



From the President's Desk:

By *Mary Lou Ambrose*

Volume 10, No. 3

March, 2018



The Supreme Court sometimes gets it wrong. Take Plessey Vs Ferguson (1896). The Court upheld the constitutionality of racial discrimination making "Separate but Equal" the Law of the land, knowing full well that there was no Equality resulting from the decision. In 2010, the Supremes held that there was no danger to our Democracy if Corporations and Unions were permitted to

consider their money as Speech, for purposes of the First Amendment. We all saw how wise Citizens United vs Federal Elections Committee has proven to be. More recently, the Supreme Court in Shelby County vs Holder (2013), struck down parts of the Voting Rights Act which protected Black citizens' access to the ballot box. Chief Justice Roberts wrote the opinion, actually stating that since many Blacks had been elected to offices since the Voting Act was put into place, there was no longer a need for it. (Justice Ginsburg, in her dissent likened that reason-

ing to deciding that, since an umbrella had been shown to keep a person dry during a rain storm, it should now be eliminated.)

The Supreme Court's opinion in District of Columbia v. Heller (2008), was the case which turned the meaning of the Second Amendment on its head. The Second Amendment reads: "*A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.*"

The Court ruled that the Second Amendment pro-

tests a person's right to bear arms and struck down a D.C. ban on handguns. However, the court also ruled, that "the right secured by the Second Amendment is not unlimited." Since its inception in 1791 until the Heller decision, the initial phrase in the Second Amendment dealing with ownership by those in the militia, ruled. In all those years, the reference to a "well regulated militia" similar to the current day National Guard, was understood as the basic reason for the Second Amendment. Each home needed to have a gun to protect the country in time of war, since there was no

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meeting
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Candidate Forum

Monday, March 19 — 6:30—8:45 pm

Acropol Family Restaurant 1135 Starkey Rd, Largo, Florida 33771

We are hosting a Candidate Forum. The candidates participating will be (clockwise):

- * **Jennifer Webb** - Candidate for FL House District 69
- * **Bernie Fensterwald** - Candidate for FL Senate Seat District 16
- * **Carl Zimmerman** - Candidate for Pinellas County school board
- * **Ryan Torrens** - Candidate for FL Attorney General



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standing army. In Heller, the need to arm a Militia was ignored, and the court decided that people had a right to have handguns in their homes. They even struck down the part of the holding from an Appellate Court that a gun kept in a home must be stored unloaded and disassembled. That, to my mind puts Heller in the same category as Plessey, Citizens United and Shelby – mistakes made by the Supreme Court. There was no discussion of automatic or semi-automatic weapons, and it was clear that the holding related only to hand guns.

Justice Scalia wrote the decision. He pointed out during an interview with Fox News¹ that “the Second Amendment obviously” doesn’t apply to weapons that can’t be hand-carried, and modern-day weapons like “hand-held rocket launchers that can bring down airplanes weren’t factored in at the time.” Scalia said further that his “starting point and probably (his) ending point will be what limitations are within the understood limitations that the society had at the time.” He said “.....so ,we’ll see what those limitations are as applied to modern weapons.”

“We’ll see,” Scalia said, suggesting that future court cases will determine what limitations on modern-day weapons are permissible. During the interview, Justice Scalia said, “Some (limitations) undoubtedly are [permissible]..... so “yes, there are some limitations that can be imposed.” Somehow the possibility of limitations was lost in the retelling. As far as the NRA and its hard-core followers are concerned, the Second

Amendment cannot be limited in any way.

So, from that point, the Second Amendment which had secured protection for hand guns has transitioned into what the NRA demands of the Legislators: complete protection for guns of every type in every situation. People are permitted to walk the streets carrying loaded AK-15 semi-automatic weapons. (Remember the police killings in Dallas when there were men on the streets during the attacks, carrying such loaded weapons, making the job of finding the shooter more difficult?) The NRA protects the carrying of loaded guns, including AK-15s, in churches, in movie theaters, on campuses or at concerts without restrictions. As far as I can see, the only places in Florida where the NRA doesn’t push for gun being allowed are at gun shows and in the Florida Legislature.

In the Republican State Houses and in the Republican-controlled US Congress are bought and paid for by the NRA. (I can’t deny that they are joined by some Democrats.) The President of the United States is bought and paid for by the NRA. Rational legislation regarding guns of any kind are controlled by money from the NRA. It is a vicious circle.

Clearly, the argument that Heller does not control automatic or semi-automatic rifles is valid, since it refers only to hand guns. The claim of the NRA that there can be no limits on the ownership and use of guns was dismissed by Justice Scalia, who specifically said that limitations could be set. So why are we at this juncture?

The mission of the NRA is simply to facilitate the sale of guns of all types and they pay well for the cooperation of the Legislators who work for them. The baby steps recently taken by the Florida Legislature in making minor changes have been called “brave.” That’s ridiculous. Marian Hammer, the lobbyist for the NRA in Florida, rules, pays, and terrifies our Legislators. She is clearly the most powerful person in Florida. She is the gun-money person.

The solution to our gun problems is to put Marian Hammer out of business. We must vote out those who take money from the NRA and, like Grover Norcross on taxes, require a written promise from candidates running for office that they will not take money from the NRA. Only when common sense prevails in Congress and the Legislatures will we escape the hold of the NRA and start to end the massacres that plague us.

¹*Fox News POLITICS July 31, 2012*

POLITICS 7/29/2012 Huffington Post

[See article on Page 3 for synopsis of Rene Flowers’ presentation for Black History Month.](#)



Highlights from February Meeting

Once again, a good turnout — we had 74 attendees, with 11 guests. We currently have 127 paid members! Thank you for joining us, and for helping us elect more Democrats.



FEATURED SPEAKER: Rene Flowers, a native of St. Petersburg, attended Howard University and University of South Florida, is a graduate of Eckerd College and is currently working on her Masters Degree In Public Administration. She formerly served as a member of the City Council of St. Petersburg, as Vice Chairperson in 1999 and 2006, and as Chairperson for two con-

secutive terms, 2000 through 2002. She is active in Democratic, African American, and educational organizations throughout Pinellas County. Renee brings all of this plus her experience, dedication and enthusiasm to share with us this evening. Rene is the current Chair of the Pinellas County School Board.

Renee Flowers provided the LMPDC with a compelling Black History slide presentation. Ms. Flowers explained that a Black History month is a good idea, but black history occurs 365 days each year. She asks, "Who are we?" And she answered "We come from Kings." Ms. Flowers explained that American history includes nothing

about the lives of the ancestors before they were stolen away to a cruel life in the American colonies. Further, Renee explained that white men captured and brought the first Africans to North America in 1619 to Jamestown, Virginia, not the South, to be enslaved for life. The holds of these ships held people chained one to another to completely fill the space. Men and women laid side by side for the entire trip from Africa to North America with little in the way of sustenance, no exercise, no bathrooms, many men and women died during these trips from disease and from starvation. It was a numbers game. Losses were ex-

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pected. These lives had no value beyond the slave sales. For 246 years, this trade in human life continued throughout this country. The last enslaved men and women were sold in 1865.

In spite of the lack of meaningful education, little experience in a life beyond the fields, almost no family units the former slaves began on the road toward self sufficiency. It was a long and difficult road as many whites placed more and more impossible obstacles' in their path, segregation, Jim Crow laws, unfair lending laws, sub-standard education, KKK, general cruelty and so many more.

The fight for civil rights for Black Americans brought forward leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Frederick Douglas, Ruby Bridges, Coretta King, John Lewis, John and Ted Kennedy and Linden Johnson. The battles were fraught with danger. Many black southerners were beaten, killed and jailed while just trying to claim those rights that belonged to all Americans. Yet, African Americans throughout this turmoil became scientists, authors, doctors, entertainers, businessmen and much more.



Candidates: ^ Alex Heeren is running for House District 66 – Alex stated that this is his home. We can do a better job than my opponent. He will fight for well-funded public schools. We can do so much better. He can do so much better. The time for half measures is over. We must make our schools safe. He will work to see that this happens. Alex's website is [Alex Heeren.com](http://AlexHeeren.com). He is in need of financial support.



Issues, ^ Peggy Tucker – Peggy keeps up with our Florida legislative agenda to keep the club informed on issues that affect our community. Peggy reported that HB7055 has been passed. There are also several gun control bills that may see the light as a result of the widespread demand for safer schools. Parkland students have gone to Tallahassee to have their voices heard. Maybe this will help.

<< Jennifer Webb is running for House District 69. She is currently leading the pack. She will work to pass sensible gun laws. Jennifer's next event is being held February 28th at the Iberian Rooster in St. Petersburg. She needs additional volunteers.

UPCOMING SPEAKERS



July 2018

Anna V. Eskamani is an Orlando Native and daughter of Iranian immigrant parents, who has worked relentlessly her entire life to protect all members of our community. A community organizer who is fighting unapologetically for progressive values, Anna currently serves as the Senior Director of Public Affairs and Communications for Planned Parenthood of Southwest and Central Florida. She is an advocate for women's health and equality. Anna is also a PhD student in Public Affairs at the University of Central Florida, She has also been featured on the cover of Time magazine, and is a candidate for HD 47.

Anna serves on local boards, including Valencia College's Peace and Justice Institute, and is a founding member of the Florida Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence, a gun safety advocacy coalition that formed after the Pulse nightclub massacre.



For the most up-to-date information on your Federal, State, and County representatives including all contact information, Go to :

[https://www.votepinellas.com/Portals/Pinellas/Documents/pdf for Website/Voter Information/2017%20Citizens%](https://www.votepinellas.com/Portals/Pinellas/Documents/pdf%20for%20Website/Voter%20Information/2017%20Citizens%20Information.pdf)

Contact your Federal Representative!

Senator Bill Nelson Washington, D.C. United States Senate 716 Senate Hart Office Building Washington, DC 20510 Phone: 202-224-5274 Fax: 202-228-2183 Tampa Sam Gibbons Federal Court House 801 N. Florida Ave., 4th Floor Tampa, Florida 33602 Phone: 813-225-7040 Fax: 813-225-7050

Senator Marco Rubio United States Senate, 284 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 Main: (202) 224-3041, Toll free: (866) 630-7106 Fax: (202) 228-5171, TTY: (407) 254-5548 Tampa: 5201 West Kennedy Boulevard Suite 530 Tampa, FL 33609 Phone: (813) 287-5035 Call: (813) 977-6450

Rep. Charlie Crist - 13th District <http://crist.house.gov/> Washington, DC Office 427 Cannon HOB Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202) 225-5961 Fax: (202) 225-9764 District Offices Seminole District Office 9210 113th Street Seminole, FL 33772 (727) 394-6950 (727) 394-6955 (fax) St. Petersburg District Office 696 1st Avenue North, Suite #203 St. Petersburg, FL 33701 Phone: (727) 318-6770

Rep. Kathy Castor - 14th District Washington Office 205 Cannon House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202) 225-3376 Fax: (202) 225-5652 Tampa Office 4144 N Armenia Ave Suite 300 Tampa, FL 33607 Phone: (813) 871-2817 Fax: (813) 871-2864 Office Hours: 8:30 am - 5:00 pm St. Petersburg Office University of South Florida - St. Pete Williams House 511 Second St. S. St. Petersburg, FL 33701 Phone: (727) 873-2817 Office Hours: Please call in advance. Note: Please mail all items to the Tampa District Office address.

Rep. Gus Bilirakis - 12th District Washington, DC Office 2112 Rayburn HOB Washington, DC 20515 PHONE: (202) 225-5755 FAX: (202) 225-4085 New Port Richey Office 7132 Little Road New Port Richey, FL 34654 PHONE: (727) 232-2921 FAX: (727) 232-2923 Tarpon Springs Office 600 Klosterman Road Room BB-038 Tarpon Springs, FL 34689 PHONE: (727) 940-5860 FAX: (727) 940-5861 Wesley Chapel Office 5901 Argonian Drive Suite 102 Wesley Chapel, FL 33545 PHONE: (813) 501-4942 FAX: (813) 501-4944

Opinions & News

Women are ready to rain down fire and fury on Trump

By Dana Milbank

Opinion writer Washington Post

As hundreds of thousands of women took to the streets on Saturday to vent their discontent with President Trump's first year in office, the president, who is supported by just 29 percent of women, did what he does best. He played the troll.

"Beautiful weather all over our great country, a perfect day for all Women to March," he tweeted, instructing women to "get out there to celebrate the historic milestones" of his presidency.

If there is another Women's March a year from now, Trump may indeed get his wish to see women celebrating. It took some time to build, but the women's backlash against Trump is ready to rain some fire and fury on him.

In addition to marching, women are running — for office — at a pace that is on course to shatter records. The Center for American Women in Politics at Rutgers University reports that 49 women are either running or planning to run for the Senate this year (previous record: 40), 389 for the House (previous record: 298) and 79 for governorships (previous record: 34 in 1994). The vast majority are

Democrats.

Even as women marched Saturday, senators were marching into the office of Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine), who led the successful effort to douse the latest conflagration Trump set. Collins, and fellow Republican Sen. Lisa Murkowski (Alaska), the women who thwarted the president on Obamacare, were also at the core of the group defusing an immigration showdown Trump had fanned with an

ad accusing Democrats of being complicit in murder.

What's next for the Women's March? We're going to have to get comfortable with being uncomfortable, says columnist Christine Emba. (Adriana Usero, Kate Woodsome, Daniel Mich/The Washington Post)

In off-year elections and polls, meanwhile, a gender chasm has opened. In Virginia's gubernatorial race, Democrat Ralph Northam won

women by 22 points, larger even than Hillary Clinton's 17-point margin in the commonwealth. Northam won 48 percent of white women, up from Clinton's 41 percent. In the Alabama Senate race, Democrat Doug Jones beat Roy Moore by 16 points among women and came close to Moore among white college-educated women.

The new Washington Post-ABC News poll finds Democrats with a



57 percent to 31 percent advantage among women going into

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November's midterm elections, twice the advantage Clinton had in 2016. Likewise, December's Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll found that women favored Democratic control of Congress by 20 points — 32 points among college-educated women.

In a sense, gravity is catching up with Trump after "Access Hollywood," Roy Moore, talk of women "bleeding," and a #MeToo movement that has reached everywhere but the male-dominated White House — complete with a male-dominated Cabinet that is working with a male-dominated Republican congressional leadership.

Particularly striking is that attitudes of women toward Trump have little to do with the economy or conventional "women's issues." Rather, the antipathy comes from a perception that he's dangerous and unstable. Republicans who plan to overcome the gender gap by talking about the economy and tax cuts are wasting their breath.

In the Post-ABC poll, there were relatively small gender gaps on immigration, race and the Russia probe. But there were huge gaps on Trump's mental stability (39 percent of women think him stable vs. 57 percent of men) and whether Trump can be trusted with nukes (only 30 percent of women think so, compared with

46 percent of men). Forty-two percent of women are very concerned Trump will launch an unjustified nuclear attack (68 percent do not trust Trump with them), compared with just 22 percent of men.

There was also a wide gender gap on perceptions of the economy, but when The Post's polling wizard, Scott Clement, ran analyses to control for people's partisan leanings, he found that gender had no significant effect on whether people give Trump credit for the economy. Even after controlling for partisanship, however, Clement found that women were six percentage points more likely to think Trump mentally unstable and nine points more likely to be very concerned about him starting a nuclear war.

This is consistent with what FiveThirtyEight observed this week: Women disapprove of Trump more than men do, regardless of party or race. That is, Republican women like Trump less than Republican men, and black Republican women like Trump less than black Republican men.

A Post-ABC poll released Jan. 22 found Democrats have an advantage ahead of 2018 congressional elections. (Elyse Samuels/The Washington Post)

Why? A combination of Trump's nuclear threats (women are generally

considered more dovish), the instability he has set off at home, and his behavior toward women have left many anxious, angry and activated.

Years ago, in a long line of misogynistic comments, Trump proclaimed that criticism doesn't matter, "as long as you've got a young and beautiful piece of ass."

It's entirely fitting that this man has sparked a mass movement of women poised to deliver a kick to his.

IF GUNS WERE AS REGULATED AS CARS



Title and Tag at Each Point of Sale	Title and Tag at Each Point of Sale
Driver Training	Gun Training
Written Test	Written Test
Practical Test	Practical Test
Health Requirements	Health Requirements
Liability Insurance on Each Vehicle	Liability Insurance on Each Gun
Renewals and Inspections at Intervals	Renewals and Inspections at Intervals

Occupy Posters owsposters.tumblr.com (C) 2015 SA

9th Annual Politics in the Park

WE are looking for SPONSORS.

The proceeds from this picnic go directly into the LARGO/MID-PINELLAS PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL COMMITTEE, from which we make donations to our State, County and Local candidates. The Political Committee is a way for our members to bundle donations to Democratic Candidates. **Sponsorships range from \$50 to \$500.** If you would like to help sponsor the Picnic, contact Mary Lou Ambrose.

You can buy tickets to the picnic ONLINE at

<https://lmpprogressivepc.com/>.

In addition to buying Picnic Tickets, you can donate online towards a sponsorship to the picnic as well!



Largo/Mid-Pinellas
Democratic Club
www.largodemocrats.com

9th Annual Democratic Picnic

Saturday, April 7, 2018

Politics in the Park

11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Pavillion 4
Taylor Lake Park
(across from Pinecrest Golf on 8th Ave)
Largo

Bratwurst!



**Super Dooper
HOT DOGS!**



Statewide and local Democratic office holders and candidates will be on hand to meet voters and speak.

**SODAS!
Lemonade!**

JOIN US!



**Lots of
CANDIDATES!**

Admission is \$10.
Tickets may be obtained from:
Mary Lou Ambrose 433-4045 or
Bob Glass 319-6031

Activist News

Constitutional Revision Committee —Public Hearing:

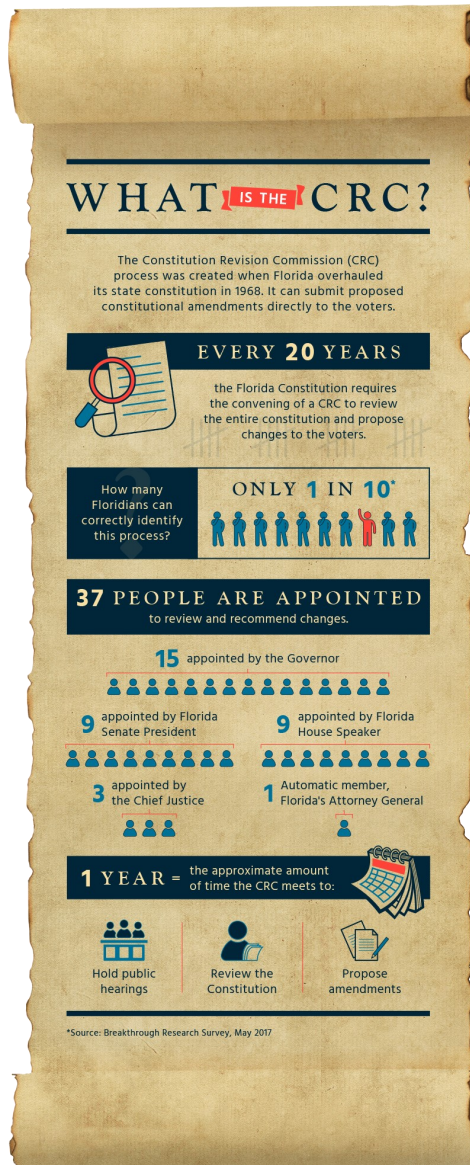
March 13, Several members of the Largo Club spoke at the Constitutional Revision Committee hearing on Tuesday in St. Petersburg. The hearing was jam-packed and went much longer than its scheduled 7 p.m. close.

More than 400 citizens signed up to speak on issues ranging from gun control to women's privacy rights to separation of church and state and banning greyhound racing. There were several bus loads of parents from Parkland in attendance.

Green plates in the photo signify that participants agreed with the speaker. Red plates meant disapproval. Speakers each had 2 minutes to speak.

To learn about the proposed changes to the Florida Constitution visit:

<https://www.flcrc.gov/Proposals>



Democratic Candidates for Governor to Debate in Tampa

Tallahassee Mayor Andrew Gillum, former Congresswoman Gwen Graham, Miami Beach Mayor Philip Levine, and Orlando businessman Chris King have all confirmed that they will attend a televised debate on April 18 at the WTVT-TV Fox 13 studios in Tampa. More info to come.



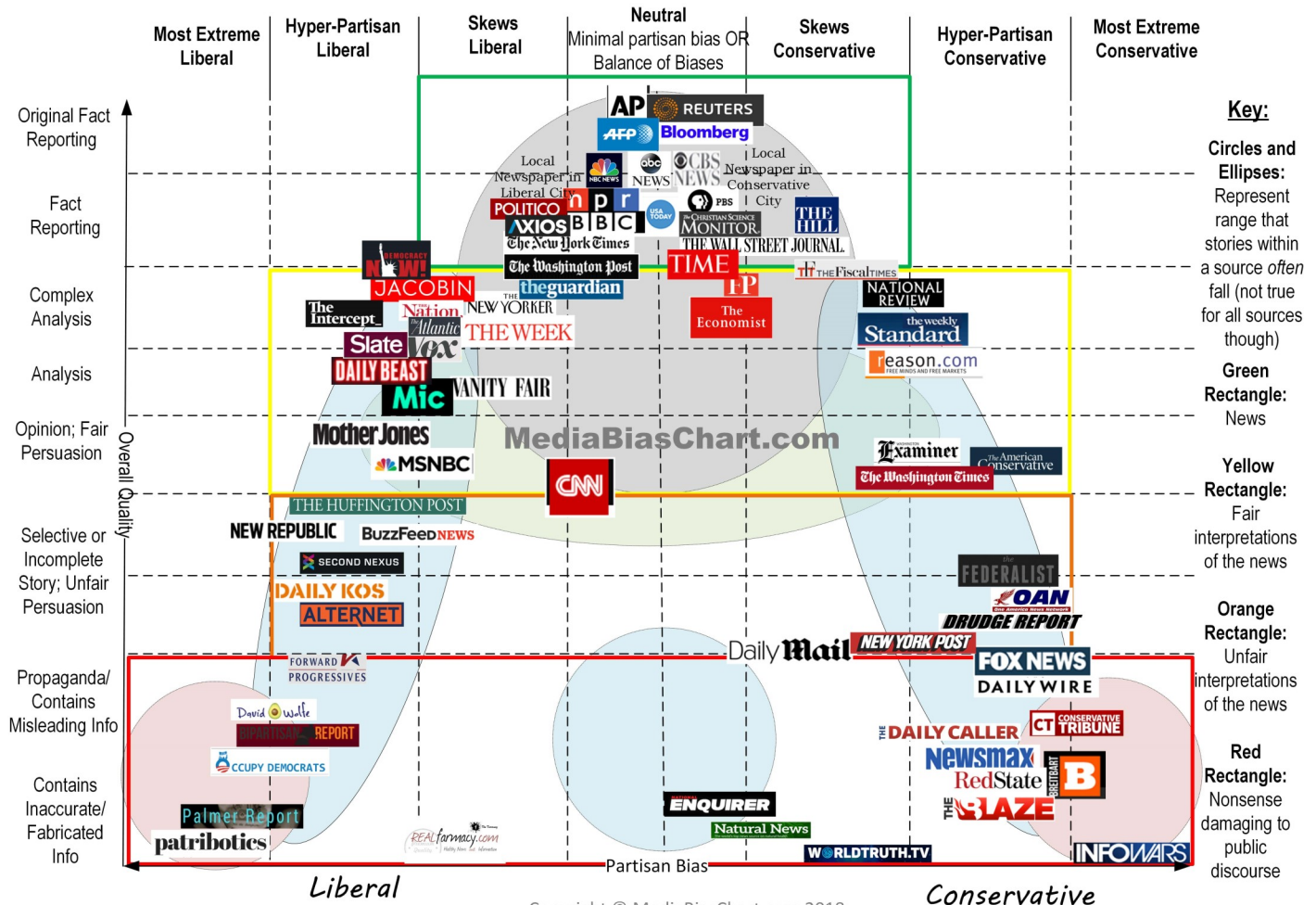
This information is courtesy of the Greater Tarpon Springs Democratic Club:

Text **"Resist"** to **50409** to get started in contacting your elected officials.

Text **"Giffords"** to **50409** to get connected with gun control groups.

Text **"NRA"** to **50409** to see how much the National Rifle Association has donated to your elected officials and spent supporting/opposing them.

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Find more events at www.pinellasdemocrats.org. or
www.floridadems.org.



What Florida's Legislature Did and Didn't Do

(compiled from Tampa Bay Times and Association Press stories) by
Peggy Tucker

Approximately 200 pieces of legislation made it through both the Florida House and the Senate in the session that just ended. Most of these still need to be signed by Gov. Scott before becoming law. Here is a quick look at some of the good, the half-good and the bad bills that passed or failed.

Good Bills That Passed

Prescription limits on opioids and \$53 million for addiction treatment.
A ban on marriage of anyone under the age of 17.
More money for the state's Bright Futures scholarship program.
A slavery memorial to be built on the Capitol grounds.
Replacing a statue of Confederate Gen. Edmund Kirby Smith with one of educator Mary McLeod Bethune in the U.S. Capitol's statuary hall.
A requirement that assisted living facilities and nursing homes have generators to run air conditioning in the event of a power outage.

Mixed Bag Bills That Passed

An expansive school safety bill in response to the school shootings in Parkland. It creates new restrictions on rifle sales, allows teachers in some cases to carry guns and provides new mental health programs. Remarkable in

that the Republican-led Legislature passed anything that included even small steps toward gun control, but provisions to possibly allow some teachers to carry weapons are confusing and ongoing funding is not assured.
An \$89 million budget that increases K-12 funding by only \$101.50 per student; allocates \$400 for school safety, mental health and other programs in response to Parkland shooting; includes \$100 million for Florida Forever and another \$200 plus million for other key environmental projects.

Bad Bills That Passed

The nation's first school voucher program for children who are bullied.
A proposed constitutional amendment asking voters to require a two-thirds vote before the Legislature can raise taxes or fees.
Doubling the maximum amount of payday loans from \$500 to \$1,000.

Good Bills That Failed

A ban on assault rifles and large capacity magazines.
A bill to prevent and punish sexual harassment in state govern-

ment.

A ban on texting and driving.
A bill to let victims of human trafficking sue hotels that turn a blind eye to the illegal activity.
A fracking ban.

Bad Bills That Failed

A crackdown on cities and counties that don't comply with federal immigration efforts (Speaker Richard Corcoran's can't get everything he wants!).
A ban on a second trimester abortion procedure that would have prohibited a physician from using forceps and other instruments to remove the fetus from the womb.
[A pre-emption of local regulation of vacation rental properties such as those offered through Airbnb and Home-Away.](#)

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admin@largodemocrats.com

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Complete Sign-up form!
This form allows you to enter your contact information and gives us permission to contact you.

Visit our Progressive Political Committee site

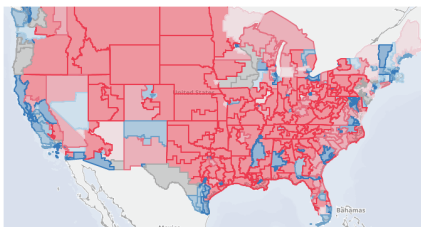
Largo/Mid-Pinellas Progressive Political Committee
We are a Political Committee, formed under the Florida Statutes, to raise money for Democratic Candidates and to advocate for Democratic Issues. The Club is limited to contributing an aggregate of \$500 per year to candidates and to support issues. The Political Committee allows us to do more for our candidates and to more effectively advocate for Progressive issues.

Upcoming Democratic Events

Full text of the 2017 Resolutions
At the October 28th meeting of the Florida Democratic Party 2017 Conference, the delegates

2017 August newsletter
2017 JULY newsletter
2017 June Newsletter
2017 May Newsletter
Photos from the April 22 Politics in the Park picnic
2017 April Newsletter

Find the link to our Political Committee page to set up your online donations!



Map from The Cook Political Report of 2018 US House Districts.

Read the full article at <https://www.cookpolitical.com/analysis/house/house-overview/ratings-changes-21-districts>

<—Want to follow the 2018 election scorecards?

Here are some websites to help you follow the bouncing balls: -->

<https://insideelections.com/ratings/senate>

<http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/2018-senate/>

<https://www.cookpolitical.com/ratings/senate-race-ratings>

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/politics/>

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All of the officers were elected March, 2017. Next election is March, 2019

Additional contact information is available on www.largodemocrats.com – click on Opinions and Letters

Why Join the Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club?

The club provides a variety of ways to stay informed and involved in local, county, state and national political discussions. But we're not just about talk. We will be part of the action in finding the best candidates and getting them elected, as well as supporting the most important causes. We will write letters, make phone calls, knock on doors, register voters, and whatever else it takes to bring change to our communities, our county and our state. But, just as important, we also want to make time to enjoy each other's company and celebrate each other's efforts at social events throughout the year. Grass-roots politics is effective and fun!

As a member of the Largo/Mid-Pinellas Democratic Club you can:

- Meet other active Democrats
- Meet and get to know your elected officials and potential candidates
- Raise funds and work for candidates
- Participate in community service projects
- Hear speakers and discuss issues of local, state and national importance
- Attend special events and monthly meetings.

Stating in membership year 2017 our dues will be \$15.00 per year. This is the first increase in dues since our founding in 2009.

