, former Chair of the Rural Caucus, was also a candidate for MDP Chair, but withdrew his candidacy for that position and is now a candidate for Second Vice Chair.

Many Tuscola Dems have already signed up to drive down to Detroit and attend the Michigan Democratic Party State Spring Convention. If you haven't yet done so, you may still sign up to attend and vote for your candidate without any charge, although you must have been a member of the Michigan Democratic Party for at least 30 days. Call Bob DeCoe at (989) 551-5432 if you need a ride.

New Leadership at the Rural Caucus


The Rural Caucus is a group chartered by the Michigan Democratic Party in 2017 to address the needs of rural Michiganders.










As it turns out, all candidates for leadership of the Rural Caucus were unopposed and elected by acclamation at the January 13 meeting. Joe Gutowski, formerly Vice Chair of the Rural Caucus for District 13, was elected as Chair, Jaime Brants, current Rural Caucus Vice Chair was reelected, Amanda Siggins of Wexford County was elected as Secretary, and Peggy Raddatz of Mason County was elected as Treasurer.









Trump's Score Card








Trump promised to make sweeping changes immediately upon returning to the White House. On the first day of his second term, he signed a blizzard of executive orders and since then has taken many more actions.






Here's a rundown of what Trump has done — and what he hasn't done — so far.

-  **Deport undocumented immigrants.** On the first day of his second term as president, Trump declared a national emergency at the US-Mexico border and vowed to use local, state, and federal resources — including the military — to launch “the largest domestic deportation operation in American history.” If Trump makes good on his promise, it will cost the US government billions of dollars and disrupt American farming, homebuilding, health care, and hospitality industries. So far, though, nothing much has happened. Deportation numbers are about the same as they were before he took office.

-  **Ban entry into the US for people coming from “terror-plagued” countries.** This policy, which Trump implemented in his first term, banned people from majority-Muslim countries from traveling to the United States. President Biden reversed the ban. Trump pledged to bring it back, but so far, has not issued a new ban.
-  **End birthright citizenship.** On his first day of his second term, Trump issued an executive order that ended birthright citizenship for the children of undocumented immigrants and foreigners with temporary visas. A federal judge has permanently blocked Trump’s order on the grounds that it violates the citizenship clause of the 14th Amendment.
-  **Withhold federal funds from “sanctuary cities.”** On his first day of his second term, Trump signed an executive order that instructed agencies to withhold access to federal funds from “sanctuary cities,” that is, cities that refuse to take part in the deportation of undocumented immigrants. San Francisco and other cities have sued to block the order.
-  **Finish the border wall.** During his first term, Trump pledged to build the wall between the US and Mexico, but didn’t finish it. On the first day of his second term, he directed the departments of Homeland Security and Defense to complete construction of the wall. We’ll see how that goes.
-  **Conduct military strikes against Mexican drug cartels.** Trump has proposed using the military to “wage war” on cartels and suggested he would conduct strikes in Mexico if they don’t “straighten it out really fast.” Deploying armed forces to Mexico without its consent would be a violation of international law. Trump hasn’t ordered any strikes yet.
-  **Reduce crime in the US.** Trump has called for federal action to reduce crime, such as building a task force to dismantle gangs and criminal networks and instituting a 10-year mandatory minimum sentence for anyone guilty of human smuggling and the death penalty for drug dealers and anyone guilty of child or woman sex trafficking. Trump cannot change federal sentencing on his own, but he can ask the Justice Department to direct federal prosecutors to pursue the death penalty when allowed under existing law.
-  **Impose 25 percent tariffs on imports from Canada and Mexico.** Trump imposed 25 percent tariffs on goods imported from Canada and Mexico but backed off after the leaders of both countries agreed to send more troops and choppers to their borders (which they were already doing). It looks as though a North American trade war has been avoided – for now.
-  **Impose other tariffs on imports.** Trump has imposed another 10 percent tariff on all Chinese products. China swiftly retaliated with a 15 percent tariff on American liquefied natural gas, a 10 percent tariff on coal, farm machinery, and automobiles, and an embargo on critical minerals used to make high-tech products. Trump has also ordered a 25 percent tariff on all steel and aluminum entering the US, beginning next month.
-  **Lower consumer prices.** Trump began backing off this promise even before he won reelection. On his first day in office, he signed an executive order that directed heads of federal agencies to “deliver emergency price relief.” So far, prices haven’t gone down.

-  **Cap credit card interest rates at 10 percent.** Trump says he can do this, but did not say how. Similar proposals to limit credit card fees and interest rates have stalled in Congress and new efforts to address this issue by the federal government would most likely face legal challenges from banking and business groups.
-  **Make home ownership more affordable.** Trump says he will open up tracts of federal land for housing construction. The problem is that almost all the most expensive and onerous regulations are imposed by state and local governments and outside the federal government's control.
-  **Cut taxes.** During the campaign, Trump vowed to cut taxes by more than \$7 trillion over 10 years even though doing so would add substantially to the national debt and risks fueling inflation. He also said he would eliminate federal taxes on tips, overtime, and Social Security, expand R&D tax credits, and reduce the corporate tax rate from 21 percent to 15 percent for companies that make their product in America. We'll see.
-  **Close the Department of Education.** Any effort to disband the Department of Education would have to go through Congress. Experts in both parties say legislation to shut down the department would require a supermajority in the Senate, which is unlikely.
-  **Cut federal funding to public schools.** Trump has promised to cut federal funding to schools that promote "critical race theory" or "radical gender ideology," including schools that offer support to transgender students or teach about racism. He has also suggested cutting funding to and revoking accreditation from universities deemed by his administration to be tolerating "antisemitic propaganda." He has also promised to fire government accreditors and hire replacements who will require that schools promote conservative values before receiving federal funds. While the Education Department can initiate investigations into schools over their curriculum, withdrawing funding on a case-by-case basis would be difficult in practice and subject to legal challenges.
-  **Fund school vouchers.** Trump promised to back school-choice programs, which provide taxpayer funds to parents to pay for private school. His allies are hoping to include a federal tax credit that would support state voucher programs in a tax package expected to move through Congress this year. We'll see what happens.
-  **Roll back environmental regulations.** Trump signed several executive orders on energy policy on his first day in office. He instructed agencies to review dozens of Biden's environmental policies and, if possible, quickly reverse them — including those that could speed the transition to electric vehicles. He promises to eliminate \$7,500 tax credits and other incentives for electric vehicle buyers. He has announced he will close the Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights and place its employees on administrative leave.
-  **Expand oil and gas production.** In his order declaring a national energy emergency, Trump called for "unleashing" domestic fossil fuel production, expanding oil and gas drilling on federal lands and waters, resuming the approval of new liquefied natural gas exports, and removing regulations for oil, natural gas, and coal production.

-  **Lower health care and prescription drug costs.** He has said that the government will pay for or mandate that insurance companies pay for all costs associated with IVF treatment, but health care experts say that fulfilling this pledge would be an uphill battle because IVF is expensive. Also, after initially threatening to overturn ACA, Trump signaled willingness to make marginal changes instead. Trump has not given any specifics of his plan to lower prescription drug costs.
-  **Protect Medicare and Medicaid.** Trump has pledged not to cut either program, though he has promised his administration will cut what he describes as “waste” within the agency that oversees Medicare and Medicaid. He is also considering significant changes to Medicaid.
-  **Change voting requirements.** Trump wants to require identification and proof of citizenship for voting. He also wants to conduct elections exclusively with same-day voting, eliminating absentee and mail-in voting, early voting and electronic voting kiosks — though at times during the campaign, he has promoted mail-in voting. He often pledged to “secure” American elections, using that phrase to set up doubt about the nation’s election systems, which he had falsely told supporters were rigged when he lost in 2020. He hasn’t said anything about elections being rigged since he won in 2024.
-  **Pull the US out of the World Health Organization and Paris climate agreement.** Trump said the United States would leave WHO and withdraw from the Paris climate agreement.
-  **Retaliate against political enemies.** Trump has said he will seek retribution against those he perceives as his enemies. He has also said he will sue newspapers and media outlets and support any indictments of the prosecutors who charged him with crimes. Trump also suggested using the National Guard or the military against American citizens, saying the United States was under threat from “the enemy from within,” including “radical left lunatics.” Trump signed an executive order that he said will end the “weaponization” of the federal government that he has claimed unfairly targeted him for years. He revoked security clearances for former aide John Bolton and former intelligence officials who he said downplayed the significance of Hunter Biden’s laptop as “a Russian information operation” in the 2020 presidential election.
-  **Create a government efficiency commission.** Trump announced creation of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), to be led by billionaire Elon Musk. He has given the young aides who work for Musk access to the Treasury Department’s computer system (which pays Social Security and Medicare benefits, federal employee’s wages, and payments to government contractors and grant recipients and contains personal information, including Social Security and bank account numbers). A federal judge has restricted access by Musk and his young aides, at least temporarily.
-  **Delay the TikTok ban.** On the first day of his second term, Trump ordered the Justice Department not to enforce the ban on TikTok for 75 days.

-  **Reshape the federal government.** Trump has issued a flurry of executive orders targeting the federal workforce. These orders include implementing a hiring freeze, converting tens of thousands of career civil servants to “at-will” employees who can be fired any time and replaced with Trump loyalists, requiring federal workers to return to full-time in-person work, eliminating government and military DEI programs, offering buy-outs to more than 2 million federal workers, firing 17 inspectors general (who are independent watchdogs whose job is to blow the whistle when they find waste, fraud, abuse, or other unlawful conduct in government agencies), firing federal prosecutors involved in the cases against Trump or the January 6 rioters, ordering a blanket temporary freeze up to \$3 trillion in domestic spending, and dismantling the USAID agency (which buys about \$2 billion in agricultural products each year from US farmers). Nearly all of Trump’s moves have been blocked by the courts, at least temporarily. New lawsuits and court rulings are emerging every day.
-  **Pardon January 6 defendants.** On his first day of his second term, Trump granted full, complete, and unconditional pardons to everyone in the mob that attacked the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, including those who went looking for Mike Pence and attacked police with baseball bats, two-by-fours, and bear spray.
-  **Reevaluate America’s role in NATO.** Under the law, presidents cannot pull the US out of NATO without congressional approval. Trump could thumb his nose at the law or he could simply scale back America’s role in NATO. He has suggested that he might oppose sending U.S. troops to defend NATO allies if he feels they haven’t spent enough for their own defense.
-  **End the war in Ukraine.** On the debate stage, Mr. Trump promised he would have the war settled before he even took office. That didn’t happen. Trump now says he is talking to Putin on the phone.
-  **Bring peace to the Middle East.** Before he took office, Trump threatened dire consequences if Hamas didn’t release hostages captured in its October 2023 attack on Israel. That didn’t happen and Trump did nothing. Meanwhile, Israel and Hamas have agreed to a ceasefire, and Trump has proposed that the US take over the Gaza Strip, kick out the Palestinians, and turn it into a beachfront casino.

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to live.



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