



DCDP BLUE NOTE

SPRING 2025
VOLUME 6, ISSUE 2

THE TIDE IS TURNING FOR DEMOCRATS!

From the Chair

New Leadership, a New Vision for the Future

Greetings Fellow Democrats and future Party members. As we begin a transformational journey for our county and our nation, I'm truly excited for the opportunity to be your Chair.

Since the County Convention, the Dorchester County Democratic Party has flipped our first seat in several years, held a 1K+ rally, in downtown Summerville, against Trump and DOGE overreach, and has received a significant increase in both donor activity and new member sign-ups.

I believe these outcomes are the result of a highly motivated Democratic base energized by an incredible community leader running for County Council, 2 great candidates running for DCDP Chair, and amazing local organizing efforts bringing us all together. This is a great reminder of why quality candidates, contested races (that don't result in mud-slinging), community organizing, and keeping our county members updated on policy actions are vital to voter activation and cohesion.

As we enter into 2025, on the road to 2026, as Chair, I have a clear mission guiding every decision I make.

I'm committed to guiding our party to authentically connect with our community, recruit high-quality candidates and committee leaders, and build the organizational infrastructure to be a force for progressive political change in Dorchester County. Our party will also be a safe, welcoming, and inclusive space focused on connection, community, and belonging.

Membership in the DCDP will be fun, informative, and provide opportunities to harness one's talents in alignment with one's values and beliefs.

I hope this resonates with you and that you'll join me in this incredible undertaking.

With Gratitude and Appreciation,

Michael Fronk, Chair
Dorchester County
Democratic Party



DCDP MEMBERSHIP MEETING

In-Person and Zoom

May 10 and June 14, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

New Bethel Sounds of Praise

351 Greyback Rd,
Summerville, SC 29483

Please sign up on the website at

dorchesterdemocrats.com

**We meet on the 2nd Saturday
of each month.**

WESTERN DORCHESTER COUNTY DEMOCRATIC CLUB MEETING

In-person

4th Mondays: April 28,

June 23, July 28

Time: 6:30 PM

Open to members and aspiring members.

Classy Sassy Salon,
421 N. Parler Ave., St. George

Contact *Tim Lewis* for scheduled speakers,
email timlewis75@gmail.com

NEW MEMBER COFFEE TALK

1st Saturday's

June 7

2:30 TO 4:00 PM

Luxe Bar and Bistro

1430 Central Ave

With record numbers signing up, we expect 2025 will be an exciting year for new member meetups. Come and network with like-minded people. Sign up at dorchesterdemocrats.com

Contact Brenson Ravenell, 3rd Vice Chair, at
bbrensonravenell@gmail.com



New DCDP Officers (2025-2027),

left to right:

Denise Haynes Rock, Alternate Executive
Committeewoman,

Richard Hayes, Executive Committeeman,
Barbara Felder, Executive Committeewoman,

Rita Adkins, 2nd Vice Chair,
Alexia Niketas, 1st Vice Chair,

Michael Fronk, Chair
(Mayra Rivera Vasquez, 2nd Vice Chair, SCDP)
Brenson Ravenell, 3rd Vice Chair
Bryan Holman, Alt. Executive Committeeman

YOUNG DEMS - LOWCOUNTRY CHAPTER SOCIAL

(ages 14 - 39)

Wednesday, April 23, 6:30PM

Brecks Steakhouse,
8510 Rivers Ave., North Charleston



A BIG WIN FOR DORCHESTER COUNTY PETER SMITH, JR. SWORN IN!



We're thrilled to share that Democrat Peter Smith Jr. was officially sworn into the Dorchester County Council on April 6, 2025, following his decisive 65%–34% victory in the March 25 special election for District 1. This is a major win—not just for Democrats, but for the entire county.

Peter's election flips a previously Republican-held seat and brings new energy, vision, and community-focused leadership to the council. A Navy veteran and longtime local advocate, Peter is ready to get to work for all of Dorchester County—ensuring every voice is heard and no one is left behind.

The swearing-in ceremony on April 6th marked the start of a new chapter for District 1 and for Dorchester County. We're proud to stand with Councilman Smith as he begins this important work.

Jeni Atchley, Campaign Manager



SPRING 2025

HANDS OFF!

Hey DCDP, it's Bryan just reporting back on how our "Hands Off" rally went, in Summerville, on 4/5, it was phenomenal! We had over 1200 protesters, peaceably lined up, we had zero real incidents--just some heckling and one water throwing incident (them not us). We had zero police interaction and got great press coverage.

We have established press contacts. Upcoming protest date in Charleston, is April 19, Brittlebank Park, 185 Lockwood, Charleston, 9:30 to 11:00 AM. There will possibly be a march in Charleston, on June 6; I will keep everyone posted as to the exact time and place.

Bryan Holman
Alt. Executive Committeeman
50501 Local Coordinator



PAID FOR BY THE DORCHESTER COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR DD2/DD4 SCHOOL DISTRICT CONSOLIDATION

SPRING 2025

The Dorchester County Legislative Delegation (DCLD) has held two hearings so far, to learn local opinions about Rep. Chris Murphy's (R-98) drafted bill, that would consolidate DD2 and DD4 school districts. Both The Eagle-Record and The Journal Scene have been running feature columns highlighting these community hearings, which have been filling the meeting spaces. This is democracy in action! There will be one more hearing, date TBA. Don't miss it. See Tim Lewis' dissent on the front page of The Eagle-Record, April 10, 2025.

***The overwhelming sentiment
from both communities is "NO!"***

DD2 School Board Meetings

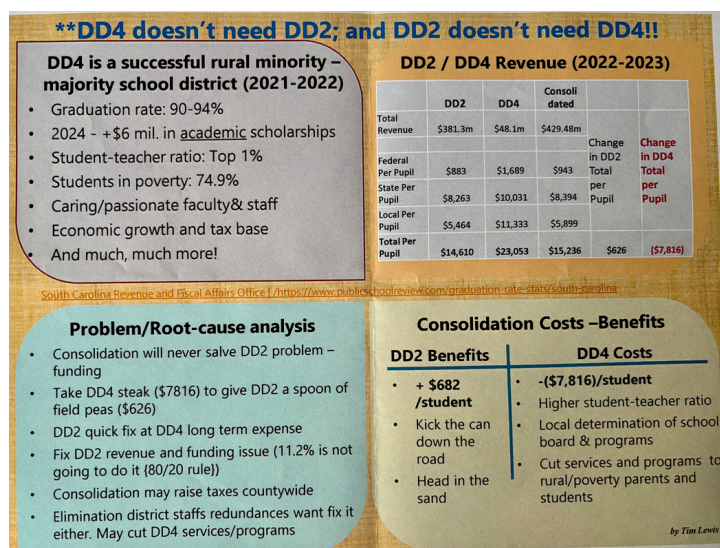
are on the 2nd & 4th Monday nights at the District Office (815 S. Main St., Summerville) at 6:00 PM. You can find the agenda by going on DD2's web page & click on BoardDocs. It may take a bit of trial & error to find the detailed agenda w/hyperlinks to specific policies to be discussed, etc.

It would be wonderful for SEVERAL DCDP members to attend meetings & become familiar with the Board's workings! Meetings are fairly routine with teachers, students & programs throughout the district being highlighted, updates given on facilities, the status of construction projects, testing scores & analytics, & curriculum changes.

Occasionally there are issues brought up in public comments that are noteworthy. The benefit of having DCDP members engaged is being able to quickly react when the State Dept. of Education makes mandates, when board elections are coming up, & to generally hold the board accountable for their actions.

Meetings are also live streamed & can be watched in real time or later when more convenient. They are also archived so you can go back & watch what has led up to the present.

Martha Sue Hope,
Community Activist (At-Large)



Graphic created by Tim Lewis, former DCDP Chair.

Governance Changes

A Panel discussion was held on Sunday, 3/30/25, at Baum's Temple AME Zion Church, Summerville. Sponsors were the NAACP and Sororities. This panel rang the alarm on the regressive and punitive effects the Anti-DEI bill H. 39270 would have on the community. (See more about it on the following page.) If passed, this will traumatize many families, hurt women and minorities. We will need to look out for our neighbors and help one another. Note: Harriet Holman (R-102) was one of the bill's sponsors.

This is not a time for silence.

"We need to do something bigger--discuss changes that inspire the moral imagination of the Nation." ~Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ), during his historic, record-breaking 25-hour filibuster from March 31 to April 1, 2025.

Bill Attacking Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

South Carolinians have been showing up and speaking out since March 4 against [House Bill 3927](#), a sweeping speech ban that would punish state agencies, schools, and universities for pursuing DEI initiatives. To date, no member of the public has spoken in favor of this bill in a legislative hearing.

On April 1st, sponsors of this bill jammed it through by limiting debate on proposed amendments. Among other things, these amendments would have protected the constitutional rights of South Carolinians and state contractors, promoted equal access to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) programs in schools, and allowed medical professionals to continue DEI training to combat inequities and biases in healthcare.

The majority of lawmakers shot those amendments down and instead adopted a dramatic revision of the bill that targets state contractors for DEI practices. The bill passed the House on Thursday and is now in the Senate, where it has not yet been assigned to committee (as of Weds., 4/9). We can still push back by calling and writing to our state [Senators](#)!

Book Censorship Regulation 43-170

Until last week, the SC Board of Education had been routinely voting to censor books ([the most in the country](#)) because of [Regulation 43-170](#). This policy purports to be about “age and developmentally appropriate” classroom materials, but it sets the same standard for kindergartners and 18-year-old high school seniors: Any text containing a “description” of sexual conduct is banned from classroom collections and school libraries.

Contact Emily Avent Havener at emilyahavener@gmail.com if you would like a list of specific studies to reference on DEI.

On April 1, the State Board of Education pumped the brakes and even suggested they would be willing to revisit Regulation 43-170, because several members expressed concern! Among them were Maya Slaughter and Ken Richardson. To quote Maya, “I am concerned about potential abuses of a process that we intended to be fair and equitable.” If these are your board members, find their contact info [here](#) and thank them.

Maya Slaughter, represents the First Circuit—Calhoun, Dorchester and Orangeburg counties. She is a practicing attorney in Orangeburg.

Board Member Maya Slaughter
849 Learning Lane
West Columbia, SC 29172
Phone: 803-290-4507
Email: mtslaughter@ed.sc.gov

Bills Attacking Transgender Rights

Several bills filed this spring have targeted the rights of transgender people, particularly trans youth. **Senate Bill 540** seems designed to protect harmful “conversion therapy” practices that falsely claim to change a person’s gender identity. The bill, filed April 3, states that a parent or guardian who “seeks out and consents to any lawful mental healthcare service for a child to assist the child in living consistent with the child’s sex” cannot be charged with abuse or harm. This bill would send South Carolina in the opposite direction of the 20 states that have passed laws protecting youth from this harmful practice.

House Bill 4302, also filed on April 3, would require that children in residential foster care facilities be placed in housing units “based strictly upon the individual’s anatomical sex at birth as recognized on their original birth certificate.”

In a state where politicians claim to love limited government, our lawmakers keep advancing bills that would create a state-enforced definition of gender — a definition that is notably out of step with science.

Alexia Niketas, 1st Vice Chair

PARTING SHOTS

SPRING 2025

The SAVE Act (H.R. 22) - On April 10, 2025, a voter suppression bill passed the US House with a 220-208 vote, and will be taken up by the Senate.

Republicans in Congress introduced the extreme anti-voter Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act (H.R. 22/S.128) and declared it among their top priorities. This bill would hinder millions of eligible Americans from registering to vote by requiring citizens to present a birth certificate or passport, in person to register.

Call your Senators here at [5 Calls](#). Talking points are included.



**HURRICANE PREP
EXPO
& FAMILY FUN DAY**
MAY 31, 10am- 1pm
ASHLEY RIVER PARK

Prepare Your Home and Family for
Hurricane Season
BRING THE FAMILY FOR:
Inflatables
Train Rides
Face Painting
Balloon Art
Food



Newsletter Contributors

Michael Fronk, Chair
Jeni Atchley
Bryan Holman
Martha Sue Hope
Tim Lewis
Alexia Niketas
Emily Avent Havener
Linda Buchanan
Elizabeth Tapp
Denise D'Ambrosia
Hands Off Rallies
Aniya Cohen, editor

**"Action may not always bring happiness; but there is
no happiness without action." Benjamin Disraeli**

**"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is
also what it takes to sit down and listen." Sir Winston Churchill**

Donate



PAID FOR BY THE DORCHESTER COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
NOT AUTHORIZED BY ANY CANDIDATE OR CANDIDATE'S COMMITTEE