

CORRECTION

We goofed! Please note that the event with Marc Elias is on *May* 20th.



VOTER EMPOWERMENT = NOW!

FM Stands Up for DEMOCRACY

While the 2022 elections are still 18 months away, the rules of the game are being determined now and will affect these elements of the 2022 Midterm election:

**who can vote + how we can vote
+ when we can vote +
whether our votes count equally**

All are under serious attack + we must do what we can to ensure that all Americans **CAN + DO** vote.

Two threats to fair elections have emerged:

Voter Suppression:

With 50 million people claiming that the 2020 elections were stolen, Republicans have filed over 361 bills in 47 states to restrict voting rights. They have targeted absentee and early voting, proposed stricter ID requirements, undermined the power of local officials, enabled voter purges and, in the case of Georgia, criminalized giving snacks or water to voters waiting in line at polling places.

Gerrymandering:

In 2021, every state in the country will redraw their electoral maps for congressional and state legislative districts. Republicans have made it clear that they will attempt to manipulate the maps again to unfairly lock themselves into power for another decade.

"Make no mistake: the Republican state legislators who have introduced these anti-voter bills will be the very same people who try to gerrymander themselves into power during the redistricting process this year."

Kelly Ward Burton, President of National Democratic Redistricting Committee

Force Multiplier is supporting two groups that are countering these threats:

Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Legal Fund fights to protect democracy and push back against state election laws that make it harder to register or vote.

[DONATE](#)

The National Redistricting Action Fund works to ensure that we have fair maps and that every person's vote counts equally. **[DONATE](#)**

JOIN OUR 2 AWESOME EVENTS for these two groups >

Early Money = Pre-Election Voter Empowerment Work

- Supports critical redistricting reform as the new census data is released
- Helps prepare for and pursue legal challenges throughout the election cycle
- Helps grassroots organizations organize and plan in their communities

Standing up for Democracy now by supporting these two organizations will improve our chances of

HOLDING THE HOUSE + SENATE.

**The 2022 race is on,
already + fiercely.**

**Early money makes the difference.
Do what you can do to make the difference!**

[DONATE to the FM Early Impact House Slate](#)

[DONATE to the FM Early Impact Senate Slate](#)

WATCH A SHORT VIDEO

Laura Weisel + Nancy Pelosi Talk Early Money [here](#)

THE CENSUS COUNTS

The 2020 census was the most controversial in our memories. We weren't sure if it would be conducted completely and fairly, especially in light of Trump's brazen attempts to

be conducted completely and fairly, especially in light of Trump's proven attempts to exclude non-citizens. Although he didn't ultimately succeed in curtailing the enumeration period or legally eliminating non-citizens, vulnerable populations were intimidated about participating. It is not possible to know the impact of that intimidation but we do now have the results, and they will prevail for the next ten years, seriously impacting the next two presidential elections.

Four hundred thirty-five congressional seats have now been re-allocated among 50 states, based on growth and shifts in the population. Five southern and western states gained one seat each. Texas gained two. Seven northeastern and midwestern states each lost a seat. New York, famously, lost one seat by only 89 residents.

Nearly fifty state legislatures must now fashion new congressional districts that are **compact + contiguous + equal in population**. Twenty-one states have bipartisan redistricting commissions; the rest rely on their state legislatures to do the job, twenty of which are controlled by Republicans.

Ideally, each district is compact and has a simple shape rather than something like a barbell or an octopus. A contiguous district would have all parts touching one another and not be connected by thin lines. Equal in population means just that. "Absolute" fairness might entail computer-generated district lines which ensure compactness. Legislatures have been known to ignore those guidelines and create imaginatively shaped districts based more on a politician's interests than those of constituents.

Hence, **"gerrymandering."** The practice started in Massachusetts in 1812 by then-governor Elbridge Gerry, who reluctantly approved a partisan voting district, shaped like a salamander, and which favored his party. His name, combined with "salamander," lives on in the practice. It isn't exclusive to Republicans, but Republican legislatures have made an art form of creating districts which dilute Democratic communities sharing similar interests and dispersing them among Republican strongholds. Thus, an absolute majority of one party can be parceled such that it always loses. Conversely, gerrymandering can make an oddly-shaped district which lumps communities of color together, which guarantees, but also limits, one or two perpetually-Democratic districts while ensuring permanent Republican wins in the rest.

States must create new districts in time for the 2022 midterm elections, and the composition of these districts, combined **with bills promoting voter suppression**, could guarantee Republican wins until 2031.

Essentially, the 2022 election cycle has already begun in the state houses. We cannot fight only to retain Democratic House and Senate seats but must also participate in every aspect of redistricting in those states where Republican legislatures draw district lines. Interested residents can attend hearings, ask questions, submit testimony, and participate in lawsuits and court challenges, if necessary. We can't erase their power, but we must challenge it at every turn.

JOIN OUR AMAZING EVENT with Eric Holder + NRAF ^



EARLY MONEY Why so soon?

Noah Krawitz, Finance Director for Cindy Axne (IA-03)

Noah Krawitz, in his mid-20s and son of our own beloved co-chair Laura Weisel, was Finance Director for Cindy Axne leading up to her re-election in November. In an interview, Noah told us about his work for Cindy's campaign.

Noah was in charge of raising funds to meet quarterly goals so that Cindy could effectively communicate her message throughout her district in every way possible during the two-year campaign.

Noah explained that early money is crucial to a candidate's success. Emily's List, the progressive fundraising organization for women candidates all over the country, first coined the phrase: "Early Money Is Like Yeast." It helps raise the dough. Early money is a sign of strength; it warns off competitors, draws national attention and cash, and enables a candidate to stay in for the long haul.

When Cindy Axne initiated her campaign for the House in 2017 she faced a seven-way primary, a crowded field. Whoever raised the most money at the start of the race would be recognized as leader of the pack. Axne's consistent, early fundraising showed she could run an aggressive, successful campaign. She set a benchmark and gained supporters not only within Iowa, but nationally.

Of course, funding is necessary throughout campaigns, until the bitter (or sweet) end, when digital and print ads are crucial to maintain the momentum and fight off last-minute attacks.

The dollars Force Multiplier raised made a difference for Cindy. She won by a slim 6300-vote margin. Donations from our community helped pay for advertisements, staff, constant travel to all 16 counties in her district and to speaking engagements in rural areas every week. It helped her to connect directly with voters, at first at "meet and greets" in people's homes and later virtually. It's an all-out, all-the-time approach.

Noah loved his job but the life of a young campaign worker like him can be nomadic. They often move among positions for House and Senate candidates, State-wide races, political committees like the DNC. It's a lot of on-the-job training and working hard to make a difference. As Noah said, "We need to elect Democrats!"

THREE
AWESOME
EVENTS
that you won't
want to miss!





1. Join Marc Elias + the DSCC Legal Fund in the Fight Against Voter Suppression

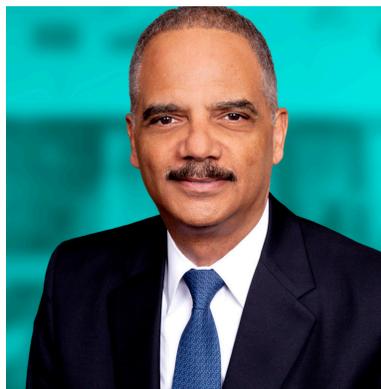
Republicans have filed over 361 bills in 47 states to restrict voting rights. They are targeting vote by mail, early voting and introducing voter ID requirements. The DSCC Legal Fund is on the front-line of the fight to protect the right to vote.

The New York Times, describes Marc Elias as "One of the most formidable election lawyers in the country, and arguably one of the most influential of unelected Democrats in Washington."

This event will benefit the DSCC Legal Fund.

**Thursday, May 20, 2021
7:00-8:00 pm ET on Zoom**

[REGISTER + DONATE](#)



2. Join Eric H. Holder + the National Redistricting Action Fund in the Fight Against Gerrymandering

AG Eric H. Holder, Kelly Ward Burton, and Saumya Narechania will speak about the National Redistricting Action Fund's work to ensure that we have fair maps and that every person's vote counts equally.

This event will benefit the National Redistricting Action Fund.

**Thursday, June 10, 2021
7:00-8:00 pm ET on Zoom**

[REGISTER + DONATE](#)





3. Join DSCC Chair Sen. Gary Peters (MI) + the DSCC + Help Hold the Senate

Support the FM Early Impact Senate Slate:

Mark Kelly (AZ) +

Maggie Hassan (NH) +

Raphael Warnock (GA) + Catherine Cortez Masto (NV)

With the Senate evenly split, a loss of even one seat could cost us the majority. The party in the White House historically loses an average of 4 seats in the Midterms.

Join DSCC Chair Sen. Peters and Ex. Dir. Christie Roberts to help us make sure that doesn't happen!

Monday, June 21, 2021

7:00-8:00 pm ET on Zoom

[REGISTER + DONATE](#)



Help spread the word!

FM ZOOM

INFO SESSIONS

A great place to find out more about FM + ask questions.

JOIN US + BRING FRIENDS

Tues. 5/11 7:00-8:00 pm

Wed. 5/19 8:00-9:00 pm



FYI: the definition of **GERRYMANDERING**
It's the map of Collin Allred's district in Dallas, Texas.

CHECK THIS OUT

We've just added more descriptive candidate profiles on our website.

You can learn about
their races + positions +
experiences + what they're focused on in DC.
Let us know if this is helpful.

:) HELP WANTED

The pay is lousy (*we're ALL volunteers*)
but the rewards are great.

- Graphic design, Adobe Suites
- Social media posting, practices + analytics
- Marketing research + email marketing
- **Motivated Interns** to help with data management, research, and other support tasks.

Get Involved + Volunteer at info@forcemultiplierma.org.

Happy Mothers Day America!

For as long as any of us can remember, US government policies have not been particularly friendly to women and children. Although some administrations attempted to ameliorate the pay gap between women and men, passed legislation to protect women from domestic violence, and most conspicuously talked a good game about support for women's rights worldwide, domestic policies often resulted in outright harm.

At the same time that Clinton was touting the benefits of his Earned Income Tax Credit for working

families, he was, famously, “ending Welfare as we know it,” requiring that most recipients hold down jobs and limiting permanently the duration of benefits, throwing families into poverty. And the last administration axed programs for public schools and affordable housing, and demonized women’s health services. The COVID-19 pandemic, which harmed nearly everyone, exposed the cracks in America’s physical, economic, social, and medical “infrastructure,” and was particularly devastating to women.

When Democrats prevailed in November 2020, we expected a much-improved political atmosphere and real attention to the needs of working people. We weren’t, however, anticipating tremendous leaps in social programs. But look what we got! “Moderate” Joe Biden is proposing a “New” New Deal, approved of even by skeptical progressives, and all three parts are especially beneficial to women and children:

- **\$1.9 trillion dollar American Rescue Plan/Covid Relief Bill**
- **Proposed \$2 trillion American Jobs Plan**
- **Proposed \$1.8 trillion American Families Plan**

Taken together, these plans represent a sea-change in the role of government in improving the lives of Americans, particularly women and children, in dozens of ways, including significant support for the care economy, more well-paying jobs and training, the child lunch program, universal pre-K, two free years of community college, mental health services, rural health care, extended unemployment benefits, premium assistance for health insurance, rental assistance and other housing programs, clean water, high-speed broadband, and of course rebuilding traditional infrastructure.

Had we not won the White House, held the House and pulled two rabbits out of our hat in Georgia, we wouldn’t have this. Elections matter and can give us a government that improves our lives.

These initiatives, bigger and bolder than we ever hoped, will, once passed, provide families and children with meaningful cash, genuine relief, and choices which will change the lived circumstances of women and children who have never seen such help. **What a real gift to honor women at this time of year!**

As always ...please share this newsletter with your friends!



Renee



Stephanie

We asked a couple of FM's to tell us what they heard/learned/thought about at the last two NEXT: Community Conversations with Justin Florence + Joan Williams.

**Renee Brandt, retired therapist, activist + aspiring world changer
A Time to Listen and Learn**

In the aftermath of the 2020 elections, many of my questions remained unanswered. Justin Florence and Joan Williams, our last two speakers in the Next conversation series, helped to enlighten me.

I knew that policies and practices of the GOP administration and the 2020 campaign posed ever-increasing threats to our democratic process and free elections. Against enormous odds, including a violent insurrection, we managed to hold a fair election, count the votes, and formally install our legitimately elected leader to the Oval office. I was relieved and puzzled. How did we do it, especially post-election? Until I read Marcia Ball’s article “The Secret History of the Shadow Campaign That Saved

the 2020 Election,” in [Time Magazine](#), February 24, 2021, I had no idea that “behind the scenes” of the daily assaults to free elections that we witnessed, an informal powerful national non-partisan coalition came together to ensure free and fair elections and the fair counting and certification of ballots.

Justin Florence, a co-founder of the non-partisan organization Protect Democracy, was one of the participants in this successful effort. Although the larger coalition has disbanded, Protect Democracy persists in the critical work of defending and strengthening our democracy. Members of the larger pro-democracy coalition anticipated the variety of attacks that could and did occur and developed and implemented targeted defense strategies. Mr. Florence credited the coalition’s success to its focus on five key areas and charted Protect Democracy’s goals moving forward: Stop ongoing threats to democracy and assure accountability of those who have committed offenses. Rebuild and renew our democratic institutions and strengthen our guardrails and systems of checks and balances. Confront the underlying structural and social circumstances that make us vulnerable to autocrats.

Another one of my unanswered questions: Why did so many people vote for Trump, and why was it so difficult for progressive folk like me to speak to them? Our last speaker Joan Williams responded to my ignorance about the characteristics and dynamics of the white working class. I include myself as a member of the white professional managerial elite that she addressed. I learned that we did not empathize with and understand the plight of the fragile failing working middle class. Our ignorance put us in a position of class cluelessness.

We often scorned members of this class and failed to listen. We lost their trust. We failed to acknowledge the cumulative effect of the loss of income, dignity, security, and hope among these Americans. The American Dream was out of reach and the government failed to deliver. Once we understand the class dynamics, we can better understand the appeal of Trump’s MAGA message to this group and their alienation from what they experienced as the elitist disdain of the Democratic party.

Hopefully we can all learn from our wise articulate speakers, and do better as we move forward to support organizations and candidates that move us toward a more equitable just future for all of us.

Stephanie Monaghan-Blout, Psy.D. **Betwixt and Between: Getting Clued in about Class in America**

At FM’s most recent Community Conversation, Joan C. Williams, spoke about her book *White Working Class; Overcoming Class Cluelessness in America*. Her thesis is that a growing cultural and economic divide between what she describes as the Professional Managerial Class (PMC) and the White Working Class (WWC) is threatening our ability to function as a democracy. Dr. Williams’s talk left me squirming. I consider this reaction to be a good thing; it means that my conceptions and attitudes got a thorough going over, revealing misconceptions, contradictions and fallacies, and got me thinking about my family legacy.

There were two, sometimes competing, sets of values and attitudes that ran through my Irish-Italian family of origin. The first was a drive to look beyond the constraints of family, workplace, or parish. My paternal grandfather summed it up when he famously said, “There has to be more to life than shoes” and rather than getting a job in the shoe factory after returning from World War I, he worked in a clothing store until he was able to start at the Post Office. The other defining strain included a set of expectations and ways of approaching the world. I have always respected the first – it got me to the PMC but this talk gave me a new understanding of the latter.

Dr. Williams’ talk brought home to me the degree to which I live in a silo. I have to admit, I like being in the PMC. I have an intellectually stimulating job where I am paid well for helping people. I like being around people who talk about ideas and think that personal growth is important. However, the only time that I get to be with different kinds of people is when I play in a women’s sports league, where my fellow hockey aficionados include engineers and scientists, but also real estate agents, HVAC technicians, car mechanics, teachers, and nurses who are straight, gay, and even trans. Even so, our politics are pretty similar. There are a few Trump voters, but we try not to bring up difficult topics when they are around.

It was thus not surprising (although quite embarrassing) to realize that I was guilty of making some rather patronizing and inaccurate assumptions about the composition of what Williams described as “working class.” Specifically, I had identified poor white people as “the problem,” rationalizing that the reason Trump did so well with this group was because they were poor and uneducated. None of those assumptions were true. Only 12% of Trump voters had incomes below \$30,000, while the median family income of Trump voters was \$75,144, comfortably in the middle range of household incomes between \$42,005 and \$131,962 that constitute 50% of American households. These people had a lot more in common with many of my relatives and friends than I realized.

My second realization was the degree to which class and culture are intertwined. My siblings and I used to joke or tear out our hair about what we assumed were aspects of our Irish identity - always working hard and doing your best, being a good provider and/or caretaker; being loyal to family and friends; standing up for the little guy; being straightforward and not putting up with “malarkey” or things, events, and people that were full of nonsense. I was struck by the similarities between the values of black and white working-class people and my own “ethnic identity.” Are these shared values a product more of class than of ethnic culture, and how does that change how we view this middle class group, out of which so many of us have emerged?

Recordings of the NEXT: Community Conversations can be found [here](#)



YOU X ME = DEMOCRACY

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