

OPENING REMARKS BY TORIE OSBORN 6/11/2023

WELCOME to the 62nd monthly meeting of Making Waves for Democracy!

I want to particularly welcome the new folks – you’re in for a treat: today, we have two key presentations. Later, you’ll hear our wonderful Brian Colker’s take on AI – you won’t want to miss that! **AND** after these remarks, we’ll introduce you to the two leaders of our new youth-led partner group up in CA-27 -- and you’ll see why **MAGA Mike Garcia, the Right-winger in the seat now, is shaking in his boots!**

OKAY.... *****

Happy Pride Month, everyone. As most of you know, I spent two decades of my life helping build the LGBTQ movement and I want to say that the Right-wing’s current cry of **SAVE THE CHILDREN is chillingly familiar to me. It’s a new anti-trans twist on that old trope -- depicting gay men as pedophiles was a staple of the homophobic Right for decades in the old days. Remember Anita Bryant? In one of the first tests of gay and lesbian unity, well before HIV/AIDS hit, we mobilized against Anita Bryant’s “Save our Children” national crusade in 1977.**

And one year later we defeated the Briggs Initiative, Prop 6, here in California - that would have fired ALL gay teachers. That

was my first action after I moved here – I road-managed a Holly Near-Meg Christian anti-Prop 6 concert tour that reached 30,000 people across the state.

So the current right-wing crusade against my LGBTQ community - especially trans kids -- is déjà vu for me. There's a reason the Human Rights Campaign has declared a state of emergency on our issue!

(And, by the way, we will NEVER book this June meeting opposite LA's Pride march again!) That was a mistake, and I'm sorry.

OKAY....In other topics....

FIRST: How about that Jack Smith? I know, I know, Judge Aileen Cannon is a Trumpie and there are 30 million Americans who are in his cult, but my best source for Republican thinking -- who has read the 49-page indictment thoroughly -- says, it's convincing as hell; Trump is toast. She's downright giddy about it.

SECOND: I was brought to tears twice in the past couple days. The first time was yesterday -- I walked to a rally and fashion show at the beach by a youth-led group fighting climate change called Families 4 A Future. Four high school kids - dressed up like their topic - spoke passionately and poetically about the impact of climate change on the Ocean, Air, Earth, and Nature. They were so forceful

and articulate and they beautifully modeled their group's key words of love, hope and courage. Watching and listening to those 12-16 year olds, I couldn't help but tear up.

The second time I felt tears coming was this morning when I read that historian Heather Cox Richardson, whose "Letter from an American" I religiously read and share daily with 12 others, has just finished her newest book, titled "Democracy Awakening". In her own words: QUOTE "This book makes an argument for a new understanding of US history as an explicitly democratic history, kept alive primarily by marginalized Americans who have worked to expand our rights and bring the principles of the Declaration of Independence to life." UNQUOTE. The book – out in September -- will help guide us all toward the future, which is why, she says, its cover depicts a sunrise!

I feel such hope today. I learned in the Obama campaign that FEAR shuts down our brains, literally; it slows down the synapses – which is why the Right wing always leads with it. But HOPE fires us up, literally, makes our brain's synapses fire more rapidly. We are more capable of solving problems, more alive and happy, and the HOPE we feel spreads to all we are around! Hope is contagious, and necessary to positive change.

AND LASTLY, on a personal note, I want to let you know that as of a couple weeks ago, I'm finally writing my autobiography. I'm only writing 15 mins a day, at the suggestion of a friend who's been published multiple times. I appreciate so much those of you who have encouraged me. Retirement is about writing your memoir, right? Well, it's happening!

I want to end my remarks today with an exhortation: We **MUST do our job this electoral cycle – we in California failed miserably at it in 2022 but we **MUST not fail in 2024.** **It's a Presidential election in an unprecedented time and our voters generally turn out every four years.** This time, let's do our part to get rid of that asshole House Speaker, Kevin McCarthy. There are several seats that are flippable in our state – including CA-41, the newly redistricted Palm Springs seat where Will Rollins is a phenomenal candidate with a great chance of winning this time around. AND CA-22 where Assemblymember Rudy Salas of Bakersfield is running again, and has a good shot at winning this time around against that phony Latino David Valadeo.....**

But Making Waves for Democracy traditionally has door-knocked and raised money for TWO nearby House seats: Next

month, in July, we'll focus on CA 47, Katie Porter's coastal Orange County seat that we know well and MUST hold now that she's running for Senate –

AND, let's flip that last Republican seat in LA County CA-27 –our focus today. MAGA MIKE MUST GO!

Over to you, Brandon Zavala!