

December 13, 2020

Ohio Democratic Party
Executive Committee
340 East Fulton Street
Columbus, OH

Dear Executive Committee Member,

Please accept this letter as my symbol of intent to be considered a candidate for Chair of the Ohio Democratic Party.

I have spent my career working on behalf of organizations and people who support progressive values. Starting in 2008 on President Obama's Ohio campaign, I have had the opportunity to serve Congresswoman Betty Sutton, We Are Ohio, and leadership roles within the ODP. Since leaving the party I have grown in many ways - working on behalf of some of the newest Ohioans in Akron's refugee community, with philanthropic leaders from around the country, advising politically active donors, and working in the Ohio progressive infrastructure. I am an organizer at heart, with a record of experience and leadership that makes me a strong candidate for this role.

The greatest honor has been serving my community as an At-Large member of Summit County Council, where I currently serve as Vice President.

The last few cycles have been a mix of good and bad for Ohio Democrats. While there is surely much frustration, I am optimistic about our future. Together we can build something new to meet our current challenges and the needs of our many stakeholders.

Below I've included some broad thoughts on the work ahead of us. But, I am firmly committed to listening to the input and feedback of all our party stakeholders. All of you, our elected leaders from U.S. Senate to township trustee, our brothers and sisters in labor, the OLBC, County Parties, our volunteers and activists, donors, and more, must have a voice in the process and a seat at the table to ensure we accomplish our shared goals.

- **Build up our basics** - the ODP must provide for a year-round, well-resourced voter protection operation, wildly improve the quality and use of our data, have better two-way communication with our party stakeholders (particularly County Parties) about party activities and strategy, and ensure the financial health of our organization.
- **88 County organizing** rooted in the following principles:
 - Relationships are the most important outcome of good organizing. As a movement, we continue to prioritize output metrics, but these are not enough to gage our success. We continue to hold up phone call attempts, door knocks, or cold text messages as the ultimate success. To succeed and help build power in communities across Ohio we must prioritize connection, conversations, and relationships in-person and online. This comes with long-term organizing.

- All voters are persuasion voters - we must understand the amount of resources and time needed to show Ohio voters, whether they live in Cleveland or Peebles, that their participation matters, and their lives will improve if they elect our candidates
- Increase voter registration and participation in communities of color, in our large cities and smaller communities like Mansfield and Lima.
- Continue to improve our gains with suburban voters.
- Stop the bleeding and begin to win back voters in Appalachia and Rural Ohio.
- **ODP must be the hub of research and communications**, particularly in the accountability space. We must innovate how we deliver all of this and create opportunities to lift up the voices of elected and non-elected party leaders across the state.
- **Better align ourselves within the ecosystem**. Citizens United has profoundly reshaped the political ecosystem for both parties. The progressive movement in Ohio has grown and there are many strong partners in the 501c4 space with talented leaders and staff doing impactful work. ODP is a critical pillar in this new eco-system. We must work collectively to assess our highest and best purpose and role with these partners, and ensure we show up with strength, capacity, and the ability to deliver on our commitments.

The work that lies ahead for us is not small, it is not easy. It will not be achieved by a single person. It will take all of us and it's going to take more than one election cycle to build lasting strength back into this institution we all love. Together, I know we can create something that will deliver electoral results that will ultimately lead to real and meaningful change for all Ohioans.

As you consider who you'll be supporting for Chair, I hope you'll consider me. No matter the outcome of this particular vote, I'll be here, ready to help move our party and our state forward. I look forward to talking with all of you in the weeks ahead and can be reached by phone at 330-322-6361.

All my best,

Liz Walters