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Big Box Retailers Lead National Effort to Gut Workers Compensation Benefits

Roxanne Cordonier

My husband owns and operates a small business. Last year one of his employees suffered a serious injury while at work. Workers compensation insurance allowed her to support her family when she was out of work. While she recovered at home from multiple surgeries, she was able to collect 66% of her pay.

Workers compensation insurance came about in the early 1900's as a unique partnership between employees and business owners. Workers gave up their right to sue if they were injured on the job, if employers would pay their medical bills and enough of their wages to get by until they recovered and returned to work. For decades this system worked well for both parties. Now major retail giants including Wal Mart and Lowes are lobbying to opt out of workers compensation insurance and be permitted to set up their own system, rigged in their favor. Since 2003, legislatures in 33 states have passed workers' comp



Roxanne Cordonier

laws that reduced benefits or made them much more difficult to qualify for. Workers comp reform is now pending in South Carolina. SC House bill # 4171 entitled "SOUTH CAROLINA EMPLOYEE INJURY BENEFIT PLAN ALTERNATIVE", is currently being reviewed in the House Judiciary Committee.

An investigation by Pro Publica
<http://www.propublica.org/article/thedemolitionofworkerscompensation>

*Continued on Page 2 See **Big Box***



Why I am a Democrat by Jeff Dishner

I am a Democrat because I am a Christian. I believe in the acceptance and brotherhood of all people. I believe in helping people who are the most vulnerable. Children, the elderly, people who are disadvantaged by our culture because they think or learn differently than me need my love. We should all care for each other in the journey of life.

I am a Democrat because I believe in people not profits. The well being of people is much more important than what financial gain their backs can produce. Workers are

*Continued on Page 2, See **Democrat***

details what's happened to injured workers since the changes were enacted. *The investigation also revealed that despite complaints about workers' comp insurance rates, employers are currently paying the lowest rates for workers compensation since the 1970's.* Large employers who are allowed to opt out of the system are putting caps on the amount of medical coverage and time limits on coverage for the most seriously injured workers.

As a small business owner the impact of these changes could be very serious. If the largest employers are allowed to opt out of the workers' comp insurance pool rates will rise for those who remain.

In states like Oklahoma and Florida who have drastically cut benefits to injured workers, the government is stepping in to fill the gap. The Pro Publica investigation cites a study by J. Paul Leigh, a health economist at the University of California, Davis estimated that workers' comp covered less than a third of injured workers medical costs and lost earnings in 2007 and that government programs like Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid paid out about \$30 billion to fill the gap. It would appear that the workers' comp reform movement is bought and paid for by large corporations and the resulting legislation is a huge gift to them and their bottom lines. Small business people and workers everywhere need to rise up and tell our lawmakers not to use taxpayer dollars to compensate workers hurt on the job.

Banned Books Week

October 3rd was banned books week, an annual event celebrating the freedom to read and the value of free and open access to information. The American Library Association, www.ala.org focuses attention on efforts across the country to ban or restrict access to books.

Banned books week also draws national attention to the harms of censorship. The ALA's office for intellectual freedom tracks efforts to ban books and compiles an annual list of challenged books. The top ten most frequently challenged books in 2014 include:

- 1) *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian*, by Sherman Alexie
- 2) *Persepolis*, by Marjane Satrapi
- 3) *And Tango Makes Three*, by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell
- 4) *The Bluest Eye*, by Toni Morrison
- 5) *It's Perfectly Normal*, by Robie Harris
- 6) *Saga*, by Brian Vaughan and Fiona Staples
- 7) *The Kite Runner*, by Khaled Hosseini
- 8) *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, by Stephen Chbosky
- 9) *A Stolen Life*, by Jaycee Dugard
- 10) *Drama*, by Raina Telgemeier

The reasons for the efforts to ban these books include; sexually explicit, offensive language, homosexuality and violence.

Why I am a Democrat, *Continued from Page 1*

more than a device to produce money. Safe, pleasant environments where people can grow, satisfying that basic human need to contribute.

I am a Democrat because I like clean air, clean water, and a future free of asthma and cancer for my children. We can no longer allow businesses to pollute our planet. Strict consequences for polluters and a shift in thinking about how our energy is used, where our energy comes from, and what we value as a society must occur. Human health and the long term stability and sustainability of our planet are the most important issues of our time.

I am a Democrat because these issues are important to our future and we have a responsibility to support leaders who will work tirelessly to ensure these beliefs are upheld.

Upcoming Meetings & Events

October 17, 2015 (Saturday) 8:30am

GCDP Monthly Meeting
Long Branch Baptist Church
28 Bolt Street
Greenville, SC

October 22, 2015 (Thursday) 5:30pm

GCDP Executive Committee Meeting
Hughes Library (Main)
25 Heritage Green Place
Greenville, SC

November 6, 2015 (Friday)

First in the South Presidential Candidates Forum
Winthrop University Coliseum
(see article on page 8)

November 9, 2015 (Monday) 12:15pm

Democratic Women Monthly Meeting
Fried Green Tomatoes
1175 Woods Crossing Road
Greenville, SC

November 11, 2015 (Wednesday) 1:00pm

League of Women Voters Monthly Meeting
University Center (McAlister Square)

SMART Scholarships

Applications are currently being accepted for the Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation (SMART) Scholarship for Service Program.

The SMART Scholarship program offers an opportunity for students pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines to receive a full scholarship and be gainfully employed upon degree completion.

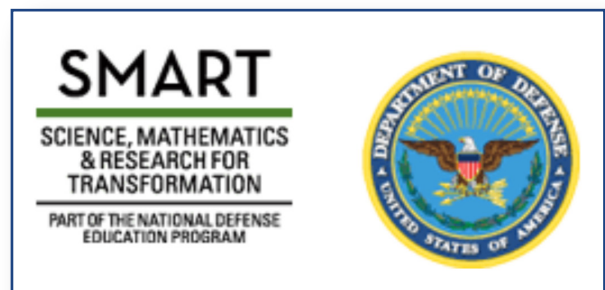
Participants in the SMART Scholarship for Service Program will receive full tuition and education related fees (does not include items such as meal plans, housing, or parking), a stipend paid at a rate of \$25,000 \$38,000 depending on degree pursuing,

access to summer research internships, mentoring, and other allowances and benefits including employment placement upon graduation.

Application Deadline: December 1, 2015

How to Apply:

https://smart.asee.org/?utm_source=tmcfmarketingsupport&utm_medium=emailblast&utm_campaign=smart-15



Jennifer Granhol

Former Governor Jennifer Granholm (D-Michigan) is speaker at GCDP October monthly meeting

The regular monthly meeting has been moved up one week to bring you Governor Granholm as the guest speaker for October. The meeting will be held Saturday, October 17 at 8:30am at Long Branch Baptist Church.

Jennifer Granholm served as Michigan's 47th governor from 2003 to 2011 and as Michigan's Attorney General before that, from 1998-2002. She is currently a senior advisor to the pro-Clinton super PAC, Correct the Record.

Jason Perkey, Executive Director of the South Carolina Democratic Party will also attend.



Remembering Bette Smock

April 8, 1926 - September 10, 2015



If you asked Bette Smock to describe herself in a few words, she probably would have said, “devoted grandmother, book lover, and fervent Democrat.” She was a passionate believer in equal justice, equal opportunity, and equal rights for all people, which of course are also bedrock values of the Democratic Party. As a child of the Great Depression and a beneficiary of FDR’s GI Bill, she believed strongly in the need for a strong government role in improving the lives of all Americans. She remained active in Democratic Women as long as she was able and when she could no longer read the newsletter herself, she asked her daughter Diane to read it aloud to her as soon as it arrived in the mail. One of her last requests was that memorial donations be made to Democratic Women—a yellow dog all the way!

League of Women Voters holds forum in Simpsonville

Simpsonville City Council Candidate Forum

The LWV of Greenville County (SC006) will be holding a candidate forum at the Simpsonville City Park Building, 100 Park Dr., Simpsonville, SC 29681 on Monday, October 26, 2015 from 7:00pm until 8:30pm.

There are ten contested offices for the Simpsonville City Council. There are Three candidates for Ward 1, Two candidates for Ward 3, Three candidates for Ward 5, and two candidates for Mayor. A moderator will ask the candidates questions prepared by the League of Women Voters of Greenville County. The questions will not be distributed in advance. Questions will be gathered from the audience, and if time permits, the audience questions will be used. The first question will give the candidates three minutes to introduce themselves to the audience. There will also be time from 8:00 until 8:30 for people to meet

the candidates and talk one on one with them.

The public is encouraged to attend. The elections are non-partisan.

Greenville County Democratic Women monthly meeting

The November meeting of Democratic Women of Greenville County will be a lunch meeting at Southern Fried Green Tomatoes. The guest speaker will be Katy Seppi, LMSW. Katy is the South Carolina Mobilization Manager for Save the Children Action Network. Save the Children Action Network advocates early childhood education in SC and ending preventable deaths of mothers and children globally.



Save the Children
Action Network

A reminder: Voter ID requirements

Elections are around the corner

New voter ID requirements took effect Nov. 5, 2013 for elections in South Carolina. Voters are required to show state-issued photo identification at the polls.

According to the South Carolina Election Commission, voters may show the following types of photo ID at polling stations:

- S.C. Driver's License
- S.C. DMV Identification Card
- S.C. Voter Registration Card with Photo
- Federal Military ID
- U.S. Passport

Voters who already have one of the IDs above are able to vote. You must bring Your ID with you to your polling place.

How to get a Photo ID:

If you do not currently have one of the Photo IDs above, you can make your voting experience easier by getting one free of charge:

- Registered voters can get a voter registration card with a photo from the Greenville County Registration & Elections Commission during normal office hours by simply providing your name, date of birth and the last four digits of your Social Security Number.
- Get a DMV ID card at a local DMV office. Check with your local DMV or www.dmv.com for required documents.

Voters who can't get a Photo ID due to some obstacle should bring their non-photo voter registration card (old card without photo) with them to the polls. They will be allowed to vote a *provisional* ballot after signing an affidavit stating they have a reasonable impediment to obtaining Photo ID. The reasonable impediment could be:

- Religious Objection to Being Photographed
- Disability or Illness
- Work Schedule

- Lack of Transportation
- Lack of Birth Certificate
- Family Responsibilities
- Any Other Obstacle You Find Reasonable

To vote under the reasonable impediment exception:

1. Present your current, non-photo registration card at the polling place.
2. Sign an affidavit stating why you could not obtain a Photo ID.
3. Cast a provisional ballot that will be counted unless the Greenville County Registration & Elections Commission has reason to believe your affidavit is false.

If you Do NOT have a Photo ID and Do NOT have a reasonable impediment to obtaining one, or you simply forgot to bring it with you to the polls, you may still vote a paper *provisional* ballot. However, for your vote to be counted, you must provide one of the Photo IDs to the Greenville County Registration & Elections Commission prior to certification of the election (usually Thursday or Friday after the election).

Wednesday January 27, 2016 is the deadline for registration to vote in the February 27, 2016 primary elections.

To check your registration status on line go to:
<https://info.scvotes.sc.gov/eng/voterinquiry/VoterInformationRequest.aspx> or:
http://www.greenvillecounty.org/voter_registration



You can help

To assist those impacted by the floods in the Midlands and the coast, you may contribute

by mail: Flood Relief, American Red Cross
P O Box 9035
Greenville, SC 29604

On-line: www.redcross.org/southcarolina
by text: REDCROSS to 9099

State News & Events

The South Carolina Democratic Party is making it easy to keep track of presidential politics in the Palmetto State. The SCDP has created a brand new website <http://firstinthesouth.com/>

First in the South is focused on the Democratic presidential primary. You can also use this site to sign up for the SCDP's First in the South Candidates Forum.



The South Carolina State Fair is October 14-25 and we need volunteers for our booth. We would love for you to join us as we represent our Party at this state-wide event.

We will provide a free **entry pass, parking, and t-shirt** for all of your hard work.

Volunteer spots are limited. Sign up today at <http://scdp.ngpvanhost.com/form/-4586651668797388800>, and someone from our office will contact you.

Join South Carolina Democratic Party Chair Jaime Harrison for conversations about our party, our values, and our state. The series of recorded interviews feature guests discussing our state, our party and what we are doing everyday to turn South Carolina blue. Recent guests have been James Carville, Dr. Cornel West, Presidential candidates; Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders and others.

View the trailer for the series and scroll down the page to see the most recent episodes at: <http://scdp.org/chairs-chats/>



Report from South Carolina Democratic Party Emergency Executive Committee

Ingrid Erwin

September 29, 2015

The Executive Council and Executive Committee of the state party met on September 29. Jaime Harrison announced that the party will host a Presidential Candidates Forum in Rock Hill on Friday, November 6. The evening forum will feature the candidates answering questions from one of the MSNBC hosts. Prior to the forum, there will be two afternoon panels. The first will feature the party chairs from the Southern states; all but one of these chairs have already committed to attend. The second panel will be issue-focused and will be led by Senator Gilda Cobb-Hunter. In a year with few actual debates, the media is expected to promote the Forum like a debate. The process by which tickets will be allocated has not been finalized. The presidential debate will be in Charleston at 9:00pm on January 17, 2016, the day before Martin Luther King Day. The debate will be televised on NBC at the conclusion of the NFC Championship game. NBC will provide the host; Jaime believes that Evening News anchor Lester Holt may serve in this capacity. The venue has not yet been chosen, but tickets are expected to be extremely limited. (Jaime advised that the state party in Nevada had been allocated only

100 tickets for the upcoming debate there.)

- A First in the South dinner will take place the night before the debate. This event will be a good opportunity to build the party by gathering a large group together. Interestingly, the Republican National Committee will be holding meetings in Charleston during the same weekend.
- Jaime reported that the party received applications for the Clyburn Political Fellowships from twenty-two counties, including Greenville County. The program will begin soon.
- State party officers and staff are working to fulfill their commitments to travel around the state. In the four months beginning June 1, members of that group have made twenty-seven visits to twenty-two different counties.
- The party is forming a Candidate Recruitment Committee, which will be divided into Congressional districts. Persons interested in serving on this committee are asked to let Jaime know of their interest.

The party's presence on social media has grown greatly. "Likes" for the Facebook page and followers on Twitter have increased. The newly designed website, launched in July, has had 25,000 page views. The party has also started a new website, First in the South, which



Ingrid Erwin
State Executive Committee Delegate

provides information about the 2016 Primary. Jaime Harrison's "Chair Chats" won an Honorable Mention in the 2015 Trailer Awards sponsored by Cablefax. It was one of three segments named a winner in the News/Public Affairs category. Jaime has conducted eleven Chair Chats and has spoken with, among others, Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders.

The party hired Olivia Logan as a Tracker to record the activities of Republican presidential and vice-presidential candidates in South Carolina. An astounding total of 204 unique events have been tracked to date. Diane May is the new Communications Director for the state party. Joseph Schweitzer recently became Finance Director.

Kaye Koonce, party First Vice Chair, scheduled a meeting of the chairs of all party caucuses in Columbia on September 29. Chairs from eight of the nine caucuses attended, including Eric Graben, chair of the Business Caucus. Kaye intends to hold two such meetings per year.

SCDP announces Democratic Presidential Candidates attending the First in the South Candidates Forum

MSNBC's Rachel Maddow to Moderate Forum

Columbia, SC – The South Carolina Democratic Party announced on October 7 the following candidates will attend the *First in the South* Presidential Candidates Forum moderated by MSNBC's Rachel Maddow on Friday, November 6 at Winthrop University's Coliseum:

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

Former Governor of Maryland Martin O'Malley

Senator Bernie Sanders

All of the Democratic presidential candidates were invited to attend. (Should Vice President Joe Biden announce his candidacy before November 6th, he will also be invited to attend the Forum.)

In addition to the South Carolina Democratic Party and Congressman James E. Clyburn, the Democratic National Committee's Southern Regional Caucus and the following Southern State Democratic Parties will serve as cohosts:

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Florida
- Georgia
- Kentucky
- Louisiana

- Mississippi
- North Carolina
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Virginia
- West Virginia

"We're thrilled to provide an opportunity for the Democratic Presidential candidates to speak to South Carolina voters and voters all across the South," said SCDP Chair Jaime Harrison. "This forum will allow candidates to share their visions for our country, speak to southern specific issues and concerns, and show that Democrats are focused on giving working and middle class families an opportunity to succeed."

"As the place for politics, we at MSNBC are looking forward to bringing this forum to a national audience," said MSNBC President Phil Griffin. "And, with Rachel Maddow leading the night, it's guaranteed to be a lively and insightful conversation with each candidate."

For more information on the Democratic Presidential Primary in South Carolina visit:
www.FirstInTheSouth.com

The forum is being held three months before the February 27 S.C. Democratic primary.

2016 Primary Schedule

Monday, February 1: Iowa Caucus

Tuesday, February 9: New Hampshire Primary

Saturday, February 20:

Democratic Caucus in Nevada
SC Republican Primary

Tuesday, February 23: Republican Nevada Caucus

Saturday, February 27: SC Democratic Primary



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