



South Florida Progressive bulletin



March 15, 2017

EVENTS AND ACTIVISM CALENDAR:

- Mar 14 Resist Tuesdays; Nelson's Office Broward**
3416 S University; Davie
- Mar 15 Water Forum 6:15-8 pm 8601 W Broward;**
Plantation
- Mar 18 Indivisible FL 22 2 pm Pride Center**
2040 N Dixie Hwy; Wilton Manors 33305
- Mar 18 - 19 Florida Democratic Progressive**
Caucus; 3102 N Habana Ave Tampa, FL
8-5 on 18th; 9-12 on 19th
- Mar 19 Gray Panthers 9:30-12 noon; Immigration**
7701 SW 76th Ave; South Miami
- Mar 22 Reclaiming Florida's Future For All; 10-4**
FL Capitol; 400 S Monroe, Tallahassee
- Apr 29 People's Climate March; DC and**
everywhere
- May 1st Nationwide Strike -**

FROM THE FRONT LINES

In Syria! Donald Trump has just sent hundreds more Marines into combat in Syria. He's sending these men and women into the midst of a bloody, six-year old war, putting their lives in danger while doing nothing to actually end the carnage in Syria.

Donald Trump has already shown that he is a reckless Commander in Chief. Just days into the job, he ordered a disastrous raid in Yemen that cost the life of a Navy SEAL and killed numerous civilians, including women and children. Now, with the news that he's sent several hundred conventional troops into Syria, with hundreds more potentially on the way, he is jumping neck deep into the Middle East's deadliest war.

The war in Syria is a devastating crisis that has cost hundreds of thousands of lives, created millions of refugees, and dragged on for 6 long years. Experts agree that there is simply no military solution to the conflict, yet only weeks into his presidency, Donald Trump is rushing towards a major war, using the same old broken thinking that every problem in the Middle East can be solved with American bombs.

Make no mistake, this new deployment is a big, game changing deal. For the first time in Syria, conventional American troops will conduct operations outside the relative safety of a secure perimeter. Trump has ordered a new, riskier mission for our troops – one that will dramatically increase the likelihood of casualties. This is a highly disturbing escalation of our involvement in Syria. - Richard Allen Smith, Afghanistan War Veteran

And when you wonder why remember (before this current proxy war):

- Syria is one of the only countries in the Middle East without debts to the International Monetary Fund (Pre-invasion Libya & Iran the only others).
- Syria is the only Mediterranean country which remains the owner of its oil company, with an oil reserve of 2,500 million barrels, the operation of which has avoided privatization and is reserved exclusively for state-owned enterprises.

FRONT PAGE NEWS

A bit of good news overlooked in the rapidly unfolding tragedy which is the administration of 45: The valve turners - five activists who shut off the oil from the Alberta tar sands pipeline in four states: Minnesota, North Dakota, Washington, Montana and were subsequently arrested, have been charged with crimes ranging from burglary to criminal sabotage. One of them, Ken Ward, was tried January 30. A divided jury refused to convict him and the judge declared a mistrial. He will be retried, but for the time being, the jury is not willing to convict on this 'crime.'

Rainforest Action Network (RAN) reports that 5100 hectares of community owned land in Indonesia has been returned to the people of Pandumaan Sipituhuta, and 12.7 million hectares of land will be redistributed to indigenous and local groups - rather than becoming more pulp plantations!

Also from RAN...Ralph Lauren, the clothing company, has pledged to take control of its supply chain and will no longer have deforestation in its clothing line. The company has pledged to protect climate and forests, and people.

On Preemption:

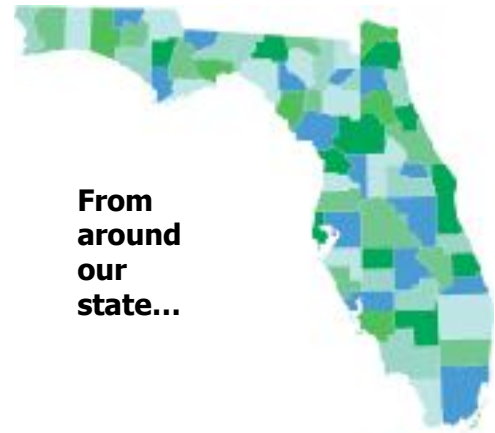
As a result of gerrymandering done after the tea party sweeps in 2010, cities which are more progressive are often hindered from passing local ordinances which reflect the needs of their locale by the conservatism of their state legislatures and the federal government. Local government bodies are the best way to deliver changes needed to innovate within their cities and counties, since they are the closest level to the people they serve. Now triple red states are using preemption to keep their local governments and ordinances in line with the conservative ideologies of the states, just as the federal government preempts state and/or local ordinances to control policies.

According to the 10th Amendment to the US Constitution certain powers are reserved to the states but there is no local governing power mentioned in the US Constitution. States are divided by those who follow Dillon's Rule - which is narrow rule to cities, and those who allow home rule - which is broad rule to cities. Dillon's Rule says if there is reasonable doubt about certain powers to the city, it has NOT been given. Thirty-nine states adhere to Dillon's Rule, ten are home rule. Florida is the only state which is a home rule state for everything but taxing authority, which is limited to the state.

So if a city sets its minimum wage at \$15 and the Dillon's Rule state doesn't agree, the law is preempted and cannot be enforced. ALEC is helping this happen everywhere these higher minimum wages laws are happening; they have their model laws legal challenge ready to strike down these local ordinances.

The most notorious case of preemption in the country is HB2 in North Carolina. This bill was written to preempt Charlotte's bill which prohibits sexual discrimination in public facilities. In order to gain support for HB2 in the state legislature, the bill also eliminated local authority to raise the minimum wage, which allowed the bill to gain enough support to pass in the legislature. Charlotte rescinded its bill in hopes the legislature would take down HB2, but efforts to repeal failed. So North Carolina's HB2 has cost the state millions in lost business because of the ensuing boycott against HB2, which discriminates against sexual preferences in public facilities.

HB2 also preempts many other protections for North Carolinians. It overrules all local family leave ordinances, child welfare protections, health insurance standards, employment discriminations by race or gender or sexual preference, limits for consecutive hours worked. And again, there was an effort to repeal this bill but it failed.



From
around
our
state...

Introducing the **bullhorn**. Fast. Free. Easy.
Five minutes out of your day to help save Florida's waters.
Use it as many times as you like. Share it with your friends.

1-844-505-2887

You will be connected directly to your legislator.
Tell them your story.
Ask them to support **Senate Bill 10**.
Let them know our way of life depends on it.

bullsugar.org
It's a Now or Never Initiative

In Florida, compliance with Trump's Immigration Order has created another example of conflict between federal vs state vs local authority. Justice Hirsch has written an opinion which orders the release a man held by the County. Hirsch's ruling, which contained references to the founding fathers and the Bible, relied heavily on a Supreme Court decision by the late Justice Antonin Scalia that laid out what the federal government is allowed to do in its relationship with the states.

"Coercion achieved by financial starvation is no less effective than coercion achieved at sword's point," Hirsch wrote. (Trump threatened to withhold money from states and cities which defied his order.) "The 'people' to whom the Tenth Amendment refers include the native-born as well as the naturalized citizen; the native English speaker as well as the speaker for whom English is a second, or third, language; the scion of old Yankee stock as well as the newcomer who took the oath of citizenship yesterday," he said.

"Miami is not, and has never been, a sanctuary city," Hirsch added. "But America is, and has always been, a sanctuary country." http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/miami-dade-sanctuary-trump_us_58b9d325e4b05cf0f4008a46

More Florida:

NO SABAL TRAIL PIPELINE!

26 Floridians have been arrested so far protesting the construction of the Sabal Trail pipeline. A man was shot to death recently after vandalizing a section of the pipeline in Dunnellon, Florida. Florida law enforcement officers shot the man who was fleeing in his pickup truck after shooting holes in the pipeline.

We need an environmental impact study of this pipeline to assess the effects of this pipeline on our fragile environment and the safety of our drinking water. Also, there needs to be an investigation into conflicts of interest from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and our Governor Rick Scott. The pipeline's construction could damage the limestone which surrounds the Florida Aquifer, one of the largest freshwater aquifers in the world that supplies 60 percent of Florida's drinking water. Floridians are outraged that our government is allowing construction to proceed in spite of these risks to our water, our limestone karst landscape, and endangered species in the Suwanee River. Three sinkholes have already occurred during the construction. Floridians are risking life and incarceration to protest against this profiteering effort of Next Era Energy to transport liquified natural gas through Florida.

Florida's Senator Bill Nelson opposed the Keystone Pipeline, but he has not yet responded to repeated requests to oppose the Sabal Trail Pipeline. In fact, he has accepted money for his campaign from electric utilities companies which own this pipeline project.

...Will a Ban on Fracking Pass?

SB 442 has been proposed in Florida which would ban fracking in the state. It has passed through the Senate Committee on Environmental Preservation and Conservation, on to two other Senate committees for consideration, before the Senate floor **But...**

In the House HB 1043 has been proposed which would allow fracking and would allow FPL to charge customers and to profit from speculative fracking projects. This bill would overturn last year's Florida Supreme Court ruling which said Florida regulators exceeded their authority by allowing FPL to charge customers but not shareholders for its speculative fracking investments. FPL is seeking to seize through the legislature what it was denied in Court.

Florida Legislative Information

In the House, Republicans outnumber Democrats 79-41. In the 40-member Senate, the GOP also dominates with a decisive 25-15 advantage. Richard Corcoran is the Speaker of the House, Joe Negron is the President of the Senate. Both are Republicans, and both are opposed by Governor Rick Scott, also a Republican. There is no detente as yet among any of these three republicans in Florida, so that can be an advantage for us progressives. Corcoran and Negron are both new to their leadership roles in this session.

Corcoran offered more of a presence to the minority party, including members on every committee, and more flexibility and rights. Rules have been rewritten to limit the influence of lobbyists; for example, legislators can no longer ride on private jets of lobbyists or citizens, even if they offer to pay the commercial rate for the flight. The public will be allowed to have access to all information about lobbying activity.

Joe Negron is working to help improve Florida's environment. He is a strong proponent of SB10, which will create a reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee to clean agricultural runoff before it contaminates our rivers. It will send water south to help the Everglades. His other legislative priorities include funding higher education, changing the juvenile justice system so that instead of arrest that minors will be given citations for minor offenses, and shifting the burden of proof from defendant to prosecutor in Stand Your Ground Law.

The legislature is now in session. With republicans by large majorities dominating our state government, as progressives it is easy to look at our role as strictly damage control. Hopefully the friction among the three republican leaders in Tallahassee will protect Floridians from some regressive policies.

At least one restriction on abortion rights has already been proposed and is making its way through the process. A measure calling for an impartial process for redistricting is also in the works, a welcomed acknowledgement, as are many many other proposals for our state.

MyFloridahouse.gov and [My FloridaSenate.gov](http://MyFloridaSenate.gov) are websites where you can find your officials and the legislation they and the entire body are developing.

How do the preferences of regular Americans differ from the elites on foreign policy?

Preferences of the elite donor class in American foreign policy are more extreme than those of most Americans. A poll using four sample groups: all political donors, those with family incomes of over \$150,000 per year, all American adults, and elite donors... found that 42% of American adults wanted to reduce defense spending to balance the budget while only 25% of the elite donor class did.

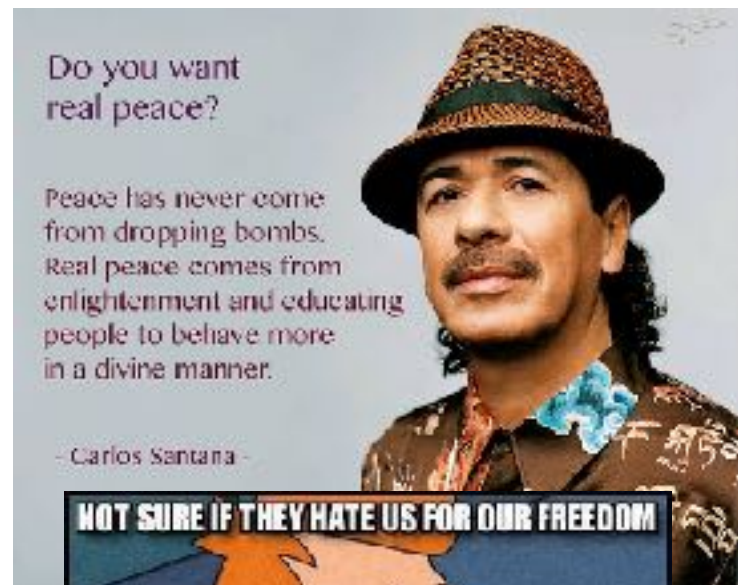
43% of all adult Americans consider our intervention into Afghanistan a mistake while only 27% of the elite donor class do. And to have access to oil, only 25% of all Americans support an intervention while 35% of elite donors do, and 48% of Republican donors do!

In general most Americans support cooperative, multilateral approaches to foreign policy. The elites are more interventionist. The foreign policy objectives favored by the elites achieve 69% adoption as policy, while only 38% of ordinary citizens' objectives are. ~excerpted from Sean McElwee, the Nation: <https://www.thenation.com/article/how-wealthy-donors-drive-aggressive-foreign-policy/>

From The Editor:

While watching CBS Sunday Morning, I heard one of the privileged hosts say, "the world has a way of providing what you need when you need it." I instantly thought, lucky you. Looking at it from the bottom up rather than from the top down, I see so much need that is unprovided, unfulfilled.

I am sure he meant it innocently, and I am sure it rang true to many watchers, who recall instances in their own lives when providence stepped in, in the form of family members, friends, church and community, government benefits, insurance. I am thinking instead of those who don't have a tv, or a place to watch it, or the freedom to make the choice, or the safety of knowing where they will lay their head or if they will be able to lay their head down and sleep, or the security of knowing they can provide for their children in our new country of ICE terrorists hunting down unfortunates, of those in other countries fleeing bombs our country rains on them to have access to their resources so our 1%, so the guy on tv, can achieve excess riches and unnecessary goods and services at the expense of those without the basic necessities: food, clothing and shelter.



From An insider's View: The Dark Rigidity of Fundamentalist White America:

<http://www.alternet.org/election-2016/rural-america-understanding-isnt-problem>

Here are the honest truths that rural Christian white Americans don't want to accept; until they accept these truths, nothing is going to change:

- Their economic situation is largely the result of voting for supply-side economic policies that have been the largest redistribution of wealth from the bottom/middle to the top in U.S. history.

- Immigrants haven't taken their jobs. If all immigrants, legal or otherwise, were removed from the U.S., our economy would come to a screeching halt and food prices would soar.

- Immigrants are not responsible for companies moving their plants overseas. The almost exclusively white business owners are responsible, because they care more about their shareholders (who are also mostly white) than about American workers.

- Women having access to birth control doesn't affect their lives either, especially women they complain about being teenage single mothers.

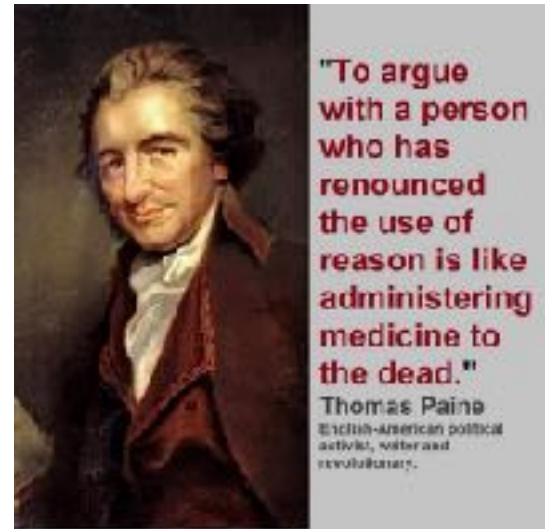
- They get a tremendous amount of help from the government they complain does nothing for them. From the roads and utility grids they use to farm subsidies, crop insurance and commodities protections, they benefit greatly from government assistance. The Farm Bill is one of the largest financial expenditures by the U.S. government. Without government assistance, their lives would be considerably worse.

- They get the largest share of Food Stamps, Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security.

- They complain about coastal liberals, but taxes from California and New York cover their farm subsidies, help maintain their highways and keep the hospitals in their sparsely populated rural areas open for business.

- They complain about "the little man being run out of business," and then shop at big-box stores.

- All the economic policies and ideas that could help rural America belong to the Democratic Party: raising the minimum wage, strengthening unions, spending on infrastructure, renewable energy growth, slowing down the damage done by climate change, and healthcare reform. All of these and more would really help a lot of rural white Americans.



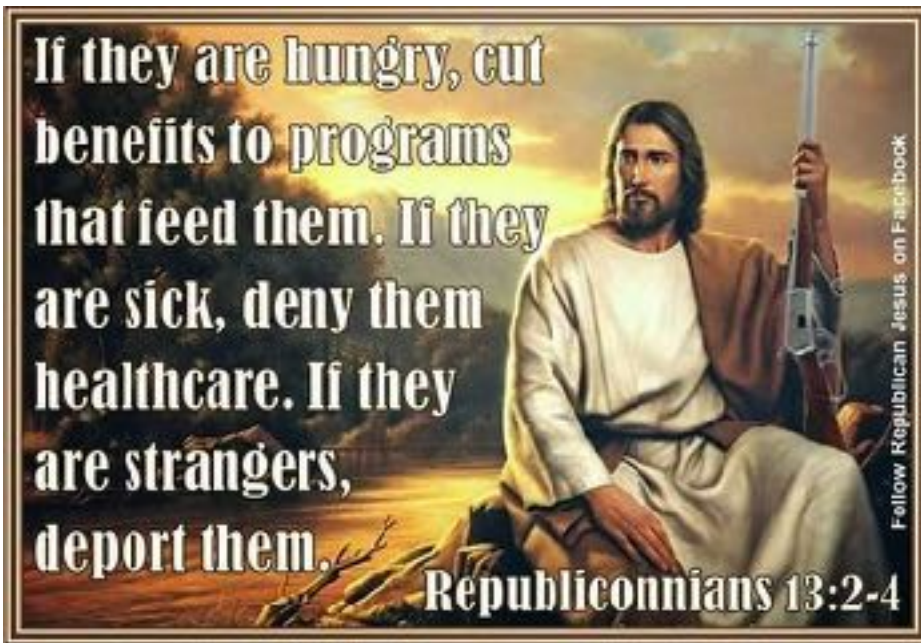
Owsley, Kentucky
99.22% White
95% Republican
96% use Food Stamps.

This edited list shows how wide the chasm is that helped elect Donald Trump. Poor people voting republican against their self interest has long been a political enigma, but in the days of Faux news and the tea party it has become epidemic. However, the republicans in power, who are seemingly educated enough to understand the truth of the policies they promote, have no excuse for lying to the public about the effects of their policies on the poor and middle class. Yet, they persist; Paul Ryan and Mitch McConnell say that they are doing what is best for the country and the rural white voters continue to vote for their republican colleagues. The neoliberal democrats have boxed themselves into a corner giving the poor and middle class voters no populist alternative.



The question persists, how was Trump elected? The role of the press is continually, and rightly examined. Matt Taibbi of Rolling Stone says, "Trump is a skillful marketer of his fictitious self." The pseudo events on television DISPLACE reality. This is how a reality star becomes president. And, Trump, even though he is a billionaire elitist does share the media habits of the common man. He is a perfect consumer of media: he hears it, believes it, and then broadcasts it himself. This is what happens with his twitter posts of something he heard Alex Jones say earlier the same day. Trump is dependent on his own press sources to tell him what he wants to believe and help him release that message.

The press was complicit in the election of Donald Trump. Now they are reexamining their obligation to the American people. The press is still owned by the corporations who want complete control of us, so we must always be aware of their true masters.



The Confederacy was a con job on whites...and still is...

by Frank Hyman

Starting in the 1840s wealthy Southerners supported more than 30 regional pro-slavery magazines, many pamphlets, newspapers and novels that falsely touted slave ownership as having benefits that would – in today’s lingo – trickle down to benefit non-slave owning whites and even blacks.

With low wages and few schools, southern whites suffered a much lower land ownership rate and a far lower literacy rate than northern whites...Most Southerners didn’t own slaves. But they were persuaded to risk their lives and limbs for the right of a few to get rich as Croesus from slavery. Read more here: <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/opinion>



Stupidity is a more dangerous enemy of the good than malice. One may protest against evil; it can be exposed and, if need be, prevented by use of force. Evil always carries within itself the germ of its own subversion in that it leaves behind in human beings at least a sense of unease. Against stupidity we are defenseless.

Neither protests nor the use of force accomplish anything here; reasons fall on deaf ears; facts that contradict one’s prejudgment simply need not be believed – in such moments the stupid person even becomes critical – and when facts are irrefutable they are just pushed aside as inconsequential, as incidental. In all this the stupid person, in contrast to the malicious one, is utterly self-satisfied and, being easily irritated, becomes dangerous by going on the attack. For that reason, greater caution is called for when dealing with a stupid person than with a malicious one. Never again will we try to persuade the stupid person with reasons, for it is senseless and dangerous.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906 - 1945)

“On Stupidity” - Letters and Papers from Prison

The legacy of land ownership

In Virginia in 1700, indentured servants had virtually no chance to own any (land), and by 1770, (still) less than 10 percent of white Virginians had claim to more than half the land.

The wealth disparity was quite obvious, but why were the rich so successful? In 1705, the Virginian assembly required masters to provide white servants at the end of their indentureship with corn, money, a gun, clothing, and 50 acres of land. The poll tax was also reduced. As a result of these legally sanctioned changes in poor whites’ economic position, they gained legal, political, emotional, social, and financial status that depended directly on the concomitant degradation of Indians and Negroes.

The decision to elevate poor and landless Europeans above African slaves and indigenous peoples was a deliberate one, made so as to vouchsafe the position of the American landed gentry relative to the masses, which position was threatened by the possibility of cross-racial, class-based rebellion.

The Silent Majority is a misnomer

It is like hitting a sacrifice
 Bug-eyed fly
 Then calling it a homer
 White Superiority is shot through the refrain
 Let’s Make America Great Again!
 A quarter of the United States population
 Is their pious peeps
 Outside of Trump rallies
 You do not hear them speak
 Truth and facts
 Do not move these angry sheep
 The Deplorables
 Worship Republican Jesus
 And Superior genes
 Inner entitled mindsets
 Group Think
 Mask nefarious means
 Ordinary working people
 Pulled the gas levers
 Subjugated the negro slaves
 Wiped out the Native teepees
 Never once contemplating
 Their actions
 As fiends

~from Republican Jesus on FB

The People's Corner

~Lorenzo Canizares

Recently while watching CNN go on and on trying to make sense of our pathetic president making another wild unsubstantiated claim, I was just as baffled as the commentators. I know we must assign some seriousness to whatever the person in the most important position in the world does or doesn't do, but goodness gracious why do we have to be at the mercy of the latest utterance of the pathological liar? Do we collectively delete in our minds the track record of Trump lies? Did we forget that our pathetic president became a hero of the white racist movement by being the most vocal celebrity proposing that former President Obama was born in Kenya? Did we forget that our current pathetic president said that he could prove that Hillary won the popular vote because three million illegals had voted? I am still waiting for the proof that we all should be demanding. Did we forget that our pathetic president promised that the American people will see his tax returns after the election? We are still waiting. Yet, we have to recognize this pathetic little man has the capability to destroy the world.



How did we get to this? Those of you that know me will remember that I have been warning for at least 15 years that we were seeing a marriage of Greed and Racism that transcended the crude attempts that were seen before in the Deep South. Reagan's operative Lee Atwater changed the approach, and Karl Rove refined it. Rove was so adamant about not allowing any glitches in the strategy that he engineered the frame-up of Alabama's former Democratic Governor, Don Siegelman, arguably the most popular white man in the deep south. The Southern Strategy worked. In 2005, New York Times opinion columnist Bob Herbert wrote "The truth is that there was very little that was subconscious about the G.O.P.'s relentless appeal to racist whites. Tired of losing elections, it saw an opportunity to renew itself by opening its arms wide to white voters who could never forgive the Democratic Party for its support of civil rights and voting rights for blacks." Add to this the growing resentment by the white working class of Hispanic immigrants who don't bother to learn English, and we have two targets, two 'others' who are taking the American dream away from the white working class.

What was the G.O.P. during the Reagan years and what is it now? The Party of Greed. The beneficiaries of Greed are a small percentage of the population so in order get the Greed agenda implemented, as Paul Ryan is dying to do, they need that marriage with white working class America.

We have to understand that what might appear to be that solid bloc of white working class Americans in reality is NOT. The Democratic Party was politically captured by an elite that detests working people. Those neoliberal democrats of course are open to using empty support of minorities and white workers to enrich themselves. They couldn't let the republicans get rich when they were not, so they engaged their own millionaires and billionaires while pretending to care about minorities, women, labor, and the environment. In 2016 the working class saw through the neoliberal democrats and their con, but was captured by the marriage of greed and racism that is Donald Trump.

White workers were told that whatever minorities received was taken from them. They were told "those" minorities were coming here for their jobs. A prime example of this was the vicious attack on Obamacare. The working class was told on Faux News that Obama was spending large amount of monies to provide healthcare to people that just arrived or to blacks that were too lazy to work. The health care "crisis" was just another attempt to cover up the fact that Obamacare was partially financed by a surcharge on the 1%. Greed has brought its own propaganda to racist America; they couldn't accept the idea that their 1% surcharge was being used to provide healthcare to "those" people.



The marriage of Greed and Racism has to be exposed for what it is. It must be done quickly before our pathetic president destroys civilization with his trigger finger. Visit www.ImpeachDonaldTrumpNow.org to take action



People Demanding Action is an arm of Progressive Democrats of America which writes and has members deliver monthly letters to Congress on progressive issues.

Members of PDA deliver the letter directly to District offices of Congressional Representatives and Senators, and to their offices on Capitol Hill.

A current issue sure to be included in the March letter is Barbara Lee's Bill HR1473 to prohibit expansion of US combat troops into Syria.

Instead of retaining Obamacare, PDA feels that it is the right time to press forward with Medicare for All, single payer health care, which was a subject of the February Educate Congress letter. Healthcare is a human right! Lowering prescription drug prices are other priorities for PDA.

PDA has a phone bank which operates nationally on the plethora of issues and actions being taken to obstruct Trump's destruction of our country as we know and love it. There is also a chapter in Broward with monthly meetings.

For more information about PDA call Mike Fox, Florida organizer: 727-320-4502.



PROGRESS FOR ALL is part of the progressive grassroots movement that has been sweeping our country since Occupy Wall Street in 2011. We are "of the people, by the people, and for the people." Unlike some other purportedly progressive and revolutionary political organizations, Progress For All has not organized as a 501(c)(4) and will not accept large undisclosed donations or contributions from any corporate PACs. Consistent with Canova's 2016 campaign, Progress For All is committed to staying true to our progressive principles by limiting itself solely to small donors and small donations. The term Progress For All stems from the New Deal tradition in American politics, from Franklin Roosevelt to John Kennedy, and embodies the progressive ideal of



BRAND NEW CONGRESS

80% of Americans agree: Congress is broken. Both major parties have proven time and time again that they are either unwilling or unable to deliver results for the American people. But we have an alternative. We are recruiting and running more than 400 outstanding candidates in a single, unified, national campaign for Congress in 2018. Together, they will pass an aggressive and practical plan to significantly increase wages, remove the influence of big money from our government, and protect the rights of all Americans. Let's elect a Brand New Congress that will get the job done.

And, let's be honest: We are not a compassionate country. Our nation has a heart-wrenching number of homeless people and countless soul-draining stories of drug dependence and addiction.

Instead of holding open discussions and passing necessary policies, the current Congress would rather give tax breaks to the wealthy and build a pointless, multi-billion dollar wall. Disgusting doesn't begin to describe that.

While compassion may be lacking, the immense capacity and potential to be compassionate remains. There are millions of individuals doing good deeds without looking for thanks, a photo-op, or a check from a mega-donor. Our #BrandNewCongress will be made of the best of American individuals, supporting a platform which builds a more inclusive, representative and compassionate America.

Go to www.brandnewcongress.org to nominate a candidate, contribute financially or volunteer your talent to help. 2018 is coming fast!

linking universal rights and benefits of citizenship to universal civic obligations and duties. The promise of American democracy is for liberty and justice, not for some, but for all. The promise of progressive reform is for Social Security, jobs at living wages, decent housing, sustainable environments, access to healthy food, affordable education, comprehensive health care, adequate leisure and family time, and freedom from unfair competition – not for some, but for all. PROGRESS FOR ALL is based in Hollywood, FL and is one of the groups working for a statewide ban on fracking in Florida, and to stop the construction of the Sabal Trail pipeline among other actions. To read more, to donate and participate in their campaigns: www.progressforall.org