

Fair Democratic Primaries for a Healthy Coalition of the Left

- WHEREAS in the 2024 General Election Democrats faced a substantial loss, losing the Presidency and both houses of Congress¹; and
- WHEREAS the media has focused on a handful of moderate Democrats who outperformed Harris, in some districts, Progressive Democrats did as well²; and
- WHEREAS Progressive candidates have utilized their good will with voters to help back establishment Democratic candidates, both in the past and particularly in 2024³. These endorsements have sometimes been costly⁴; and
- WHEREAS the Democratic party and affiliated PACs have used endorsement mechanisms to undercut progressive candidates, sometimes against the desire of local parties⁵; and
- WHEREAS Democratic party aligned PACs have given huge amounts to moderate candidates to defeat progressives in primaries⁶; and
- WHEREAS progressive candidates who have won in primaries have been undercut as well, sometimes leading to Republicans being elected⁷; and
- WHEREAS in 2024, Democrats saw losses amongst working class voters across all other demographic characteristics⁸; and
- WHEREAS systemic disenfranchisement and consistently pro-corporate policies lead to significant disapproval for both parties⁹; and
- WHEREAS progressives have long been warning about the Democratic Party's failure to address the needs of the working class¹⁰; and

¹ <https://apnews.com/projects/election-results-2024/>

² <https://www.washingtonpost.com/elections/2024/11/09/democrats-house-senate-down-ballot/>,
<https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/msnbc-opinion/aoc-trump-democrats-listen-voters-rcna179762>

³ <https://www.npr.org/2024/04/12/1244155069/bernie-sanders-joe-biden-young-voters>

⁴ <https://x.com/anthonyzenkus/status/1857948347841015891>

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<https://www.opb.org/article/2024/04/30/oregon-5th-congressional-district-primary-jamie-mcleod-skinner-janelle-bynum/>

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<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/5/3/17290902/dccc-2018-midterms-primaries-democrats-nancy-pelosi-laura-moser> , <https://theintercept.com/2022/11/11/midterms-house-democrats-spending/>

⁷ <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/11/08/buffalo-mayor-progressives-dems-520327>

⁸ <https://jacobin.com/2024/11/working-class-voters-democrats-trump>

⁹

https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2024/07/11/joe-bidens-job-approval-views-of-the-republican-and-democratic-parties/pp_2024-7-11_election-2024_5-03/ ,

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2024/11/29/democrats-working-people/>

¹⁰

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/jan/10/bernie-sanders-democrats-failing-working-class-interview>

- WHEREAS union leaders¹¹, and elected officials¹² are urging the Democratic party to make significant institutional changes to do more for the working class and labor¹³; and
- WHEREAS voters who feel disenfranchised by the corporate economy gravitate towards candidates that speak to their needs regardless of party affiliation, meaning Progressives can have more appeal to these swing voters¹⁴; and
- WHEREAS the goal of the Democratic Party of Clackamas County is to elect Democrats, we should support whichever Democratic candidate is preferable in a given area and the primary election process, free from institutional and PAC meddling, is currently our best mechanism to determine who that is.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT

- We, the members of the Democratic Party of Clackamas County, assert that we are a strong party made up of diverse viewpoints. Our members are both moderate and progressive. We believe that caucusing and compromising together is the best way to serve the working people of Clackamas County and to successfully elect Democrats.
- The Democratic Party of Clackamas County pledges to minimize influence during local, statewide and national primaries by endorsing candidates and providing funds and resources equivalently to all Democratic candidates except in cases where a Democrat is substantially non-aligned with Democratic Party of Clackamas County's published platform or in certain open primary situations where vote splitting could lead to a non-Democrat winning outright in the primary.
- The Democratic Party of Clackamas County pledges to dissuade aligned PACs from undermining the choice of voters in primaries through disproportionate primary spending on candidates, and to particularly discourage PACs from creating extreme attack ads during primary campaigns between Democrats.
- The Democratic Party of Clackamas County pledges to encourage candidates to prefer individual contributions over PAC funds in primaries and to utilize the tools at its disposal to dissuade candidates from working with PACs to undermine the choice of voters in primaries – either by accepting disproportionately large contributions, or by utilizing PACs to run write-in campaigns in a general election which seek to undercut the winner of a Democratic primary – using measures up to and including censure.
- The Democratic Party of Clackamas County pledges to support legislation and policies that create substantial change that benefits working class citizens.

¹¹

<https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2024-election/democrats-lost-working-class-union-leaders-say-time-reconstruct-democr-rcna179284>

¹²

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2024/nov/11/progressive-caucus-democrats-populist-economic-policies>

¹³

<https://www.politico.com/news/2024/11/10/democrats-debate-reverse-slide-working-class-voters-0018864>

¹⁴

<https://www.npr.org/2016/03/13/470278253/bernie-sanders-has-strength-among-white-men-pinched-by-the-economy>,
<https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/msnbc-opinion/aoc-trump-democrats-listen-voters-rcna179762>

- The Democratic Party of Clackamas County will forward this Resolution to local Democratic parties in other Oregon counties and encourage them to pass similar resolutions committing to the above principles of cooperation and fair primary elections
- The Democratic Party of Clackamas County will forward this Resolution to the Democratic Party of Oregon and encourage the state party to pass a similar resolution committing to the above principles of cooperation and fair primary elections.
- The Democratic Party of Clackamas County will forward this Resolution to the National Democratic Party, the DSCC and the DCCC and encourage them to pass similar resolutions committing to the above principles of cooperation and fair primary elections.