

The SCPD PAC Progressive Patriot

The Newsletter for Progressive Activists in NE Ohio

WHAT IS SCPD PAC?

Summit County Progressive Democrats PAC is a grass roots organization of dedicated people committed to social justice on the local, state, national, and international levels. We support efforts that better the lives of all citizens by working to promote human rights, equal economic opportunity, responsive government, a safe, sustainable environment, and a society built on compassion. Our goal is to expand grass roots participation in the political process and to return the federal government to the will of the people. SCPD PAC works to support progressive candidates through grassroots activism, contributions coaching candidates, forums and events and the production of literature and sample ballots to educate the electorate. If you are interested in SCPD PAC, contact

Ingrid Kunstel at
ikunstel@neo.rr.com.

“ Grassroots Action NOW! ”

November 2017

**JOIN US AT OUR NEXT
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP
MEETING**

DECEMBER 12th @ 6:30PM

AKRON PUBLIC LIBRARY



Happy Thanksgiving!



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Economic Justice

By Justin Leonti



The Summit County Progressive Democrats' Economic Justice Team supports policies that work for all American workers, not just the wealthy who tend to use the system in favor of their own interests. We strive to ensure that the system works for everyone so that America remains economically strong. The creation of a fair system that works for all Americans means that we don't favor policies that only accommodate and protect the rich, but make sure the rules protect and assist those who cannot or can no longer provide for themselves.

America's tax code is constantly trying to be "simplified" or "reformed". Our current tax system taxes citizens anywhere from 10% to 35% with 7 different levels. Your tax rate is determined by income and filing status such as married, married with dependents, single, widowed, head of household (single with dependents), etc. With a 25% difference between the lowest taxation level and highest taxation level, and other attributes that affect one's tax rate, Americans are frustrated and want a change. We hear all too often that America's tax system is too complex. It's 2017, Donald Trump is President, and he like many other Presidents, wants to simplify and reform our tax system. But does his plan work for everyone?

The new tax plan will adjust the different tax rates to just 3 percentages: 12%, 25%, and 35%. While this could prove to be costly for those in the lower tax brackets, the standard deduction is nearly doubled to \$12,000 for single and \$24,000 for married taxpayers.

One issue that is presented is the lack of deductions that impoverished citizens typically have on their taxes. Itemized deductions currently can come from a home mortgage interest, premium mortgage insurance, property taxes, charitable donations, etc. Under Trump's tax plan, only mortgage interest and charitable donations will be left, all others eliminated. The standard deduction amounts being nearly doubled could help some, but not most. With standard deductions, there are no questions asked on the amount that is taken. With this amount being doubled, more fraudulent tax filings may occur and there

would be nothing done about it as long as it is under \$12,000 for single filings, or \$24,000 for married. All in all, this does not help the middle class and it does not help the lower class.

President Trump's tax plan helps large corporations, much more than middle class families, cutting the highest corporate tax from 35% to 20%. It also eliminates the corporate alternative minimum tax (AMT), which is currently assessed at 20%. The corporate alternative minimum tax is an alternative tax method used by the Internal Revenue Service to calculate a person or corporation's tax liability. This system was created to prevent tax avoidance through excess tax deductions. Under AMT, many common deductions are added back to your income and your tax liability is recalculated. If the alternative minimum tax is eliminated, it could allow large corporations to avoid paying taxes at all through unreasonable deductions.

Trump says that his tax plan greatly helps large corporations to create more jobs, but historically when businesses are taxed at a lower rate it does not result in economic growth. This was proven during the Reagan and Bush Sr. eras when growth fell to negative levels during the 1990s. Two of the three years with the highest growth were during the 1950s, when the top tax rate was 91%.

There are many more pieces to the tax plan and we will not know exactly how the public will be completely affected until it becomes law. At this point, it looks like the rich will become richer, and the middle-class and poor may be in the same situation as we are now, or worse. Because of Trump's concept of trickle-down economics, it is highly unlikely that anyone will benefit from the tax plan but the very rich.

Trump's tax plan greatly helps large corporations to create more jobs, he says, but historically when businesses are taxed at a lower rate, it does not result in economic growth which was proved during the Reagan and Bush Sr. eras when growth fell to negative levels during 199. 2 of the 3 years with the highest growth were during the 1950s, when the top tax rate was 91%. There are many more pieces to the tax plan and we will not know exactly how the public will be affected until it becomes law. At this point, it looks like the rich will become richer, and the middle-class and poor may be in the same situation as we are now, or worse.

You can read more [here](#).

The Economic Justice Team, chaired by Justin Leonti is looking for interested persons that want to get involved who are passionate about ensuring that America's policies work for everyone. If you're interested in participating in the Economic Justice team, please contact Justin at justinleonti@gmail.com or (330) 618-4993.

Candidate Development Committee – Fall Update By Tom Schmida

It's official. At the October 10th membership meeting the members in attendance voted to change our SCPD By-Laws to establish the Candidate Development Committee (CDC) as a standing committee. Prior to this meeting, our committee functioned as an "extended" committee. We appreciate the change in status as it amplifies the work we do in training candidates, campaign managers, and campaign volunteers.

In recent weeks, the CDC has focused its efforts on canvassing training as the campaign season for local elections was well underway. The committee developed training sessions that covered the following topics:

- Implementing a canvassing plan & targeting voters
- Effectively delivering your message when knocking on doors
- The Do's and Don'ts of canvassing.

The canvassing training is offered in two formats: A full 90 minute session, and an abbreviated session of 45 minutes. The shorter session allows us to be included on the meeting agenda of Democratic clubs and other progressive and like-minded organizations. For example, the CDC conducted the 45 minute training at the October meeting of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). In addition, we are reaching out to various organizations offering to bring our training directly to their members.

As 2018 approaches the CDC will be gearing up to present our full-day training sessions for candidates, and campaign managers similar to the sessions we conducted in March and June of this year. The training will likely take place in late January or early February of 2018.

As I have mentioned in previous articles, SCPD has a tremendous array of talented presenters who have managed campaigns, who are elected officials or have run for office, and who have exceptional expertise in fundraising, messaging, and organizing campaigns.

The CDC meets the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Nervous Dog Coffee Shop in Stow or via telephone conference call. We are always looking for new committee members. If you are interested in joining us please email me at tom.schmida@gmail.com.

Tom Schmida
Chair, Candidate Development Committee



The President's Corner

Why I Am A Democrat

By Thomas Townsend, President of SCPD PAC

When Ingrid asked me to write my first "President's Corner," the intention was to write about the vision I have for our organization during my time as president. While that may make for an interesting read, I'd prefer to address a question that we know is difficult to answer: Why am I a Democrat? By answering that question, you may learn a little about me and how I ended up in this organization.

I was born in Uniontown, PA to parents that already had four boys. I was born into poverty. We moved often, spending much of my first few years in a two room apartment (not two bedrooms; two rooms). My brothers shared a room that was pretty much a hallway. We were on welfare (or as we called it, relief), and we, for a time, lived in housing projects. I can distinctly remember, at the age of three, standing in line at the fire station holding a box for my mom who was disabled. We would pick up cereal, powdered milk, powdered eggs, cheese, etc. - all with that distinct white label with black letters. It was gross, but it was all we had. I would often go days with nothing but bread to eat; sometimes with nothing to put on it. As my brothers got older, they began to move out. This was good news for me, as that meant fewer mouths for my parents to feed. Things got a bit easier for us, and then my dad moved to Ohio and got a Union job. For the first time in his adult life, he was earning a living wage, and we bought a trailer that we parked on a plot of land in the middle of a cornfield in Navarre, Ohio (45 minutes south of Akron). For me, this was living in luxury.

I attended a public school. I wanted to be a teacher. My mother, though loving, was not encouraging. She wanted me to work at Nickel's Bakery with my dad or at UPS which was known for hiring young people. She was convinced I was too

dumb (my grades were awful) and too poor to attend college. I made it a goal to prove her wrong. After taking government student loans and working my way through five years at Kent State University, I fulfilled my dream and became a teacher at a public school. My goal has been, and will continue to be, making my students feel significant and giving them a voice.



So, why am I a Democrat? Quite frankly, Democrats haven't always been on the right side of history. However, when it comes to working to help those in need, supporting public education, supporting Unions, and working to provide opportunity to those who feel helpless, Democrats are currently on the right side of history. I never wanted a handout. My parents had their vices, but I know my father believed in the American Dream and wanted to provide for his family. However, it

wasn't easy for us. It's not easy for a lot of Americans. And, I recognize that it's even harder for women, LGBT, and people of color. And, again, I believe that Democrats are on the right side of history on issues that concern these groups.

I'm a Democrat because if it weren't for effective government, my life would be a lot different. I was given opportunities through public housing and food programs, public education, government loans, and I have the amazing opportunity to teach in a public school. I have also established a career that pays well and provides benefits to me and my family, and that is largely due to a Union that gives a voice to me and my colleagues. Republicans seek to destroy each every opportunity I've been given. And Democrats have fought to protect and strengthen these opportunities. I want these opportunities for all Americans, so I'm proud to be a Democrat.



Tax Cut Myths

By Frank Kunstel

With the House having passed its “budget blueprint”, the movement to inflict tax cuts on our society has officially begun. With all the misdirection, obfuscation, and outright lying from the Right about tax cuts, it behooves us progressives to have some quick facts at our fingertips. Here are some myths the Right will proclaim as true, but they aren't. So, in talking to friends, contacting your Congresspersons, or writing Letters to the Editor, keep these handy.

1. Myth: Tax cuts pay for themselves.

This myth holds that when taxes are reduced, there is a direct impact on economic growth, so that tax revenues will actually go up and the government will have the funds it needs to support its programs. Except this isn't true. Let's not take the word of liberals, let's look at what conservatives have to say about it. Gregory Mankiw served as George W. Bush's Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors and is now an economics professor at Harvard. He has stated on numerous occasions that tax cuts at best only recover about one-third of lost revenue ([here](#)). Bruce Bartlett served in various economic advisory capacities in the Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations. He has argued for years that there is no evidence that tax cuts stimulate growth or recoup lost tax revenue ([here](#)). Douglas Holtz-Eakin served as head of the Congressional Budget Office and as an advisor to John McCain. He says that Trump's tax plan is “detached from empirical reality”, and that tax cuts only replace 25%-35% of lost revenue ([here](#)).

2. Myth: America's corporate tax rate is among the highest in the world and makes American businesses less competitive.

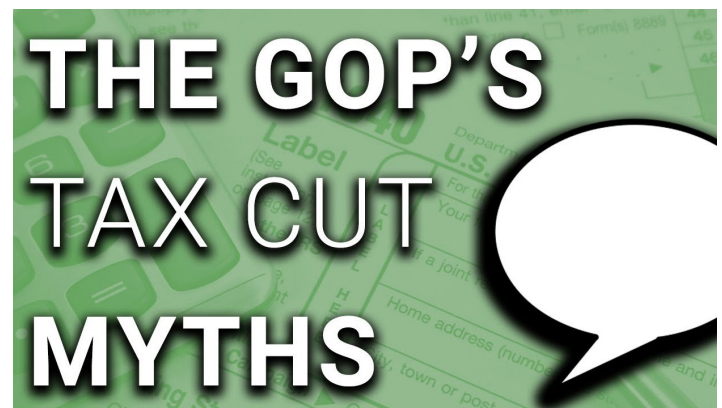
Although the nominal corporate tax rate is 35%, due to deductions, credits, loopholes and creative accounting, the true average rate that corporations pay is around 19% according to the Congressional Budget Office ([here](#)). Many companies, such as Duke Energy, Priceline.com and Boeing paid zero taxes in one or more of the past 10 years ([here](#)).

3. Myth: Reducing corporate taxes will cause businesses to bring back to America all the cash they have stored overseas, and that money will be used to create jobs.

This myth is easy to destroy. All we have to do is look at what actually happened in 2005, the last time there was a “tax holiday” that allowed businesses to bring home profits from overseas at a reduced rate. The promise was that there would be 500,000 new jobs created. But instead the money went primarily to increasing executive compensation and

to paying shareholder dividends. There was no significant increase in capital investment, in jobs creation or in R&D. For example, Pfizer brought back home \$35 Billion. It spent \$20 Billion on dividends, \$13 Billion on executive pay increases, and it cut 12,000 jobs ([here](#) for all these facts).

Tax cuts typically don't promote economic growth, don't increase worker pay, and don't increase business investment ([here](#)). Want a lesson in what tax cuts do? Look at what happened in Kansas where Sam Brownback's tax cuts nearly destroyed the state ([here](#)). On the other hand, if one wants to help fund the government without increasing taxes, consider increasing the budget for the IRS. It is estimated that the U.S. Treasury loses over \$270 Billion each year due to tax cheating ([here](#)).



SCPD Endorsements

By Eddie Rice

Just a few notes before we get to the recommendations:

Why isn't my candidate listed?

1. He/she didn't seek our endorsement OR
2. He/she didn't turn in their endorsement survey on time OR
3. He/she turned out be a "Democratic in Name Only" by demonstrating a history of voting in Republican primaries
4. The candidate did not respond to our request to speak in front of SCPD

How was this all determined?

1. Candidates seeking our endorsement filled out the revised [Issues survey](#) or the [Judicial survey](#).
2. Those answers were then evaluated by the respective scoring committees and converted to a score out of 100.
3. The Candidate Support Committee then met multiple times through the election cycle and made priority/ endorsement decisions that were then sent to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors then accepted, modified, or rejected, the recommendations and sent those onto the membership for an up or down vote.

Who are the endorsed candidates?

Akron Municipal Court
Annalisa Williams

Akron Municipal Court
Nicole Walker

Akron Municipal Court
Ron Cable

Barberton Municipal Court
Margaret Scott

Akron Municipal Clerk of Courts
Jeff Fusco

**Akron Public Schools Board of Education
(4 choices allowed)**
Ginger Baylor
Patrick Bravo
Lisa Mansfield
Helena Larios

Cuyahoga Falls Mayor
Don Walters

Cuyahoga Falls City Council Ward 3
Meika Penta

Cuyahoga Falls City Council Ward 4
Mary Nichols-Rhodes

Cuyahoga Falls City Council Ward 6
Debbie Ziccardi

Cuyahoga Falls School Board
Anthony Gomez

Stow City Council Ward 3
Christina Shaw



What Keeps You Sane in Insane Times?

What makes you think I am staying sane? I must say that I have been really angry and depressed by what has happened since November. Sometimes I go numb to all the negative things I read and hear. At other times- when Trump does or says another ridiculous thing, I triumph, thinking that this will help bring him down. But, I realize that his base doesn't care what outrageous things he says and does- he is their GOD. That is the most depressing thing of all. That facts don't matter anymore and that Russia is helping to foment the dissension. I guess as I get older, I get more pessimistic. I think that has been true of many generations of people. I'm sure that I'm a downer around some people. I should just shut up and work for our candidates and issues. But, I feel impotent.

- Jan Oakley

Thought-provoking question! I realize I don't have any real strategy. I do know that the more I think about Trump and his administration, the higher my stress level. The thought of four years of this is truly frightening. I can, and often do, just not think about it with my head in the sand. Your question makes me realize I do need a more proactive position - which does require a real strategy - to be more involved in trying to minimize the damage of this administration. Stay tuned.

- Sandy Laurenson

I find that taking mind-clearing walks to enjoy nature's beauty helps me with my sanity, preferably in our beautiful parks but also just walking on our street.

- Sherrie Weitzenhof

The thought keeping me sane right now is that tough times do not last, but tough people do, and someone has to keep fighting.

- Amber Young

What keeps me sane during these stressful times? I focus on the issues on which I can have impact with a small group that works with me.

- Kathy Arthur

I stay as sane as I am going to get by phoning and writing to politicians about the progressive views on issues, the progressive votes I want the politicians to make, working for progressive candidates, talking with like-minded friends, reading fiction and . . . playing endless Solitaire!

- Ingrid Kunstel

I surround myself with flowers, good friends and the wonderful experiences of my life and don't listen to the news. . .and I pray a lot.

- Mary Louise McMahon

Activism, helping others, music, anything Elvis, Turner Classic Movies, especially those with Jimmy Stewart, Cary Grant, and Audrey Hepburn, trips home to visit family, and studying with friends in a coffee shop while sipping hot tea or cocoa; oh, and belly breathing.

- Shelly Evans

The things that keep me sane these days are family and friends, nature and yoga.

-Beth Doney

Insanity Battle

Annual Dinner

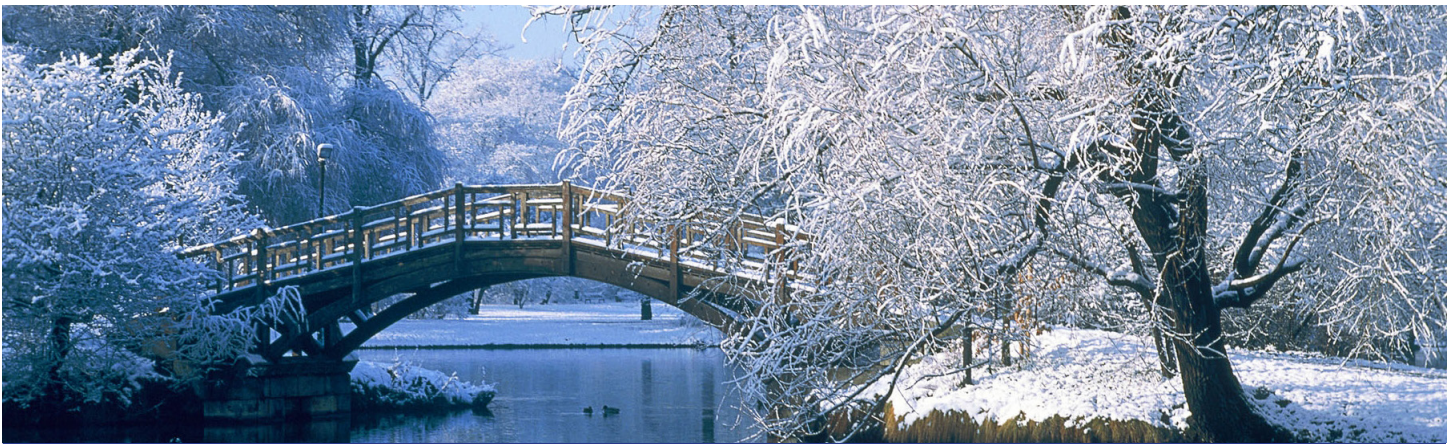
Remember to make reservations for our Annual November Election Celebration Dinner

We will be holding our Annual Election Celebration Dinner on Tuesday, November 14, at Papa Joe's Restaurant in the Merriman Valley at 6:30 p.m.

You must make a reservation with Sherrie Weitzenhof (email at SWeitzenho@aol.com) and indicate if you would like the meat option or the vegetarian option. The meals will cost \$20 which does not include alcoholic beverages.

Each person will pay for their own in cash or check only.

If you have never attended one of these dinners, expect to have a great time. It is relaxing and gives us all a chance to visit and enjoy one another's company. Many politicians and elected officials often attend this event. We hope to see all of you there.



Let Your Voice Be Heard

Are you itching to see your views in print? Do you think you have an issue that needs more attention from SCPD PAC? Well, here is your opportunity. Send your ideas, letters, thoughts to Ingrid Kunstel, Chair of Communications @ ingridkunstel@gmail.com. The committee will review the entries and select one for the next edition of the Progressive Patriot.

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