



WOMAN'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CLUB

ESTABLISHED 1922 | *From the Right to Vote...the Power to Lead*

RESISTANCE 2017

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Our Mission

The Woman's National Democratic Club (WNDC) is the meeting place for Democrats, Independents, and Progressives in the nation's capital. We serve as a forum for writers, scholars, and Democratic and progressive leaders, and we engage our members and guests—women and men—in discussions and advocacy for public policy that advances our nation's democratic values.

Resistance 2017

Resistance 2017 is a special issue of the *PPC News*, published in response to President Donald J. Trump's first 100 days. The editorials included here reflect the strong commitment of the WNDC—its Board of Governors, committees, and members—to resist the civic catastrophe ushered in by the Trump Administration. In the months that follow this publication, we will continue devoting our collective strength, energy, and skill to resist the damaging agenda this administration seeks to impose on our nation and its citizens.

Committee for Public Policy and Political Action

Karen Pataky, Chair

The Public Policy Committee (PPC) is the political arm of the Woman's National Democratic Club (WNDC). It develops and advocates for positions on a broad range of national and international importance through its several task forces. The chair of the committee is the WNDC Vice President for Public Policy and Political Action, Karen Pataky.

Task Forces

DC Statehood, MaryEva Candon, *Chair*

Education/Children's Issues, Dianna Washington, *Chair*

Earth and Environment, Jean Stewart, *Chair*

Election Reform/Voting Rights, Gail Gottlieb, *Chair*

Faith and Values, Kristin Cabral, *Chair*

Global Women, Veena Trehan, *Chair*

Gun Policy, Gail Gottlieb, *Chair*

Health Care, Karen Pataky, *Chair*

Social and Economic Justice, Veena Trehan, *Chair*

EDITOR: Elizabeth Joyce, *Vice President for Communications*

Resistance 2017

Facing Down Trump's "Deconstruction" Machine

Anyone who hoped that President Donald Trump would eschew Candidate Trump's cruel rhetoric now knows better. A mere five months into his tenure, this scandal-ridden, impulse-driven president has moved to reverse decades of progress and our Constitution itself. WNDC's Public Policy Committee presents a glimpse of Trump's most disturbing initiatives to rally our members for the Resistance ahead.

The Democratic National Committee's Summer of Resistance began nationwide on June 3.

The editorials that follow show why WNDC will be part of it.

ACA REPEAL: FIG LEAF FOR CUTTING TAXES AND FEDERALLY FUNDED HEALTH CARE

The American Health Care Act, recently passed by the House of Representatives, shows the president's and the Republican-dominated Congress's willingness to take healthcare from millions of Americans. The effort to repeal Obamacare (the Affordable Care Act) reveals callous indifference to the economic plight of our citizens.

"Americans have to make a choice," stated Congressman Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah). "Rather than getting that new iPhone ... maybe they should invest in their own health care." "The Medicaid population, which is (on) a free credit card as a group, do probably the least preventive medicine and taking care of themselves..." sniffed physician-Congressman Roger Marshall (R-Kansas).

These cynical attacks on the soon-to-be uninsured mask the true agenda of Republican "health care reform"—to provide [extra funds as a cushion for "tax reform"](#)—or tax cuts for the wealthy. Republicans want to pass massive tax cuts as part of a health care package (rather than a tax reform bill) to avoid having to offset (or make up for) the revenue losses required under the reconciliation process they favor to avoid having to work with Democrats on tax reform. This underhanded strategy, plus the Republican/Libertarian (Rand Paul) opposition to the federal government as protector of the health and welfare of its citizens, lies behind the tactics to repeal (but not replace) Obamacare.

So, who wins if "Trump Care" (the American Health Care Act, narrowly passed by the House), survives the Senate?

- **High income earners** who will enjoy millions in tax cuts
- **Upper middle class without preexisting conditions** who will also enjoy tax cuts
- **Young middle class people without (known) preexisting health conditions** will enjoy low insurance rates
- **People who choose to "go without insurance"** (presupposing no accidents, critical illnesses, or pregnancies will occur)
- **Large employers** who would no longer be required to offer affordable health care to their employees and thus would keep billions of dollars in profits
- **Medical device, prescription drug, and indoor tanning companies** that would all have their taxes rolled back.

Who Loses?

- **Americans with preexisting conditions** will be forced into very expensive "high risk insurance pools" rather than the general insurance funds where healthy citizens' insurance payments buffer the exorbitant costs of the chronically infirm. A recent [Kaiser Family Foundation study](#) found that 6.3 million people would be at risk for higher premiums under the House bill.

- **Older Americans under Medicare age (65 years old)** in most states may lose access to care via “Trump Care,” which would allow insurance companies to quintuple the premiums charged to a 64-year-old person compared to the costs for an 18-year old person.
- **Poor people of all ages in most states** will lose access to health care with the slashing of \$880 million dollars over ten years of the Medicaid program, which finances 50 percent of all births and 75 percent of publicly funded reproductive care for beneficiaries who are mostly black and Latina. Millions of frail elderly and disabled citizens will also be stripped of access to health care and nursing home care.
- **State governments will lose millions of dollars** in Medicaid funding because states that have chosen the Medicaid expansion (32, 14 with Republican governors) receive a 30 percent increase in state revenues.
- **Hospitals will close** due to loss of Medicaid and Medicare dollars. Hospital closures also result in significant job losses in their surrounding communities.
- **2.5 million women (and men who request STD testing) will lose Planned Parenthood** as their preferred reproductive health care provider due to last-minute concessions to the far-right. The “deal” would strip funding to Planned Parenthood via Title X and Medicaid funding for one year.

Citizens over 65 who rely on Medicare will face an uncertain future because some Republicans are threatening to dismantle and “voucherize” Medicare.

Also, people who choose less comprehensive coverage (not an option under Obamacare) will pay lower rates for insurance that customarily covers too few major health disasters that do not involve preexisting conditions. Preventive care, prescription costs, and prenatal care including labor and delivery are generally “not covered” and would be billed to each patient. Most Americans are unaware of the paucity of coverage of such health insurance plans.

Not surprisingly many professional health care associations (e.g., the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Nurses Association, and the American Hospital Association) have strongly denounced the Trump/Ryan bill.

We cannot and we will not allow health care to be denied to any American simply because he/she is perceived to be one of “those people” who are not deserving of the same health care we wish for ourselves and our families. Not ever.

Karen Pataky
*Vice President for Public Policy and Political Action
 Chair, Healthcare Task Force*

A PRESIDENT WHOSE EGO TRUMPS AMERICANS' VOTING RIGHTS

More than 100 days into the Trump presidency, Democrats still take bitter solace from Hillary Clinton's three-million-vote victory in the popular vote. Having witnessed a similar scenario with Al Gore's popular vote victory over George W. Bush, organizations like [FairVote](#), [Common Cause](#), and others are intensifying calls to replace the Electoral College with direct national elections.

But President Trump, instead of claiming his Electoral College victory and moving on, has a far different preoccupation: He [insists](#) that *he* is the real winner of the popular vote—when we disregard the three to five million “illegals” he says voted. His claim is [not grounded](#) in fact; election experts have repeatedly said that voter fraud is extremely rare.

This claim might easily be ignored as just another of the President's colorful, evidence-free assertions, but for his recently hatched, taxpayer-funded, ironically named [Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity](#). While Americans across the political spectrum might welcome a commission that helps election supervisors keep their records updated, facilitates citizen participation, or protects against hacking, this is a horse of a different color, and choosing as co-chair Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach—the infamous [King of Voter Suppression](#)—speaks volumes. Kobach has been [called](#) the “most racist politician in America” and is the architect of voter restrictions that a federal court [struck down](#) after a finding that it would unconstitutionally disenfranchise 18,000 Kansans.

What Is Voter Suppression?

Designed to suppress turnout for racial, hyper-partisan, or other illicit reasons, voter suppression takes various forms. It can mean erecting obstacles to registration, like nearly insurmountable bureaucratic labyrinths for ex-offenders and others. Or reducing the number of early voting sites and eliminating early voting on [days](#) traditionally used by African American churches to organize trips to the polls. Or imposing cumbersome and unnecessary voter ID requirements to disenfranchise marginalized groups. Or—don't laugh—by [canceling](#) the registration of voters with names similar to those of registered voters in other states. (This is a tactic advocated by Kris Kobach.)

Republican-controlled state legislatures have been enthusiastically employing these maneuvers. In North Carolina, they were used to “target African Americans with almost surgical precision” and “impose cures for problems that did not exist,” according to the 4th Circuit panel that [struck down](#) the law. But in a major victory for civil and voting rights advocates, the Supreme Court has [declined](#) to overturn the 4th District's decision. Don't celebrate too soon, however: Federal court findings of racial gerrymandering in North Carolina's congressional and legislative districts are under still appeal.

Glimmers of Hope

There are other glimmers of hope, too. In Wisconsin, Republican Governor Scott Walker had [proposed](#) eliminating all six election commission positions that had been funded by a soon-to-expire grant under the Help America Vote Act, enacted in 2002. In a partial victory for the electorate, the Republican-controlled

Joint Finance Committee (which replaced a previous bipartisan board) reinstated five of the six positions and reduced the daily payments to members of the elections and ethics commissioners from \$454 to \$227, rather than to the paltry \$50 the governor had proposed. Although Wisconsin's situation is not as bad as it might have been, as the state's Democrats point out, a fully functioning voting system is crucial to our democracy and needs full funding. Wisconsin badly needs to show a real commitment to voting rights: In 2014, a federal court struck down a law that required a form of ID that an estimated 300,000 Wisconsinites **lacked**. Many of those potential voters may have been **turned off** from the election process. In 2016 Donald Trump won Wisconsin by 27,000 votes.

And in Illinois, the state senate approval has just moved a **step closer** to enacting universal registration of eligible voters, which would put the state in line with seven other states (Alaska, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Oregon, Vermont, and West Virginia) and the District of Columbia.

Causes for Concern

In Texas, voting rights advocates recently **celebrated** a federal court decision striking down Texas's voter ID requirements, which were among the most onerous in the country. The finding that the law intentionally discriminated against minorities was particularly telling: Under the Obama administration, the Justice Department joined in alleging that the law was designed for that very purpose. In stark contrast, under the Trump administration, the Justice Department **withdrew** this element of its case. Apparently allergic to unbiased election procedures, the Trump administration nonetheless will spend taxpayer funds on his phony "Commission on Election Integrity" and continue to feed the narrative that too many people—the wrong kind of people—are voting.

Although the wave of voter suppression tactics was already underway, 14 states put new restrictions in place for the **2016 elections**. Donald Trump **carried** 12 of them—Alabama, Arizona, Indiana, Kansas, Mississippi, Nebraska, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin. The remaining two—New Hampshire and Rhode Island—had just eight Electoral College votes between them, hardly enough to hold back the tsunami of voter suppression tactics.

As the American electorate experiences the confusion caused by constantly changing restrictions and the sense of futility caused by such structural impediments to democracy as gerrymandering, it's small wonder that the United States has one of the **lowest rates** of election participation in the developed world. In the topsy-turvy world of the Donald J. Trump presidency, voter suppression is not a travesty to address but a victory to celebrate: "They didn't come out. And that was big — so thank you to the African American community," Trump crowed.

It's hard to know whether Trump believes he won the Electoral College vote fairly or his absurd assertions about millions of illegally cast ballots. In any case, his ego-driven delusions strengthen the hands of racists and others who wish to suppress turn-out and dampen our democracy.

And now we have the Trump-created, Kobach-chaired "Commission on Election Integrity."

Should we be worried? Yes. Bigly.

Gail Gottlieb, Chair
Election Reform/Voting Rights Task Force

GLOBAL WOMEN ARE TARGETED BUT RISING

An estimated [4.5 million people worldwide](#) sailed through the streets worldwide for the Women's March, protesting the inauguration of Donald Trump. The president's war on women (coincidentally?) began immediately:

Slashing Global Aid

Major decreases in international aid for programs supporting reproductive rights, healthcare and well-being will severely impact women worldwide.

- **Global Gag Rule:** Just two days later, President Trump instituted the "global gag rule" (also ironically called the "Mexico City Policy"), which cuts off funding for health groups that promote, refers patients to, or advocate abortion, even if they are not using U.S. Government funding to do so. The gag rule "[crippled family planning programmes](#)" and [potentially increased abortions](#) when it was last in effect during the George W. Bush administration (*The Lancet*). Trump's gag rule [greatly expands](#) the scope of [government programs](#) subject to the restriction.
- **Severe Development and Diplomacy Budget Cuts:** The Trump administration's proposed fiscal year 2018 "skinny budget" also slashes diplomacy and development budgets by over 30 percent and could include an end to a 2012 policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (GEFE) that requires all projects to have a gender integration plan.
- **Sought to End Funding for "Let Girls Learn":** The administration planned to [end funding for Michelle Obama's "Let Girls Learn"](#) initiative aimed at breaking down the barriers keeping 62 million girls out of school for fewer early marriages, and better health and economic prospects. They subsequently stepped back from that unpopular position.
- **Cuts for United Nations Population Fund:** In addition, the administration seeks to [cut off funding](#) for the United Nations Population Fund that does not provide abortions but has prevented 35 million unintended pregnancies in just three years and millions more devastating injuries, infections, and death. This policy has been described as "misogyny" (*The Lancet*) and "pro-death" (Nicholas Kristoff, *The New York Times*).
- **Massive Cuts to U.N. Funding:** U.S cuts to United Nations funding ([50 percent by one estimate](#)) severely damage the international humanitarian system and especially punish of women, who [suffer more in war](#).

Attempts to Silence U.S. Women Leaders

Domestically, the attempt to exclude and silence women has been notable, even for an administration never expected to champion equality or human rights.

- **Senator Elizabeth Warren was chastised** by Senator Mitch McConnell for reading Coretta Scott King's 1986 letter criticizing Jeff Sessions' work to disenfranchise black voters. "She persisted," Senator McConnell sermonized, "justifying" his silencing of a fellow Senator, yet producing a powerful and inspiring meme.

- **Protester Desiree Fairouz is being prosecuted for laughing** during the January confirmation hearing of Jeff Sessions at Senator Richard Shelby's assertion that Sessions "has [treated] all Americans equally under the law."
- **Senator McConnell formed a working group of 13 white men** to shape the Senate's health care bill (after the passage of a ACHA by the House which **harms mothers and babies** and cuts Medicare **critical to elderly women**.)
- **Acting Attorney General Sally Yates was fired** for refusing to implement the Muslim ban (called as much on a Trump campaign website until early May). Yates's recent powerful and deeply illuminating testimony before the Senate, though, may have provided key momentum on the Trump-Russia scandal.

Removing Reproductive Rights

The Republicans have launched an all-out assault on reproductive rights. They signed into law a provision to keep patients using Title X funds—devoted to providing comprehensive family planning—from using the organization that is often the **best family planning provider**: Planned Parenthood. In fact, in 1/5 of the counties in which it operates, it is the only provider. That law would prevent about 1.3 million patients from using Planned Parenthood services. Additionally, the American Healthcare Act passed by the House of Representatives, if passed in its current form, would take away most of Planned Parenthood's federal funding.

In states, the effect is arguably worse, with over 1,000 measures introduced to restrict reproductive health being introduced in 2017 ALONE. Fetal burial laws, anti-scientific counseling, and personhood measures are being advanced. Thirty states are reintroducing targeted regulation of abortion providers (TRAP) legislation, despite a Supreme Court case just last year that ruled against that approach. These initiatives may be introduced in preparation for a Roe vs. Wade challenge, as a direct overturn in the near future is unlikely. The appointment of Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court **bodes poorly**; chipping away at a woman's right to choose is more likely now.

Women Battle Back

Notably, though women are stepping up, with more than **11,000 interested in running for office** and continuing activism, particularly after the rousing Women's March, to defend our human, economic, and environmental rights. Women's rights are human rights, and we must conduct a war on the Trump Administration's war on women.

Veena Trehan, Chair
Global Women Task Force

TRUMP AND EDUCATION: ONLY 1,320 MORE DAYS TO GO

The Trump Administration's first 100 days have come and gone, and we are beginning to see the outline of his educational policies and the potentially destructive impact of these policies on our nation's schools.

The president and his education secretary, Betsy DeVos, are working to increase funds for voucher programs in schools and have made "school choice" a priority. Opponents label this effort as a privatization of public schools and view the use of public funds for private and religious schools as a "dismantling of public education." Historically, access to public education has been a cornerstone of American democracy. During the campaign, Donald Trump promised to fund a \$20 billion school choice program, and as president, he has asked Congress to work with him in extending this effort.

Where Will This Money Come From?

The [Washington Post](#) reports that official details, which will include \$10.6 billion in cuts to the Department of Education and 22 programs on the chopping block, will be released this month. The programs include:

- **After-school programs** serving 1.6 million children, the majority of whom are poor.
- **2.1 billion for teacher training** and class size reduction.
- **\$15 million cut in a child care program** for low income- parents attending college.
- **50 percent cut in funding for college work study.**
- **End of a loan-forgiveness program** that encourages students to pursue careers in underserved areas.
- **Staff decrease** in the Office of Civil Rights, which enforces civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination in academic institutions.
- **Funding cuts for mental health services in schools.**

What's at Stake?

The administration wants to spend \$400 million to expand charter schools and promote school vouchers. Washington, DC's voucher program that allows low- income students to attend private schools using federal funds has received mixed reviews—with one study showing a decrease in math performance for participating students while another showed increased graduation rates. The Trump Administration is also requesting \$1 billion for a new grant program, Funding Options for Children to Unleash Success (FOCUS) to encourage schools to adopt school choice policies.

In April, President Trump signed an executive order requiring Education Secretary Betsy DeVos to conduct a review (within 300 days) identifying any regulations in which the federal government has "overstepped its legal authority in K-12 schools." The Every Child Succeeds Act of 2015 gave states much authority over schools instead of the federal government, and many Republicans believe the federal government should not be

involved in public education at all. Others look to school choice as a way for school districts to exercise more control over their schools.

However, even within the school choice movement, there is much dissent on how and where the nation's children should be educated. One group supporting school choice wants to see funds used to improve traditional public schools. Another group wants to allow tax funds in the form of vouchers used for private schools, including both religious and for-profit schools. Many see the lingering and unsettled issues of school integration and teacher diversity as providing the backdrop for many of these policies.

Secretary DeVos's poor grasp of these issues was on fully display earlier this month when she delivered the commencement speech at the historically black Bethune-Cookman University in Florida. She described such institutions (which were actually founded in response to racial segregation) as "real pioneers when it comes to school choice." Many outraged students turned their backs on her during her speech.

Let's hope the nation turns its back on this misguided set of policies.

Dianna Washington, PhD, Chair
Education and Children's Issues Task Force

SEVERE CHALLENGES TO SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Despite a win that drew heavily upon working class, the Trump administration has advanced policies that harm its prime electorate. His agenda caters to the wealthy and businesses, funneling concentration of wealth to the top—even while [eight men have as much as 3.5 billion](#) worldwide and Americans disapprove of record national inequality). Trump's spokespeople have tried to mask the damage to his voters with swift changes in topic and an attempt to make a foil of immigrants and minorities, contrasting them with whites.

Yet these minority groups, ironically, have never held substantial power, thus how could they have made America “not great?” The overall threat is enormous: Trump seeks to reverse decades of progress won by broad-based diverse coalitions, to ignore our most pressing challenges, and to shy away from any reconciliation of the administration's proposals with prized American values of equality, justice, and opportunity.

Frustratingly, Trump's cabinet appointees don't actually believe in government. They represent a potential onslaught against programs that advance the vital public interests—a sustainable climate, clean air, a strong public education for all, and living wages.

The first 100 days can be viewed as trail of broken promises, with considerable damage to our republic:

- ***The American Healthcare Act of 2017*** did not pass within the first 100 days. And, while not yet scored by the Congressional Budget Office, it probably represents an enormous wealth transfer and will harm tens of millions of Americans. Numerous healthcare and public interest groups have come out against it.
- ***The confirmation of Neil Gorsuch*** to the Supreme Court threatens human, civil and environmental rights and legal protections, which prompted over [115 national organizations to oppose his elevation](#).
- ***The administration's tough rhetoric against undocumented immigrants*** has been followed by actions expanding the categories for deportation and creating an [office for victim of crimes by undocumented immigrants](#) who, ironically, commit less crime than citizens. One Dreamer has been deported, contrary to administration statements. Half of those subject to February raids [lacked a criminal record](#) or had committed minor offenses. About [500 jurisdictions](#) are now “sanctuary cities,” although Texas has just banned them.
- ***Executive Order 13769 (01/27) denied entry*** to many individuals from seven nations—Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria (delayed indefinitely) and Yemen—despite [no immigrants and refugees](#) from these nations having been tied to even one fatal terror attack. Most recently, Hawaiian and Maryland federal judges blocked a revised order, and court challenges continue.
- ***Also chilling has been the war on the media, knowledge, and science:*** the cornerstones of free speech, debate, and democracy. The administration has labeled the media the enemy of the people and the opposition party, with Nixonian overtones. They have made false assertions on [numerous topics](#) and removed significant information vital to the public interest (including science and [climate data – reposted in Chicago](#)).

The first 100 days can be viewed as trail of broken promises, with considerable damage to our republic.



Progress comes only through the ardent pursuit of truth, which requires a functional democracy. In these times of unprecedented challenges, we must strive not to turn back the clock, but to advance progress through wins that champion justice and equality.

Veena Trehan, Chair
Social and Economic Justice Task Force

POTUS 45 VERSUS THE EARTH AND ENVIRONMENT

At this writing, the implications of the current administration for the earth and the environment are all horrifying. The greatest dangers to the health of our country and our planet besides POTUS 45 are three of his chosen executive branch leaders. First and worst is EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, a climate science denier and longtime foe of the agency he is supposedly leading. EPA spokesman J. P. Freire recently announced plans to replace scientists on scientific advisory boards with “[industry scientific experts](#)” and to cut one advisory board’s budget by 84 percent, “reflecting a lower number of peer reviews.”

Next is Energy Secretary Rick Perry, who thought that the mission of his agency was to promote the oil and gas industry.

Last but not least is Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke, who has per Trump’s executive order begun to review all National Monuments established since 1996 with an eye to at least reduce them in area to permit exploitation of oil and minerals, timber, and fish resources on these precious lands.

In general, the administration has pushed for a wide variety of initiatives that promote fossil fuels and in various ways endanger the environment:

- Authorizing resumption of the Keystone XL pipeline and the DAPL pipeline.
- Pushing for more offshore oil drilling in the Atlantic, Gulf, and for offshore drilling in the fragile Arctic.
- Attempting to revoke environmental regulations, e.g., increasing fuel economy standards for personal and commercial vehicles, controlling disposition of coal ash.

The Administration’s proposed budget outline would drastically cut funds to the EPA, NOAA, Energy Department programs on climate research, programs for Chesapeake Bay cleanup, and on safe disposition of mining wastes.

These draconian budget and accompanying staffing cuts are on hold until October 1; the Congressional spending agreement keeping the government temporarily in business protects many of these agencies and programs until then. Further, revoking regulations is not an easy or a fast process. There is also pushback from Congress, as the current tightened regulations on methane emissions on Federal lands have been upheld by the Senate. The administration also announced in June that the U.S. will pull out of the Paris Climate Accords.

Given the overall anti-environmental and pro-fossil fuel stance of this administration— embodied most obviously by the wrecking crew of Trump, Pruitt, Perry, and Zinke— the environment in the U.S., and the planet as a whole, still have a great deal to worry about.

Jean Stewart, Chair
Earth and Environment Task Force



Resistance 2017

The views expressed in this document represent the opinions of members of the Public Policy Committee of the Woman's National Democratic Club. We hope these analyses will inspire our members and allies to join us in opposing the damaging policies of the Trump Administration. WNDC will partner with the Democratic National Committee to host a wide range of resistance activities, beginning in June 2017. WNDC political activism includes supporting candidates who endorse our views, coordination with the DNC and other like-minded organizations, further publications, media outreach, and regular alerts to our members and constituents about developments on these issues.

We urge our members and supporters to join us in these efforts. Contact information for members of Congress is available at www.house.gov (House of Representatives) and www.senate.gov (Senate). The White House can be reached at www.whitehouse.gov.