

Tuscola County Democratic Party Newsletter

May 2025

Volume 4, Issue 5

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 May Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Tuscola County Democratic Party will be held on **Thursday, May 15**, 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 April Meeting

Chair Deb Parker called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. on April 17 at the Brentwood. Thirty-two members and one guest were in attendance. Alex Krisch gave us a run-down of current events, including illegal deportations and other actions of the Trump administration, and he reported on the *Hands Off!* rallies and other recent protests as well as the recent Michigan Rural Summit in Sault Ste Marie. Mona DeQuis encouraged us to elect more Democrats for local office and take part in rallies in support of Vassar and Reese school millages. Alison Blattner gave us tips on how to conduct an effective protest. Sherene McCloy told us about plans for an upcoming protest in front of the Tuscola County Courthouse. Deb Parker announced that our annual road cleanup on M-81 will take place beginning at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 31. 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!

May 6th Election

On May 6th, voters living in the Reese and Vassar school districts went to the polls and voted on proposals to increase their property taxes to fund public schools. Here's how they voted:

Proposal	Yes	No
Reese Public Schools Sinking Fund	304	263
Vassar Public Schools Operating Millage	887	569

Yahoo!

Trump's First 100 Days

In the 1930s, Franklin Roosevelt introduced momentous changes during his first 100 days as president. Since then, the "first 100 days" has become a benchmark by which US presidents are measured. Trump ended the first 100 days of his second term on April 30. Here are some highlights:

- **Pardons.** Trump issued full, complete, and unconditional pardons to all members of the mob that attacked the Capitol on January 6, 2021, including those who ransacked congressional offices, went looking for Mike Pence, and attacked police with baseball bats, two-by-fours, and bear spray. He also pardoned convicted felon Trevor Milton after he and his wife donated \$1.8 million to Trump's campaign, and he pardoned the cryptocurrency exchange BitMEX and several of that company's executives who had pleaded guilty to financial crimes.
- **Trade war.** The US Constitution gives Congress, not the president, the power to set tariffs, but Trump took that power unto himself by declaring a national emergency under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), enabling him to start a trade war. He raised tariffs on Chinese imports to 145 percent. In retaliation, China imposed a 125 percent tariff on US goods and restricted exports of rare earths critical to high-tech industries. Trump also imposed a 25 percent tariff on most goods from our neighbors — Canada and Mexico — but afterwards granted exemptions for certain goods. Then he added a 25 percent tariff on imported steel, aluminum, and automobiles from all countries. Then he imposed a minimum 10 percent tariff on all US imports and higher tariffs on imports from 57 countries, but afterwards suspended those tariffs for 90 days for all countries except China
- **Immigrants.** Trump has mobilized agencies across the federal government, from the IRS to the Postal Service, to help him round up and deport immigrants. His immigration officers snatched foreign students off the streets and stripped their visas for engaging in speech he dislikes. He signed a proclamation invoking the Alien Enemy Act against Tren de Aragua (TdA), an international gang with deep roots in Venezuela, ignoring the fact that TdA isn't a foreign government, the US isn't at war with them, and they aren't invading our country. He then deported 238 alleged Venezuelan gang members (along with others who were not gang members) to a notorious prison in El Salvador without due process and refused to try and get them back.

- **Dismantling the federal government.** Trump has ripped through the federal government, dismantling government agencies, cutting diversity programs, gutting climate change initiatives, firing more than a hundred thousand workers including the Inspector Generals of seventeen different agencies, slashing spending on foreign aid and scientific research, installing his people at the Justice Department and FBI, and purging the top uniformed military leadership.
- **Impoundment.** Trump has refused to spend money that Congress has appropriated. He froze all foreign assistance funding for 90 days. He froze the disbursement of all money appropriated in the Inflation Reduction Act and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Acts. He froze federal funding for sanctuary cities. He imposed holds on USAID and NIH grants. He slashed more than \$1 billion from Department of Agriculture programs that support food banks throughout the country.
- **Musk.** Trump appointed billionaire Elon Musk as the head of the so-called “Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE).” It turns out that Musk and his team didn’t save the government much money, but did manage to cripple the Social Security Administration, the Center for Disease Control, the National Weather Service, and other essential agencies by firing civil servants at random. Musk initially promised to slash \$2 trillion from government spending, but he kept dropping that number until finally he admitted that DOGE might be able to save \$150 billion, although even that number is suspect.
- **Retribution.** Trump has openly used Justice Department’s prosecutors and FBI investigators to target his perceived enemies. He has ordered criminal investigations of two officials who worked for him during his first term — Chris Krebs, who contradicted Trump’s false claim of fraud in the 2020 presidential election, and Miles Taylor, who wrote an unflattering piece about him in *The New York Times*. He shot off letters to top law firms that have represented his foes in the past and universities known for progressive social activism. Several white-shoe firms quickly agreed to provide hundreds of millions in pro-bono work for Trump in exchange for relief from his attacks. Columbia University agreed to overhaul its protest policies and change its Middle Eastern Studies curriculum to avoid Trump’s cutting \$400 million of federal funding. The leadership at Paramount is reportedly considering settlement of a \$20 billion lawsuit filed by Trump over a *60 Minutes* interview last October with Kamala Harris. Trump has also sued ABC and The Des Moines Register over coverage he didn’t like. He ordered the Justice Department to investigate ActBlue, even though there is no evidence they did anything wrong. He has taken over the Kennedy Center for the Arts and ordered the Smithsonian to change its exhibits.
- **Foreign Policy.** Trump picked a fight with our allies in NATO and threw Ukraine under the bus. He has called our European allies “freeloaders” and said he wouldn’t defend those who failed to spend at least 2 percent of their GDP on defense. He has withdrawn the US from the Paris Climate Agreement and the World Health Organization. He says he wants to take back the Panama Canal, take over Greenland, and annex Canada as our 51st state. He has proposed kicking Palestinians out of Gaza and turning it into a seaside gambling casino.

- **Self-enrichment.** On the eve of his second inauguration, Trump released two new crypto coins, \$Trump and \$Melania, which effectively allow any individual or foreign state to funnel money anonymously to him and his family. He has paired this scheme with a pullback of crypto regulation by the SEC and Justice Department. He has gone easy on corruption in other ways, too. On his first day in office, he rescinded a Biden administration policy that barred executive branch employees from accepting major gifts from lobbyists, and he has purged officials across the government whose job was to uncover malfeasance. He's building a new Trump Tower in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia's second largest city, with plans for two more projects in partnership with a Saudi company with close ties to the Saudi government. The Trump Organization has agreed to a new Middle East golf course and real estate deal with a Qatari government-owned firm.

In the first 100 days of his second term, Trump has done more damage to American democracy than anything since the failure of Reconstruction, and no doubt he will do more harm in the 1300+ days he has left. However, there are signs that Trump's honeymoon may be over.

- **Trump has racked up a raft of legal defeats.** Trump's executive orders are being met with a historic flood of lawsuits, more than 350 in all, and at least 123 court rulings have paused some of his moves. The plaintiffs include public school districts, religious groups, small-business owners, doctors, and even Republicans that he has fired. Federal court judges in multiple cases and jurisdictions have enjoined his unconstitutional power grabs, and a few judges in immigration cases have suggested holding the government in contempt. A federal court has ordered the government to return an illegally deported immigrant, and the US Supreme Court has insisted that deportees receive due process. The law firms Perkins Coie and WilmerHale have won restraining orders from a federal judge.
- **The economy is in a tailspin.** The US Bureau of Economic Analysis recently released a report showing that American GDP shrank from a healthy plus 2.4 percent in the fourth quarter of 2024 to a minus 0.3 percent in the first quarter of 2025. The stock market has been on a rollercoaster. It plunged with the announcement of tariffs, spiked with news of a 90-day delay, and since has continued to rise and fall as Trump levies and pauses tariffs. Of even greater concern is that the market in US Treasuries is tanking too. Normally when stocks sell off, investors shift their assets into US government bonds, but recently investors have been parking their money in the Japanese yen and the Swiss franc instead. Toy makers and retailers are already stalling orders and production as they try to assess the tariffs. Since China produces nearly 80 percent of all toys and 90 percent of Christmas goods sold in America, the upcoming holiday season looks grim. The pain from Trump's tariffs has also hit US agriculture since China has largely stopped buying American farm products, from pork to soybeans. Economists expect that Trump's tariffs will hit American economic growth more severely beginning in the second quarter of 2025 as container ships from China stop arriving in the US. United Parcel Service has already announced that it is laying off 20,000 employees and closing 73 of its buildings.

- **Trump’s “foreign policy” is in tatters.** Trump said he would end the Israel-Hamas war on Day One. That hasn’t happened. He also said he would end the Russia-Ukraine war on Day One, and that hasn’t happened either. Trump’s sellout of Ukraine has sparked new European solidarity and commitments to build its own defense industry. His threat to take Greenland from fellow NATO member Denmark has been met with Danish outrage. His threat to take back the Panama Canal was met with a firm “¡Ni hablar!” from Panama’s President José Molino. In Canada, Prime Minister Mark Carney won a surprise election victory with a “stand-up-to-Trump” message.
- **Trump’s poll numbers are plummeting.** His approval rating has slipped below 40 percent, lower at this stage in his term than that of any other president since records have been kept. His culture wars have fizzled, and his supposed strengths (e.g., immigration) have quickly become liabilities thanks to incompetence and overreach by his administration. Collective action from universities, charities, law firms, law students, unions, and ordinary Americans has blossomed, putting Republican lawmakers on defense and prompting some to hide from their constituents. At the same time, Trump has elevated to positions of great influence a set of loyalists whose main qualification seems to be the way they look. Elon Musk has become a reviled figure.
- **Democrats are stirring.** Republicans who control Congress have so far stayed out of Trump’s way, and Republicans have full power over twenty-three state governments (versus just fifteen for Democrats). Nonetheless, one by one, some of our Democratic leaders are stepping up — Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont (technically an Independent, but one of us), Senator Cory Booker of New Jersey, Senator Chris Murphy of Connecticut, Senator Chris Van Hollen of Maryland, House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries of New York, and Governor JB Pritzker of Illinois.

In the past 100 days, our country has been gravely wounded, and all of it was predictable. It was predictable that Trump would pursue a ruinous set of policies — he campaigned on them. It was predictable that he would choose people unqualified to run the federal government — he did it the last time he was president. It’s unlikely that he will change. He is stubbornly committed to his reckless tariffs, his ruinous cuts to federal agencies, his audacious attacks on the federal judiciary, and his cruel immigration policies.

As Democrats, we must not give up. We must continue to participate in frequent and well-attended peaceful protests. If we keep speaking out and Trump’s blunders keep piling up, the table will be set for the midterms, and if we emerge victorious, the MAGA herd will be thinned out and perhaps surviving Republicans will come out of hiding.

American democracy been threatened in the past — during post-Reconstruction, Jim Crow, the Red Scare, Watergate. Each time, we have managed to beat back those threats because ordinary Americans fought for democracy. We must do it again. It’s our patriotic duty.

Make Tuscola County a better place to live.



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P.O. Box 605, Caro, MI 48723*

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