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Politics: Reality Check -- Trump Isn't Going Away

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Quick: where's your head at? Are you tired of paying attention to politics and just want to get back to your life? Are you happy to fill out online petitions ("waste of time!" say your friends, which takes more time than actually filling one out) and donate a little money and write or phone your representatives in the House and Senate (though maybe just maybe your phone calls have trailed off) and maybe even march? Maybe you're still waiting for your check from George Soros for taking part in the women's march (joke!) but you still showed up and marched AGAIN on Tax Day? Are you feeling frustrated and like it's all pointless?

Or maybe you're hoping that a combination of President Trump's incompetence, the checks and balances of the courts and even the checks and balances (however reluctant) of a Republican-controlled legislative branch will keep things from spiraling out of control? I mean, the Republicans are fighting amongst themselves so the plans to pass a tax cut for the 1% and the selling off of roads and bridges to private companies seem to be falling apart, right? And hey, the potentially traitorous acts of collaborating with an enemy of the US to profit and seize power might eventually be uncovered in a shocking, Watergate-style imbroglio, please? (And then we'd have President Pence.)

Not quite. First, anything and everything you do matters and makes a difference. You're powerful. Keep doing it and do more. Second, nonetheless tremendous damage is being done to the country, what it stands for, our economy and our future every single day that the Presidency is pimped out to the highest bidder. True, Trump is not passing a lot of effective legislation. By the standards of any normal President, he has stumbled out of the gate. Badly.

But damage is still being done.



To pick one example, Trump's Muslim ban was temporarily blocked by the courts. (You went to an airport or shared the images of Americans who won't let people be banned again from this country because of their faith, the way Catholics and Jews and others were banned in the past? Great!) But I have a friend — a permanent resident of the US with two children who are citizens of the US, the only home they've ever known. He's a black Muslim from Senegal and he's afraid to leave the country to visit his elderly mother. What if he can't get back in? College students who might once have stayed in the US and started businesses or contributed to our economy as valuable skilled workers are now more likely to go somewhere else. Tourism has taken a huge hit, with estimates of the US losing billions of dollars in business in 2017 and much more in 2018. Even CANADIANS are hesitating to visit. We're no longer a welcoming country and that's bad for business, actually. It will take a lot of effort to rebuild that trust as a beacon of freedom and hope to the world.

Or take health care. Trump and Ryan fell on their faces when trying to give tax cuts to the 1% and leave 13 million stranded without health insurance. But the uncertainty of what shape the health care system might take means it's a bigger risk now. And that means the market for health insurance might collapse anyway (or become prohibitively expensive) without a single new law being passed.

You don't need to win big to win. An enemy of public schools is in charge of our public schools. A Senator who has devoted his life to denying basic civil rights to people of color (and anyone else not white and Christian) is the Attorney General. A spoiler of the environment who thinks quarterly profits for Big Oil are far more important than his own grandchildren's future when it comes to breathable air and a livable planet is in charge of the EPA.

Trump didn't become President with the goal of passing lots of legislation and changing our country for good (or ill). He really doesn't care about any of that, which is why his position can change on major, fundamental issues from one day to the next and then back again. He became President for one reason only: to get even richer and more powerful. And on that one metric — the only one he cares about — Trump is succeeding in every possible way. Countries are falling all over themselves to green-light projects he's been fighting to make happen for years. China is handing out trademarks to Trump, his daughter Ivanka and his businesses like party favors. Corruption and cronyism that we condescendingly associated only with Central and South America or Eastern Europe or the Middle East or Africa (or Italy!)? Well, now it's taking root here and every day it continues our country is cheapened in ways far worse than gold-plated bathroom fixtures.

Depressed much? Don't be. All your actions matter and yes, the courts and the Congress and the media and the scandal of Russia are having an impact. Keep paying attention. But only one thing and one thing alone can absolutely guarantee blocking Trump: voting.

Oh I know, you ALWAYS vote in mid-term elections. But even if you vote, you need to do more than vote. You need to get your friends and neighbors to vote. You need to have a party to celebrate voting so everyone will go vote. You need to register anyone and everyone you know to vote. You need to ask them to vote. You need to talk about it for months. You need to volunteer. If you live in a super liberal district, you need to adopt one that isn't. Maybe you used to live in Florida or have friends in Illinois or know folks who simply live in a wealthy suburb that needs some prodding. Maybe it's your hometown or the hometown of your husband or wife or the city where your kids or nieces and nephews go to college or where your best friend moved. You have a lot of connections to a lot of places in this country. Find one that needs you to donate money or time or enthusiasm or just pushing the people you know who live there to take action and don't give up.

Because there are no safe seats. Not even Paul Ryan's seat is safe.

There are a LOT more of us than them.

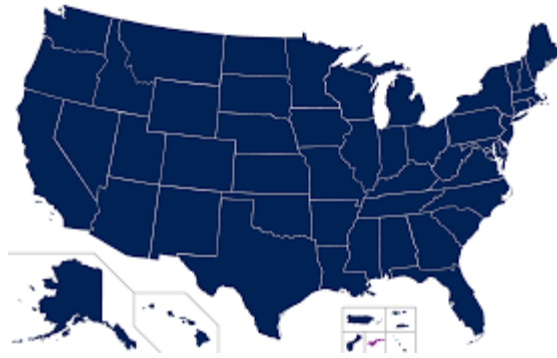
You don't need to change the minds of your crazy high school friends on Facebook or your aunt who always listens to right wing talk radio. All you have to do is vote and get everyone else who agrees with you to vote and the Democrats will win all over the country.

Win over some people in the middle by staying polite and focusing on facts and the issues? Democrats win big.

Dishearten the people on the far right who never voted for someone with a little "d" by their names and never will by refusing to take the bait and get nasty online or in person and stick to what you care about and want to do? Take the wind out of their sails, impress the undecided voters by not looking unhinged like those folk? Then the Democrats can win every single seat in the House and win back the governorships and even take control of the Senate. Not in three years or seven years but now.

It's mathematically possible, which is another way of saying it can happen but of course it won't happen. But it could. And it might. And it must.

Tomorrow: #NoSafeSeats — A Plan To Win



REGISTER TO VOTE!!

It's easy, it's fun, it's empowering.

Here's a nonpartisan site that will allow you to easily access your state's voter registration site.

Are you in New York? You can register online right here.

If you don't register and vote, you don't get to complain.

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