

We're Here and Staying Here

My nomination for "Understatement of the Year: Things did not turn out the way we hoped and worked so hard for."

Despite the herculean efforts of over 100 volunteers—who wrote postcards, made phone calls, knocked on doors, sent texts, and more-- we didn't get the election results we wanted, especially given that we had the strongest statewide slate in over a generation. Even though the national picture is rosier, things are pretty bleak here in Texas. My heartfelt thanks to everyone who dug deep and helped us contact as many voters as possible.

Disappointed but undaunted, the Kendall County Democratic Party (KCDP) will continue our efforts to elect more Democrats. KCDP has a much higher profile here in Kendall County than ever before. (If you voted early, you probably saw us smiling and waving from our tent along Fawn Valley Dr.) With our permanent office on Blanco Rd., our participation in local parades and Market

Days, and our Adopt-A-Highway segment along FM 3351—people can no longer say that "Kendall County doesn't have any Democrats." When I moved here five years ago, the Boerne Area Democrats had 40 members. Today, the club has nearly 200 members. We're here, we're getting louder, and we're growing.

KCDP will continue our focus on its core issues:

Public education: Just as in most rural communities, Boerne ISD is the largest employer in Kendall County. The public school district, its employees, and its activities form a nucleus of community activity. As a result, most rural residents are strongly against any form of vouchers, which siphon off funds from public schools. Only Democrats are committed to fully funding public education and paying teachers what they deserve. Per Holly Hansen at The Texan News, in January, the governor doubled-down on his commit-



ment to getting vouchers passed during next year's Legislature, and KCDP will do everything in its power to forestall this disaster to public school funding.

Infrastructure: Everyone wants better roads and a reliable electrical grid, and Democrats are committed to providing them. After the 2021 Legislative session where nothing substantial was done to fix our tottering electrical grid, the governor and lieutenant governor raked in almost \$6 million in campaign donations in just two weeks from the oil and gas industry, per The Texas Tribune. Texans deserve better.

Local control: KCDP will continue to educate voters about the importance of local control. Dem-

ocrats will work hard to make sure local officials have the tools they need to manage development in their cities and counties from here—not from Austin. During the last Texas Legislative session, KCDP worked closely with County Commissioner Richard Elkins on a bipartisan effort to pass a bill that would give Kendall County more control to ensure responsible development in our rapidly growing area, and we will support similar efforts again next year. Unfortunately, despite considerable testimony in support of the bill, it never made it out of committee.

Passing Sensible Gun Safety Measures: A whole bunch of Texas Democrats grew up in our state's gun culture. Many of us don't remember a time we didn't want a gun and barely remember a time we didn't have one. We don't want to take away anybody's guns, and we're pretty darn committed to our own. But we also believe in common sense. We need universal background checks. If we really

"back the blue," we need to get Teflon and armor-piercing ammo off the streets. And it's time to get the long guns out of the public square—concealed carry offers protection without intimidation. We believe we can have a strong Second Amendment and common-sense gun laws that protect our communities.

Protecting Social Security and Medicare: Democrats are committed to preserving these vital programs that we've all paid into over the years.

In short, we're here and we're staying here. TAMOUTYT—There Are More of Us Than You Think. We will continue our outreach efforts to find more local Democrats, and we will continue to fight for Democratic ideals. We welcome all who want to build a better Texas. For more information on how to get involved, call our office at 830-331-1243 or visit www.kcdems.us

Laura Bray is Chair of the Kendall County Democratic Party.