

**OPENING REMARKS: MAKING WAVES FOR DEMOCRACY 4/7/2024**

**WELCOME to our 69<sup>th</sup> meeting of Making Waves for Democracy!**

**An abiding lesson I learned from the 2008 Obama campaign is that HOPE opens up our brains; it makes our synapses fire quicker. We function better and are happier. That's why fascists always rule with FEAR, which shuts down the brain.**

**I'm filled with HOPE about November's election. Americans strongly support FREEDOM over FASCISM every time. I believe we will flip the House, hold the White House and the Senate. BUT....BEWARE the Republicans' fear-mongering spin, which finds its way into the mainstream news, even CNN and MSNBC, (which seem foolishly obsessed with the old horserace frame.....!) Like – guys – there is only one sane side here!**

**Remember our motto at *Making Waves*: Action is the ONLY antidote to fear, anger or despair.... It's. up. To. US. What. Happens. in November! What we DO matters, particularly in the next 3 months – when the tone will be set for November.....**

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**All my life, I've fought fascism – Personally I think it's because I was born and lived in social democratic Denmark till age 4 but then lived for two years in Madrid, Spain, under the dictator Franco. I experienced HOPE then**

**FEAR at an early age. Not only was I a sitting duck for the 1960s, but I have a nose for fascism. I was the one in the anti-Vietnam war movement in Vermont who ALWAYS knew which long-haired guy was the agent -- Remember Cointelpro?? (In those days of J. Edgar Hoover, all FBI agents were bad guys!)**

**Here's what I think about this all-important election in November:  
NUMBER ONE (1) BIDEN/HARRIS is what we got. Do I always agree with Joe? NO!! But he's our guy! Remember what Rebecca Solnit says: Your vote is NOT a valentine; it's a chess move! And, by the way, I LOVE that Kamala is getting better and better...She looked STRONG at the State of the Union address when Joe rocked it!**

**Later today, Brian Colker will enlighten us on the Senate races but let me be clear: We can hold the Senate! And, of course, the road to flipping the House -- and making that eloquent Hakeem Jeffries Speaker! -- once again runs through California.**

**TWO: The ANTI-MAGA movement is HUGE and growing. It's the largest electoral force in the US today. Since the Dobbs decision in April 2022, every single ballot measure and key local election has been won by Democrats, because although 40% of voters nationally are registered independents, they skew Blue as the Republican Party goes off the rails! Democrats**

**REPRESENT** the vast majority of Americans, and stand for the patriotic values of freedom, health, safety, democracy...

**THREE:** It may surprise you but **ABORTION** is on the California ballot this November. It's easy to think it's safe in our Blue state, but I just recently learned that if a national ABORTION BAN passes, it supersedes the California constitution.

That's why it's VITAL to flip the House and Hold the Senate and White House! A Blue Trifecta will pass **NATIONAL** pro-reproductive rights legislation that aligns with the **VAST MAJORITY** of the country (70%) and supersedes Dobbs. **BY THE WAY CA-27's MAGA Mike Garcia is a co-sponsor of that national abortion ban** , that's why it's so important to elect our own George Whitesides this November....More on that later....

Note that abortion will be on the ballot in up to 12 states; it's already qualified in FL, and while the deadline for signature gathering is coming up yet, they say they have enough signatures to qualify in AZ and NV.

**BUT BEWARE REPUBLICAN EFFORTS TO ADVANCE SUPERMAJORITY THRESHOLDS**, like the 60% it'll take to pass it in FL. Every grade school kid knows that **MAJORITY RULES** in the US -- that is 50% + 1 -- **BUT** one of the Republican anti-democracy tactics is **HIGH THRESHOLDS** of 55-66% for people's ballot measures....

**FOUR: As an Organizer, I always think of what we're building, the relationships, the networks and organizing hubs – the INFRASTRUCTURE FOR CHANGE! Think back to January, 2017, to the HUGE Women's March or the Muslim Ban LAX protests, the raw anger that drove the Big Blue Wave of 2018. But it was totally unorganized! No, that energy isn't animating our politics these days, BUT: think of what has been built; think of how different your life is from a few short years ago....**

**The landscape has totally changed since 2017 at the grassroots level. *Making Waves* is an anomaly because we're all-volunteer and lots of those spontaneous formations that existed in Jan 2017 have gone away, but look at what remains: On a national level, there's Indivisible, Sister District and Swing Left, Field Team Six, the Blue Voter Guide and more..... In LA, there's our partners, Westside Dem HQ and Grassroots Dems HQ, and the new California Grassroots Alliance that studies the data and is targeting 6 House seats, with the motto: The Road to the House Majority in 2024 Goes through California.**

**We literally all have new friends in the past few years! We love Rachel Maddow together; we listen to podcasts and share them with each other; we subscribe daily to Jess Craven's blog, to historian Heather Cox Richardson,**

lawyer Robert Hubbell, economist Robert Reich, and more....In the past month, I've been on two zooms with HUNDREDS of people -- one had 750 folks, the other, 300.

Make no mistake: this is a new SOCIAL MOVEMENT. Millions of new activists are civically engaged -- and ORGANIZED into an electoral force. I'm betting on US -- that together we will SAVE DEMOCRACY.

And – finally, my last point: I trust my political intuition, and I agree with Maurice Mitchell (author of the brilliant article from Nov 2022 called BUILDING RESILIENT ORGANIZATIONS which you'll get a link to in your follow-up email to this meeting today). Maurice is the Executive Director of the Working Families Party, and he thinks we're in a “transformational moment”. He says that the new, better world is MUCH closer than it seems.

And I agree with him!....

But, first things first. First, onward to a blue national trifecta in November!

Now, on with our agenda today! Next, we'll hear from our own leadership team member, Brandon Zavala – the brilliant young politico and go-to guy from the Antelope Valley....Over to you, Brandon!