

January 4, 2023

Dear Democrats,

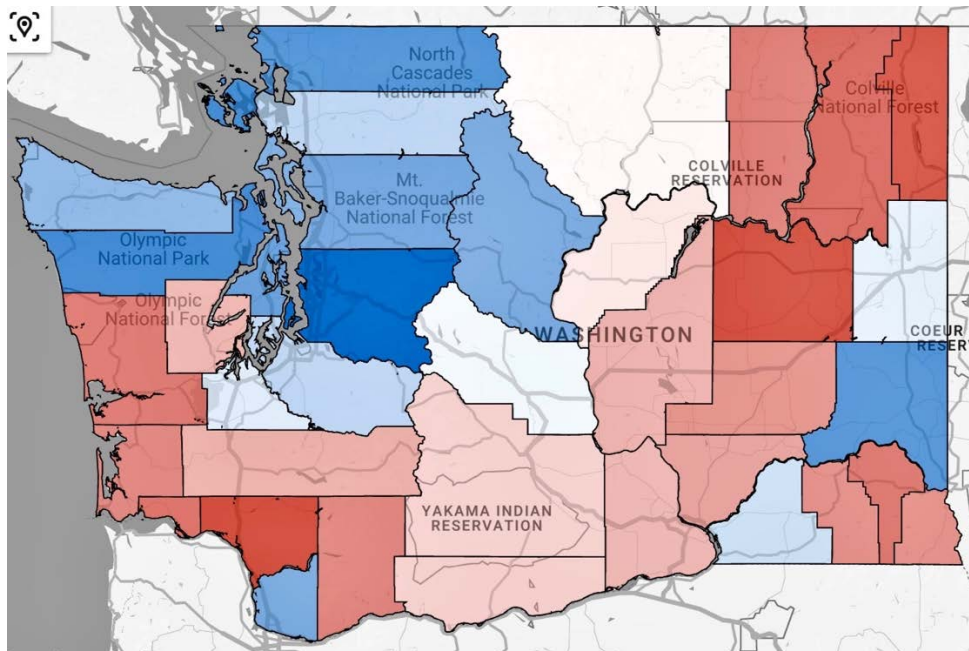
I'm excited to announce that it's time to get to work on the 2023/4 election cycle (and I have an announcement of my own).

It's really amazing what we have accomplished together over the last six years Washington Democrats, and where we stand now as a state party - one of the **best in the nation!**

November of 2016 marked an Election Day that cast a shadow over our nation, our people, and our freedoms. But instead of giving in, our party and our people rose up - to organize, to resist those who wish to harm our democracy, and to win elections up and down the ballot with the most diverse set of candidates in our state's history.

I'm so proud to have been the first woman elected party chair in over 30 years in January of 2017, and the **only LGBTQ Chair in the history of our party.** Together, we have built a team of unmatched volunteers and staff and donors and allies. Our performance and success led to my peers also electing me Chair of the ASDC Western Caucus, Chair of the DNC Western Caucus, and a member of the DNC Executive Committee. Washington's work and results have "stood tall" nationally.

Our Rise and Organize program is the premier volunteer training program in the nation - training teams of thousands of local organizers in every county in Washington. Thanks to them, and our local party organizations, **we've increased the vote for democrats in every county, anywhere from 6 to 16%! Some places are a little less red, but someplace are a lot bluer!**



We have won countless local races around the state and built a lasting “blue bench” in places like Burien, Sequim, Vancouver, Walla Walla, Wenatchee, Spokane, and Bellingham, to just name a few. Our Rise and Run and Rooted to Win programs for local candidates have been emulated in dozens of other states. And we just continue to expand! We run (and win) in every race and every place.

We have gone from a 1-seat minority in the State Senate to a 9-seat majority, a two-seat majority in the State House to an 18-seat majority, easily ensuring a “blue triple” for years to come. And **we have increased the diversity in our state legislature** in every single electoral year - in 2018, in 2020, and again in 2022.

The list of “new” legislators we elected is impressive: Manka Dhingra, Mona Das, John Lovick, Joe Nguyen, T’wina Nobles, Emily Randall, Rebecca Saldana, Yasmin Trudeau, Claire Wilson, Claudia Kauffman, Sharon Shewmake, Noel Frame, April Berg, Lisa Callan, Bill Ramos, Liz Berry, Julia Reed, Brandy Donaghy, Davina Duerr, Debra Entenman, Jesse Johnson, Jamila Taylor, Kristine Reeves, Kirsten Harris-Talley, Chipalo Street, David Hackney, Deb Lekanof, Melanie Morgan, Chris Sterns, Tarra Simons, Alicia Rule, Dave Paul, Clyde Shavers, Beth Doglio, Dan Bronoske, Sharlett Mena, Lauren Davis, Emily Alvarado, Julio Cortes, Mary Fosse, Alex Ramel, Joe Timmons, Javier Valdez, and Darya Farivar. They all won their first races, or the first races in a new office, during the past six years. That’s 45 incredible democratic legislators!

We now hold every statewide office - including the long elusive Secretary of State office with Democrat Steve Hobbs - and we elected Governor Jay Inslee to an unprecedented and historic third term.

We flipped not one but two congressional districts in the 8th and 3rd, now hold an 8-2 majority in our House delegation, and increased the diversity of that delegation as well. We have five incredible women in Pramila Jayapal, Suzan Delbene, Marilyn Strickland, Kim Schrier, Marie Gluesenkamp Perez, and some pretty great guys in Derek Kilmer, Rick Larsen, and Adam Smith.

And, both Doug White and Natasha Hill were fantastic candidates in the 4th and 5th CDs respectively, and I hope they stay in the fight to help lead our party and get actual democratic representation in Eastern Washington.

We have re-elected the incredible Senate duo of Patty Murray (2022) and Maria Cantwell (2018), and Senator Murray now stands third in line in presidential succession.

But there’s more. Much more.

We moved Washington from a Caucus to a Primary state to select our presidential nominee - enabling hundreds of thousands more people to participate.

We created the most inclusive delegate selection and action plans in advance of the state and national conventions, with the most diverse delegate outreach process – and delegation - ever.

We fought for democracy reforms within our own party as well. At the last National Convention one lone resolution out of hundreds passed the entire national convention – the one I drafted with grassroots support - to permanently retain the changes requested by the Unity and Reform Commission after the 2016 cycle, like the changes to “superdelegates”. And we fought for - and won - greater access to legislative and state challengers to Votebuilder access.

We created the “Five State Alliance” to send our tools, expertise, and millions of dollars to change the election outcomes in Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin - and look at the results!

We increased our fundraising eight-fold, making certain we had the resources we needed to win. I especially want to thank Governor Jay Inslee, King County Executive Dow Constantine, Secretary of State Steve Hobbs, Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, and Representatives Derek Kilmer, Pramila Jayapal, Rick Larsen, Suzan Delbene, Adam Smith, Marilyn Strickland, and Kim Schrier for their faithful and fabulous multi-year fundraising efforts for the State Party. There would never have been enough resources for us in 2018, 2020, or 2022 without their help, smarts, and commitment to TEAM.

We’re invested in data, and the integrity of our Votebuilder asset - now valued at tens of millions of dollars, and the premier database of Washington voters.

Frankly, we’ve accomplished everything I set out to do when I became Chair, especially the most important reason I ran for the job to begin with – expand voting rights and access in Washington. Thanks to you, and our democratic majorities, we enacted automatic voter registration, same day registration, pre-registration for 16 and 17th year-olds, postage free ballots, the Washington State Voting Rights Act, the Native American Voting Rights Act, and so much more.

When I first ran for State Party Chair in 2017, I didn't come for the title or to build a resume - I promised to work hard and make transformational change, born of over thirty years’ experience as an activist, elected official, organizational, and community leader. **The unofficial job description is just two words: “Elect Democrats.”** I believe I have delivered on that promise for these past six years – and it has been an honor to serve in this position.

While the work has been hard and disciplined and tiring, it’s also been the experience of a lifetime. Upon consultation with my family over the Holiday break, I’ve decided to not run for re-election as State Party Chair, but instead pass the torch to a new generation of leaders ready to use that torch to light the fires of democracy and teamwork and community around our state.

I have so many people and organizations to thank, but I'll save that for my final State Committee Meeting on January 28th, in Olympia. In the meantime, remember that the great use for life is to spend it for something that will outlast it. What we have accomplished over the last six years transcends all of us as individuals and makes our state and nation better. What more could one ask? It's a story we've lived together, and a legacy to pass on, and build upon. Preserving our democracy requires action, investment, persistence, and passion.

Thank you, again, for this opportunity.

With Gratitude,



Tina Podlowski
Chair, Washington State Democrats

