

## Opening Remarks by Torie Osborn – Aug. 18, 2024 MWD

Welcome to the 73d meeting of *Making Waves for Democracy!* I want to especially welcome the new people here today. We WILL send a follow up email to you, with all today's info....

We meet on the cusp of the 2024 Democratic Convention with JOY and HOPE everywhere, an unexpectedly strong surge of positive energy and unity. I think a big reason for this unique wave moment is the pent-up demand since Covid 19. After that kind of mass death and collective trauma, people need something positive, as we in the LGBTQ community know well, with the win of marriage equality and the so-called “gayby boom” both following quickly after the agony of AIDS.

Today, Americans need HOPE and JOY.

I'm shocked how much the Orange Fascist and his horrid, sexist running mate were taken by surprise. Overnight, he's the old guy – and us childless cat ladies are taking revenge.....Note that Deepak Bhargava will talk later about how we win against more powerful forces, but surprise attacks is one way.

God bless Joe Biden. There's one insider I know who says that he took the heat for at least a couple weeks while his VP got her ducks lined up. But I think this launch was bigger than even Kamala and Joe anticipated....

**And, for once, electoral politics is a means, not an end. The political space that has been opened is fabulous -- We have the chance to leap forward with Kamala Harris as President, to advance further the agenda we have all dreamed of: the agenda that a majority of Americans want – FREEDOM. Sweet Honey in the Rock sang in “Ella’s Song”:**

**“We Who Believe in Freedom Cannot Rest until it’s WON”..... Kamala’s victory would be one fitting tribute to the author of that song, Bernice Johnson Reagan, who recently joined the ancestors...**

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**I’ve often wondered about the two sides of my own political life – how they would come together, what would possibly unite them: the friends I’ve made since 2016, those newly active, who powered the 2018 Blue Tsunami – AND on the other hand the existing progressive-movement infrastructure I’ve been part of for decades. The demographics are different; and ne’er the twain has met – before now.**

**What used to be called “The Resistance” is primarily comprised of tens of thousands of mostly, not exclusively, older white, educated women. This newest progressive force in America is less ideological but united around democratic ideals and against Project 2025 – and are now hardened warriors after 7+ years of activism. We have our**

**groups, new in 2017 – such as Indivisible, Sister District, Swing Left -- and Making Waves for Democracy! -- that are well-organized, and active – and daily readers of historian Heather Cox Richardson and others....But it’s fairly monochromatic demographically...**

**AND then, there’s the people-of-color-led, fast-growing, urban progressive movement that’s over 30 years in the making, that I connected with at Liberty Hill Foundation – the racial and economic justice movements – the network of mostly younger progressives, Black and Brown and Asian folks who have led the immigrant rights and criminal justice reform movements of the past decades ....**

**Little did I guess that Kamala Harris would be the connector of these two forces! Little did I guess that U.S. fascism might be defeated by an electoral campaign! Now, I know we haven’t won yet, but victory is in sight -- if we keep it up.**

**I hope that VP Harris knows she is a vessel, a channel for connecting these two forces. I believe she does.**

**The “Kamalanomenon” started with Black Women for Harris – then Black Men for Harris, then White Dudes for Harris in the first week, and there’s been a LOT more Zooms recently: Comedians for Harris, Hollers for Harris, Lawyers for Harris, Jewish Women for Harris, and I just read upcoming is Chefs for Harris.**

I listened – later on YouTube -- to the whole 3 hours of the White Women for Harris call that broke Zoom with over 100,000 women. As a friend who was on that call – also a longtime lesbian activist in her 70s -- noted, the ease with which the younger women talked about their white privilege was striking! And two friends who never before would have used that language, embraced it.

**REMEMBER, this is a movement moment and change happens startlingly fast!!**

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And, by the way, I saw Kamala speak in person June 29, a mere two days after that disastrous debate – at a garden party with 300 others celebrating the 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary of marriage equality – I listened intently from the third row, front and center, as she talked for 25 minutes without a note. I've seen her multiple times over the years BUT she was way different this time. She was commanding, charismatic! She had totally lost that insecurity that made her laugh too much, and used to drive me nuts. She radiates strength and confidence now. After seeing her that day, my stomach actually unclenched and I said to myself as I walked out: She's ready!

And in the last month, we've seen the flawless roll-out of a campaign. Even James Carville, with his grumpy, ever-critical eye, shocked me when he said on MSNBC recently that she's run a perfect campaign so far!

**But, her future win in November is up to us! We need to organize, to talk to voters and fundraise like we've never done before. We want to beat not only that Orange Fascist, but we must assure that Pres Harris has the Senate AND THE HOUSE! And flipping the House is our job! We need to crush galloping fascism everywhere, put Project 2025 in the dustbin of history -- save Ukraine, and turn around the middle east.....We must FINALLY enact majority rule! That means gun safety, abortion rights, ALL OUR FREEDOMS, plus ending the filibuster, SCOTUS reform, expanded healthcare, education AND MUCH MORE...**

**OMG – we have the political space to dream about what is possible again -- about not just fighting the evil empire but advancing our own agenda! In a recent column by our next speaker was this sobering statistic: in 1998, 68% of Americans thought the system was fair; by 2019, only 29% did. My goal for President Kamala Harris and VP Tim Walz is that by the end of their two terms in office, that increases to at least the old number: 68%....**

**AND NOW ONTO OUR MAIN SPEAKER for  
TODAY....DEEPAK BHARGAVA....**