



THE NEW YORK STATE DEMOCRATIC RURAL CONFERENCE



WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING?

We passed a resolution at our July 16 conference call meeting urging our representatives to vote against the House legislation which would result in closing some rural post offices, curtailing deliveries substantially and laying off many workers. Congresswoman Louise Slaughter responded, thanking us for our resolution and stating that she has been working toward strengthening the postal service for many years now, and was very much in sympathy with our resolution.

USPS Resolution

WHEREAS the United States Postal Service (USPS) is a vital national resource that provides essential services to 151 million households and businesses and supports more than 7 million private sector jobs; and

WHEREAS the services offered by the USPS have long been particularly critical to the social and economic life of rural communities; and

WHEREAS advanced telecommunications technologies that have been cited as viable alternatives to postal services are often unavailable or unaffordable in those aforementioned rural communities; and

WHEREAS the requirement placed upon the USPS by Congress to pre-fund retiree health obligations for the next 75 years is an unreasonable fiduciary burden that has not been required of any other organization, public or private, in the country; and

WHEREAS the aforementioned fiduciary requirement is responsible for 85% of the USPS' financial losses since it was enacted in 2006; and

WHEREAS the United States Congress is currently considering the Postal Service Reform Act of 2012 (H.R. 2309), which would end weekend mail delivery; terminate at-home mail delivery and close thousands of local post offices, which would drastically slow mail delivery and impede access for thousands of people with mobility issues and would be especially felt in rural America where distances are so great; and would eliminate hundreds of thousands of jobs at a time when the U.S. economy continues to struggle.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Democratic Rural Conference of New York State strongly opposes passage of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2012 (H.R. 2309); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Democratic Rural Conference of New York State requests and recommends that the United States Congress eliminate the unfair and unreasonable requirement that the USPS pre-fund retiree health obligations for the next 75 years and work to incorporate USPS retiree health benefits into the reforms enacted in the Patient Protection and Affordability Act signed into law in 2010; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Democratic Rural Conference of New York State is hereby directed to forward copies of this resolution to the entire New York State Congressional Delegation and to U.S. Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand.



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Congress has not acted on the USPS Bill.

On August 18 we held a Board meeting in Syracuse, where we began a discussion of allocation of funding. No decision was reached, and a Board meeting Conferene Call is scheduled for September 17 to discuss possible funding for county committees and candidates and their committees, etc.

Dawn Rivers, Issues Committees Chair, reported that her survey of members' identification of important issues resulted in the economy (including infrastructure issues) as the most frequent area of concern. School funding and reform as well as property tax/unfunded mandates were two other major concerns. The Committee will be preparing material in advance of scheduling a meeting with the Lt. Governor's office to discuss these issues further. Chairwoman Rivers expressed her appreciation for the prompt and generous response of the DRC membership to her request for input.

We will be inviting NYSDC Co-Chairs and Exec. Director to meet with us to discuss how we can strengthen our bonds with them and how they can help us in our common mission to elect Democratic candidates in New York State. Some ideas that have emerged involve broader transmission of information to State Committee Members, strengthen our electronic communication by establishing a Bulletin Board for consultation, information and expertise on election issues . The Lawyers' Council should be involved here, and we will invite them to a meeting as well.

The Chair was instructed to communicate with the Governor's Office by phone and letter, urging him to hold regional meetings upstate to share information about our areas and to support our candidates.

The DRC Facebook page is available to highlight candidates, issues and any interesting programs individual counties are undertaking. Send them to Don Ackerman at bdonack@aol.com to be posted.



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The role of Associate Members was discussed. Currently they cannot vote in membership meetings but there is nothing in our By-Laws to preclude their running for Board or Officer positions. The Board passed a resolution at it Aug. 18 meeting allowing any Associate Member to run for Board or office providing that member is a resident of a DRC county. This is an addition to the By-Laws and will be brought to the members for ratification at the next meeting.

Secretary Phil Jones will review the changes in weighted voting caused by the redistricting and present a new list of weighted votes to the Board and membership. Below is a brief explanation of what this change might mean for some Counties.

The By-Laws provide for each DRC County to have 10 votes. The distribution of the weighted vote within a County depends on the number of Assembly districts within a County or the number of State Committee members(SCM). So if today, your County has 2 Assembly districts (4 State Committee members), each SCM has a weighted vote of 2 and the County Chair has a weighted vote of 2 for a total of 10 weighted votes for the county.

If on January 1, 2013 your County has only one Assembly district (2 SCM), then each SCM would have a weighted vote of 3 and the County Chair would have a weighted vote of 4 for a total of 10 for your County.

If there is no change in the number of Assembly Districts in your County on January 1, then there will be no change in the weighted vote within your County.

DRC BY-LAWS-Section on Voting

VOTING - Every member County shall be afforded 10 votes, equally divided between the State Committee Member (SCM) and the Chair of each county. In cases where the votes cannot be divided equally, the odd vote remaining will be exercised by the Chair of the county. A member may vote by a written proxy held by a registered Democrat from the absent member's county, so long as said signed proxy is registered with the DRC Secretary prior to the opening of the meeting. In the event that a County Chair is also a State Committee member, they may designate another registered Democrat from their County to cast their extra votes.



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Re-elect President Obama.

We can do this! Polling shows Obama is not the underdog, and the choice of Ryan, while energizing the Tea-Party people, will backfire on message IF we do what needs to be done to publicize the facts about the President's accomplishments and the effects the Republican proposals would have on most Americans. And if we get out the vote even better than we have done before, we will win.

We need to explain to folks that the Affordable Health Care Act will cover more of our people who are uninsured, will help college students, will cover senior prescriptions now in an uncovered "doughnut hole", nullify exclusion for preexisting conditions, etc.

We need to explain to folks that the amount of the proposed cuts in Medicare is the same amount both parties are putting forth! But The R's want to offer people vouchers they can use on the private market under the mercy of insurance company rates and their tendency and history to keep rising. The Republicans truly want to end Medicare as we know it.

We need to remind folks that the R's in Congress have obstructed the road to economic recovery and jobs. They put winning elections above solving the problems of the country. That is the long and short of it!

These facts alone should be more than enough, if communicated again and again, to re-elect the President and to elect Democrats to Congress who will support him by putting people first.

Contact Rob Diamond at the State committee to find out how you can help. Calling and canvassing in Pennsylvania and Ohio are important activities. Working for our Congressional candidates in every way possible is essential. We can do this!

MOVING FORWARD!

Irene



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THE DRC CONTACT INFO, ETC....

Web page: www.nysdrc.org

To subscribe to our list serve go to: NYSDemocraticRuralConference-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

To Post a Message on the List serve go to : NYSDemocraticRuralConference@yahoogroups.com

Meet on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pages/Democratic-Rural-Conference-of-New-York-State/162050418621

Or e-mail us at:

Irene Stein, Chair ---

Dan McCandless, Vice Chair ---

Cindy Emmer, Treasurer ---

Phil Jones, Secretary ---

Don Ackerman, Parliamentarian ---

Doris Kirsch, Asst. Secretary ---

Dawn Rivers, Issues Committee Chair ---

Dan McCandless, By-Laws Committee Chair ---

Tom Poelker, Political Committee Chair ---

Jane Dodds, Conference Chair ---

Mark Bellardini, Labor Committee Chair

Ted Young, Board Member----

Bob Reynolds, Board Member ---

Cindy Lockrow, Board Member ----

Joe Pickreign, Board Member -----

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DRC Board Services...

SPEAKERS Bureau:

The following DRC Executive Committee Members are available as speakers at DRC County events:

Irene Stein, Cindy Emmer, Tom Poelker or Phil Jones.

Mentoring Services: The DRC Executive Committee has many experienced County Chairs. As such, we are available to mentor and provide support to new County Chairs.

DUES

Dues are \$10 for 2012, checks are payable to the DRC and should be sent to Cindy Emmer, 858 Davis St., Elmira, NY 14901.

If you are not getting correspondence from the DRC, be sure to share your e-mail address with phildem@rochester.rr.com