



Portage County Democratic Party News and Notes - March 2020

Dear %firstname%,

I don't need to tell you that what we are experiencing in our country, and throughout all the world, is unprecedented in our lifetime. Healthcare systems, economies, and governments of countries around the world are being brought to their knees because of this pandemic. Unfortunately, the worst is yet before us, if we are to heed the doctors and the scientists.

While it is important for us to join together as a common people, with common goals, in a common nation and support our leaders, we must not do so blindly. It has been said that out of chaos comes opportunity, and our president, judging by his actions and his words, seems poised to take full advantage of this situation. By sewing half-truths and incorrect information and bullying those who are in a position to question him and threatening to divide the country further with threats of quarantines of states whose governors displease him, he recognizes an opportunity that, by maintaining the chaos, he can attempt to tip the balance of power in his favor. We cannot allow this to happen.

I believe the first and most important step in preventing this is to have the strongest showing possible for our primary election in Ohio that continues until April 28th. It is in this way that we can prove that we will not cower, nor be intimidated, nor be apathetic, to this rhetoric.

This is no easy task. Your assumed right of showing up at the voting booth to cast your ballot took years of wars, protests, and solidarity pushing back against those who would take that right away from us, and we must not let this exceptional moment in history disaffect or disenfranchise any citizen's vote.

As such, we have about a month to get the word out to the over 107,000 registered voters in Portage County so that they can make their vote count and have a voice in the electoral process in Ohio, and inform the powers-that-be that we will have a voice throughout these United States in November.

To this end, I would encourage you to communicate, safely, with your friends, relatives, and neighbors encouraging them to vote by ordering their absentee ballot application from the Board of Elections at 330-297-3511. This may be done with a phone call, but they must do so promptly in order to have their vote count.

We will weather this storm together. Stay safe.

Forward,



Dean DePerro, Chairman

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Elections Updates

Primary Extended to 4/28. Due to the coronavirus outbreak, the March 17, 2020 Primary Election has been extended to April 28th. The remainder of the election will be conducted almost entirely by mail. Voters must request an absentee ballot, complete it, and either return it in person to the drop box at the County Administration Building in Ravenna by 7:30pm on 4/28 or mail it with a postmark no later than 4/27.

The quickest way to get an absentee ballot is to visit the Board's [website](#) and print off an absentee ballot request form, complete it, and return it ASAP. The Board requests voters only send one request, as multiple requests will slow down the process. The Board suggests voters ask for a ballot ASAP to allow time for transit through the postal service.

The Board Office in Ravenna will be open for limited in-person voting on 4/28 from 6:30am - 7:30pm. Only voters with a qualified disability or who cannot receive mail are eligible to vote in person. All others must vote via mail.

This situation is unprecedented, and the Board requests patience as it attempts to accommodate a significant process change on the fly and fulfill its mission to make sure every eligible vote is counted.

For more information, please call the Board of Elections at 330-297-3511.

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COVID-19 - Community Resources

Portage County Health District. The Health District is continuously updating its [Facebook Page](#) during the outbreak with tips on staying healthy, what to do if you or someone you love becomes sick, and more.

Job & Family Services. Portage County Job & Family Services has developed a comprehensive listing of community services and service adjustments in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. It can be accessed [here](#).

United Way of Portage County. The United Way of Portage County is working to develop a [COVID-19 Relief Fund](#) to help those in our community who need it most survive the financial crunch created by this crisis. They also continue their [2-1-1](#) service, connecting those in need to a variety of community services.

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COVID-19 - How is Portage County Operating?

On March 24th, the County Commissioners passed a resolution closing the County Administration Building indefinitely to the public (with limited exceptions) for the duration of the coronavirus outbreak.

Each Portage County office has posted information about their operations, and how the public can reach them for the conduct of essential business. A memo with that information is available [here](#), and will be updated regularly for the duration of the outbreak.

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Upcoming Events

[Betsy Rader digital training](#). Betsy Rader's campaign for State Senate is hosting virtual phone bank trainings via Zoom on Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons. The goal is to make volunteer recruitment calls in the district to build Betsy's volunteer force and inform voters about the changes to the Ohio Primary election.

Due to the ongoing coronavirus outbreak, all in-person political events have been postponed indefinitely. In the interim, we invite you to follow our local Party on [Facebook](#) for updates as we have them.

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ICYMI - News and Notes

[Akron Beacon-Journal - Dems see complaint as deliberate misinformation attack - 2/19/20](#)

"(Congressional candidate Hillary) Mueri is demanding an apology. 'The local paper ran with the story, including a quote from (a state official) threatening to prosecute me. Within a matter of hours I was able to track down the proof that I did not vote twice,' Mueri said... 'While the paper ran an updated story, the damage is already done - a shot to my honor and my integrity.'"

[Columbus Dispatch - No deal on school vouchers as lawmakers head home - 2/20/20](#)

"Ohio lawmakers are preparing to head home without a deal on school vouchers - leaving districts, parents and educators to wonder whether a compromise can be reached by the April 1 deadline."

[Record-Courier - Clyde to help lead Biden campaign in Ohio - 2/24/20](#)

"Portage County Commissioner Kathleen Clyde is one of three Ohio elected officials named to serve as senior advisors to former Vice President Joe Biden's presidential campaign in Ohio."

[WKYC - Ohio Dems accuse pastor of buying votes for Trump - 2/24/20](#)

"During the free event, \$25,000 was handed out in a series of free raffles. Winners received prizes in envelopes, in cash, as some of the headliners spoke openly and positively about President Trump. They included Geraldo Rivera."

[*Cleveland.com - Ohio Dem Congress members want action on coronavirus - 2/25/20*](#)

"Niles-area Rep. Tim Ryan, a senior Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee, said it's the U.S. government's job 'to ensure that we have the tools in place to keep our citizens healthy and safe.'"

[*Columbus Dispatch - Oscar-winning film shows anti-union acts at Dayton factory, leading to federal probe - 2/27/20*](#)

"Sen. Sherrod Brown appears in 'American Factory,' speaking at the grand opening of the Fuyao plant and encouraging employees to unionize if they wished."

[*Record-Courier - Fill out that Census form, officials say - 2/29/20*](#)

"Portage County Auditor Janet Esposito and Commissioner Kathleen Clyde are head of the county's Complete Count Committee. The group also includes more than 30 others from across the county, representing local governments, nonprofit groups, libraries, schools and churches."

[*Ohio Public Radio - Dems say coronavirus shows need for paid family leave - 3/3/20*](#)

"(State Rep. Janine) Boyd says concerns around the coronavirus highlight what she calls a stressful decision between staying home or getting paid. 'They'll risk coming to work because they can't afford not to. And they will spread the virus further.'"

[*Cleveland.com - Black Ohioans favor small gov., abortion and gun rights, poll finds - 3/4/20*](#)

"More than three-quarters of those surveyed backed abortion rights, and 75 percent agreed that strict environmental laws are worth the cost for better health and quality of life."

[*WCMH - NBC's Chuck Todd says Ohio in play in both primary, general election - 3/8/20*](#)

"Todd said that despite Donald Trump's big win here in 2016, Ohio will be in play for the presidential election this November, but before then, it will play a 'vital' role in the Democratic primary."

[*Roll Call - Campaigns grapple with uncertainty amid coronavirus concerns -*](#)

[3/10/20](#)

"Pepper said the virus would put a damper on late rallies and fundraising events in the final days before next Tuesday's primary. But his bigger concern was Election Day chaos."

[Hill.TV - Volunteer drop, poll locations changed: How Ohio preps for election in crisis - 3/13/20](#)

"Pepper also said the party was doing everything it can to prevent voting problems that happened on Super Tuesday, such as hours-long lines."

[Columbus Dispatch - Trump claims he "didn't know" about cutting pandemic office, but Sherrod Brown shows otherwise - 3/15/20](#)

"And the senator provided proof: a two-page letter to the president dated May 18, 2018. In the missive, Brown questioned Trump's elimination of the global health security office, part fo the National Security Council."

[AP - Ohio Dems sue over delay of primary election - 3/18/20](#)

"The Ohio Democratic Party sued Tuesday afternoon over Secretary of State Frank LaRose's decision to set a new date, saying that power rests only with the Legislature."

[Record-Courier - Portage Treasurer closes office - 3/19/20](#)

"Portage County Treasurer Brad Cromes has closed his office at the Portage County Administration Building in Ravenna in response to the coronavirus outbreak."

[Record-Courier - Portage County declares state of emergency - 3/20/20](#)

"Portage County Commissioners declared a state of emergency related to COVID-19, even as they live-streamed Thursday's meeting because of concerns about the spread of the virus."

[Akron Beacon-Journal - \(Editorial\) Time for Ohio to vote by mail - 3/21/20](#)

"But we find the criticism of LaRose far more justified...The Ohio Democratic Party thought so, and filed a lawsuit - since joined by the state's Libertarian Party - in state court contending that he had acted illegally. A bipartisan group of legislatures thought so too, and as a result the Ohio General Assembly will debate the issue of what to do about the primary eleciton."

[Record-Courier - County closes Administration Building - 3/24/20](#)

"Concerns about limiting the spread of COVID-19 have closed the Portage County Administration Building, effective Wednesday morning."

[Columbus Dispatch - Coronavirus response: Ohio legislature extends absentee voting, pushes back tax filing deadline - 3/25/20](#)

"The Ohio House and Senate unanimously agreed Wednesday to a sweeping bill that would extend voting in the primary election, prohibit water companies from shutting off people's service, and give state income tax filers and holders of expired state licenses a grace period. Gov. Mike DeWine said he plans to sign the measure quickly."

[Cleveland.com - Trump-branded coronavirus mailing draws criticism - 3/27/20](#)

"A government mailing headlined 'President Trump's Coronavirus Guidelines for America' is being criticized as a counterproductive use of a public health emergency for re-election purposes."

[Cleveland.com - \(Editorial\) Sherrod Brown: If we don't save lives now, there won't be an economy left to save - 3/29/20](#)

"The most important thing we can do to support Ohio workers and sustain our economy is to stop the spread of the coronavirus and save lives."

Ohio Dems - (Press Release) Dems launch "stay at home and vote" push for Ohio primary - 3/30/20

"In response to the coronavirus crisis and Gov. Mike DeWine's 'stay at home' order, the Ohio Democratic Party has transitioned its campaign efforts to a completely online operation, holding virtual cross-country fundraisers, training hundreds of volunteers through webinars and reaching thousands of voters with digital ads."

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For more news and notes on the activities of Democrats from around Ohio, sign up for the Ohio Democratic Party Daily Update [here](#).

Check us out on Facebook!



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