

Power, Pot, & People
Whitney 2020 Announcement Speech
Minor edits for clarification
Original video available on YouTube “Power, Pot, and People”
Sunday, August 2, 2020
Arlington Vermont Recreation Center

Rain is great on a day like today because the fire I feel inside to pursue this position is going to burn this state to the ground. Now more than ever do people need to stand together to defend the freedoms of Americans and Vermonters. We have been led through the past year with fear. Coronavirus is scary but it hasn't needed to shut down our economy and keep people in homes. We need to work together coming forward with a purpose and a plan, and I have the purpose and I have the plan.

My plan outlines the three P's- Power, Pot, and People.

Power

I want to command the Vermont National Guard through the upcoming two deployments. I want to pass a bill, H.401, written by Doris Sumner, after years and years of diversity training and observation in the Vermont National Guard. Women who report sexual assaults and harassment and pursue investigations for justice for wrong deeds done to them by green on green attacks, deserve the opportunity deserve the opportunity for their investigation not be the end of their career.

When I reported my sexual assault in 2016, the man I told was my NCOIC, which means he was my direct supervisor. After I told him he called me up and said he had thought about for a really long time and there was no way he could not push this assault through the investigation process. He told me it was going to change the direction of my career forever and I did not know what he meant. Five years later I am now being medically discharged from the Vermont National Guard. My career was cut short by 12 years. After 11 years in the service, I was not ready to stop.

I have a passion inside of me because I am a warrior. I have trained thousands of Soldiers and I have trained alongside even more. Together we have defended our nation and we have defended our state and I ask every single one of them to stand with me to protect the Soldiers still in. Over 30 women and men have provided statements saying the workplace climate and the command structure of the Vermont National Guard is toxic to female leadership. In America in 2020 that is unacceptable. In Vermont in 2020 that is unacceptable. That is an 1/8th of the female force in the Vermont National Guard. That's your aunt, that's your sister, that's your daughter, that's your mother. Those are women who have signed up to serve this State and to serve this country and have been attacked within. It is your duty as a Vermonter to protect those women, to protect their rights, and to protect their careers. The Adjutant General does not want to protect them. He ignores these reports, he ignores the climate, and instead wants to continue pushing forward with aggressive training schedules and demands that are hurting the troops.

The positions in the Vermont National Guard are oversaturated. The demand for new Recruits cannot keep up with the declining population of Vermont. Young Vermonters are leaving by busloads to pursue other ventures in cities around

America. We as Vermonters need to do something different to keep young people here and to attract people to the state that we love.

It is hard to work here, it is hard to live here, but raising your children in towns like Arlington produce Governor Candidates. Raising your children towns towns like Rutland, expose them to the first black female town Aldermans. Raising your children in Vermont bring Patriots, they bring independent and critical thinkers and we need families here.

So by voting for me, you're going to vote me into power to command and retraining and ethical restricting of the Vermont National Guard. I would love to bring the flight facility to Bennington to increase jobs and opportunity and take the wining and yelling out of Shelburne and Burlington against the {F-35's.) We want them here. We want the economy. The sounds of jets flying over our town and over our state is freedom. We should be accepting those noises and accepting that and bringing it forward with vigor and applaud.

BOOM BOOM CAN YOU HEAR THE SOUND OF THE ENEMY?
BOOM BOOM CAN YOU HEAR THE SOUNDS OF ARTILLERY, RAINING DOWN ON
THE ENEMY?

These are the patriotic chants we need to be cheering to support our Armed Forces in Vermont, not turning them away.

Pot.

It's funny coming from a National Guard service member with experience talking about cannabis, cannabis culture. But I'm going to stand here and tell you that cannabis saved me through my Post Traumatic Stress Disorders. Cannabis is a medicine that can help so many people through difficult times in their life. But even more than that, cannabis is something as recreational and safer than alcohol and Vermont blasts alcohol ads and we blast alcohol culture across our nation as though it's candy. It's not. We need to bring the opportunity to tax the retail sale of cannabis in Vermont, IMMEDIATELY.

COVID 19 has desecrated our economy and now we must begin a tax revenue supply that will fill in a hole, instead of creating more. Vermont wants so many programs, but they are choosing to tax the wrong people. You cannot tax the life source out of a farm. Farmers are taxed enough. Farmers have a hard enough time. We cannot keep taking money from people who don't have any money to give. We need to create a new opportunity, a new economy, and that is through cannabis culture.

States and have done this and have record surplus tax revenue, more money than they even know what to do with. Can Vermont even say they've ever even thought

of having that problem? I don't think that they can, and instead, they are taxing the people who don't have enough.

We need to stand for the Vermonters together, who work in the blue collar communities. The ones who ache, the ones who got sent home. I know so many of you were lucky enough to work from your computers at home and survive through Coronavirus, but so many were not. The people who were not need to be the focus of this next economy. Forestry needs to be highlighted. The mountains of Vermont and the fields of Vermont are overgrown. We have too many trees, can you believe that? 100 years ago our forests were clear. They need to be cleared again. The health and safety of our forests demand this. I believe that Cynthia Browning on the Agriculture and Forestry committee is going to make great changes and I hope that she stands beside me and uses the opportunity to run as an independent to truly bring independent ideas into our state house.

People

So many Vermonters use side by sides for recreation, side by sides, four wheelers, and dirt bikes. Around the country motocross economy is real and it's flourishing. Dirt bikers were the ones who could practice and ride through Coronavirus. Family and friends of mine has left the state to compete around the nation. Why can't we do that here? We can't do that here because environmental regulations are so strict it stifles any opportunity for recreational fun and development. We need to work together making Vermont a place for our children to have fun and then create businesses out of that fun. We need to create an environment where families want to be here and right now that isn't the case.

I spent four years recruiting for the National Guard. I know first hand how many students are leaving Vermont. Time and time again I would offer them the benefits of free college, free health insurance, not to mention the emotional patriotism and satisfaction that goes along with serving our nation and they don't want it. They want diversity, they want opportunity, they want economy, and it's not here.

We need to stop listening to those who are leading in fear and we need to start listening to young Americans and young Vermonters who are demanding control to lead the economy and to lead the future into the next century. When I look around here today, I am so blessed with the people who are here supporting me. I have neighbors, friends, family, service members, mothers, fathers, sons, children, but nobody is of a different color than white.

This is a problem in Vermont. We need more diversity. We hear the cries of BLM ripple through the world right now. We are creating a movement by supporting the rights of black Americans demanding to be freed from social injustice and systemic racism. This year I was able to travel to Indiana. I went to a town called Gary to go to the shore of Lake Michigan. On my way I saw the remains of 7,500 vacant buildings, demolished, falling apart to the ground, surrounded by a black

community that has been left with absolutely zero economic opportunity and intense crime regulation against cannabis culture.

Do you want that here Vermont? Do you want to lead our state into isolation and abandonment? No. I believe that as Vermonters we can lead the nation in a form of reparations for black and Hispanic Americans who have found themselves behind bars as a result of incarceration to non violent marijuana crimes.

If cannabis is going to be legal now and I advocate for taxing them, I cannot advocate for a white woman in a white state to make money off of something that black America has been put away behind bars and punished for. In Vermont we have the opportunity to take land, develop it, clear it, build homes, and together work out an initiative where we provide black American families the opportunity to move to Vermont as pioneers creating a cannabis culture where their skills are no longer looked at as punishment and bad. We have an opportunity to give reparations for cannabis culture. We don't need to start angry pickets for slave reparations, that is a National discussion, but we as Vermonters have the opportunity to step forward and say we want to do better and we want to be equal.

Equality is the base of what my platform is. All I've asked for in the service is to be considered equal and I was attacked for being a woman, for being a powerful woman. I will not sit here in silence, I will not be shamed into my house with the labels of "crazy." Crazy means great. There are so many leaders of our time who have been called "Great," men especially. It is time to label strong powerful women as "great. Do not look at me with pity, do not look at me with sadness. Look at me with respect. Look at me with admiration. Look at me with excitement because I am the face of 30 women in the Armed Forces who cannot stand up here because they are shaking in fear in their bedrooms still, after having their careers brutally mutilated by the Armed Forces. You MUST look at the children in your home and wonder if they want to serve their country too and if that is your daughter, do you want their patriotism and their service to be attacked because they are strong and powerful? I hope you say the answer is no.

Together, going forward, I am going to be moving around Vermont over the weekends doing events similar to this one. I love public speaking. I learned it here in Arlington. Arlington trained me to be a critical thinker and a loud voice. I was never good at sports, and in Arlington that's what everyone is known for. I hope Arlington comes together and rallies behind me. They didn't produce a great athlete, I can run, but I am not coordinated, but they did produce one heck of a political candidate to run for Governor to run for this State and they did produce one heck of a Patriot and I am asking for the support of men, women, children, black brown, white, to go forward and lead Vermont with a commanding voice with an inspiring story, and together, we can build a Vermont our kids want to stay in.

Thank you so much for coming today. Whitney 2020, Woot Woot!