



Fellow Democrats,

As we woke up Wednesday morning, we found that the results of this election were not what we had hoped for. This isn't the first time we've faced disappointment, nor will it be the last. This is both the beauty and the heartbreak of democracy. In a democracy, the voices of the people are protected and heard, which is exactly what happened yesterday.

In Manatee County, we accomplished remarkable things this cycle. Despite yesterday's outcome, we achieved record-high Democratic turnout, far surpassing turnout in both 2022 and 2020. We had candidates up and down the ballot who provided a meaningful alternative to the Republican narrative. We successfully flipped School Board District 1 for Heather Felton, reelected Pam Coachman for Bradenton City Council Ward 5, and organized with more energy and impact than ever before. All of this is a testament to our hard work, and we should be proud of what we accomplished.

From the beginning, we've said that this is just the start of something bigger. This election wasn't only about 2024; it was about building a foundation that will carry us through 2026, 2028, and beyond. Now, we turn our focus to the future and ask ourselves: where do we go from here?

In Manatee County, our next steps are to build on this foundation. We'll mobilize earlier, strengthen our messaging to lead on the issues, and continue improving our ground game for the midterms. While we may take a moment to rest, mourn, and reset, it's how we respond to adversity that defines us. We will be ready to hit the ground running for 2026.

Thank you for your dedication and hard work.

Chris Wetherington

Chris Wetherington
Chair, Manatee County Democratic Party

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