



# South Brevard Democratic Women's Club

August 2013

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**President's  
Message**

None of us were totally surprised when the far right SCOTUS Justices decided it was their chance to do away with the Voting Rights Act in the case of Shelby County v. Holder, but even so it sent some shock waves through our nation.



Patricia Farley Crutcher  
President

It was section 5 that required certain areas to receive preclearance before making changes in voting procedures and most of these locations were in the south or western part of the US. Chief Justice John Roberts argued that the area identified by Congress had been identified 40 years ago and that times have changed. He quoted numbers of black voters and black office holders as proof of his view. ( As comedians noted, Roberts failed to mention Trayvon Martin or Paula Dean. ) He said the information in section 4 was no longer valid and Congress could update the information. Justice Anthony Scalia even went further out to support his right wing friends than he usually does claiming Congress had no right to enforce the legislation, even though the 15th Amendment clearly states that it does. Scalia even called the Voting Rights Act, which many consider the most important civil rights legislation in our nation's history, a form of "racial entitlement."

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**ERA Action**

Well, don't hold your breath that changes will be made with the Congress we have right now. SCOTUS was aware of that when the decision was passed down.

Justice Ruth Ginsberg in a clear and determined dissent made some impressive statements:

\* "When confronting the most constitutionally invidious form of discrimination and the most fundamental right in our democratic system, Congress' power to act is at its height."

\* "Demand for a record of violations equivalent to the one earlier made would expose Congress to a catch-22. If the statute was working, there would be less evidence of discrimination, so opponents might argue that Congress should not be allowed to renew the statute. In contrast, if the statute was not working, there would be plenty of evidence of discrimination, but scant reason to renew a failed regulatory regime."

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**Super Mule**

\* "Just as buildings in California have a greater need to be earthquake proofed, places where there is greater racial polarization in voting have a greater need for prophylactic measures to prevent purposeful race discrimination."

\* "Congress approached the 2006 reauthorization of the VRA with great care and seriousness. The same cannot be said of the Court's opinion today. The Court makes no genuine attempt to engage with the massive legislative record that Congress assembled. Instead, it relies on increases in voter registration and turnout as if that were the whole story. Without even identifying a standard of review, the Court dismissively brushes off arguments based on "data from the record," and declines to enter the "debate about what the record shows"... One would expect more from an opinion striking at the heart of the Nation's signal piece of civil-rights legislation."

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**SBDWC  
Boosters**

\* “Given a record replete with examples of denial or abridgment of a paramount federal right, the Court should have left the matter where it belongs: in Congress’ bailiwick.”

Ginsburg’s dissent also included these examples of race-based voter discrimination in recent history:

\* “In 1995, Mississippi sought to reenact a dual voter registration system, ‘which was initially enacted in 1892 to disenfranchise Black voters,’ and for that reason was struck down by a federal court in 1987.”

\* “Following the 2000 Census, the City of Albany, Georgia, proposed a redistricting plan that DOJ found to be ‘designed with the purpose to limit and retrogress the increased black voting strength...in the city as a whole.’”

\* “In 2001, the mayor and all-white five-member Board of Aldermen of Kilmichael, Mississippi, abruptly canceled the town’s election after ‘an unprecedented number’ of African American candidates announced they were running for office. DOJ required an election, and the town elected its first black mayor and three black aldermen.”

\* “In 2006, the court found that Texas’ attempt to redraw a congressional district to reduce the strength of Latino voters bore ‘the mark of intentional discrimination that could give rise to an equal protection violation,’ and ordered the district redrawn in compliance with the VRA...In response, Texas sought to undermine this Court’s order by curtailing early voting in the district, but was blocked by an action to enforce the §5 pre-clearance requirement.”

\* “In 2003, after African-Americans won a majority of the seats on the school board for the first time in history, Charleston County, South Carolina, proposed an at-large voting mechanism for the board. The proposal, made without consulting any of the African-American members of the school board, was found to be an ‘exact replica’ of an earlier voting scheme that, a federal court had determined, violated the VRA...DOJ invoked §5 to block the proposal.”

\* “In 1993, the City of Millen, Georgia, proposed to delay the election in a majority-black district by two years, leaving that district without representation on the city council while the neighboring majority white district would have three representatives...DOJ blocked the proposal. The county then sought to move a polling place from a predominantly black neighborhood in the city to an inaccessible location in a predominantly white neighborhood outside city limits.”

\* “In 2004, Waller County, Texas, threatened to prosecute two black students after they announced their intention to run for office. The county then attempted to reduce the availability of early voting in that election at polling places near a historically black university.”

\* “In 1990, Dallas County, Alabama, whose county seat is the City of Selma, sought to purge its voter rolls of many black voters. DOJ rejected the purge as discriminatory, noting that it would have disqualified many citizens from voting ‘simply because they failed to pick up or return a voter update form, when there was no valid requirement that they do so.’”

The 5-4 ruling delivering the blow to the Voting Rights Act was a chance for the five conservative Justices to push their ideology onto the nation. No wonder the conservatives want more Scalia’s on the Court. This decision was about the political power necessary to win elections, not about principles and law. As Democrats, as citizens, and as protectors of the right to vote, we have our work cut out for us.

*Our next meeting has been moved from August 3rd to August 10th at 11:30 am at Me-maws because many members want to attend the fundraiser for Serene Harbor Domestic Violence Shelter on August 3rd.*

*Our Champagne and Chocolate Convention fundraiser will be on Saturday September the 7th. Our annual Blue Donkey Sale will take place at that event, too. Watch for Details.*

## **WOMEN are watching. We will take action!**

The Chained CPI—the Social Security benefit cut proposal that would mean thousands of dollars less for everyone—is still alive in the House. This week, House Republicans announced that they were including it in their “menu” of demands in ex-

change for raising the debt ceiling.

But Representatives Alan Grayson (D, FL-9) and Mark Takano (D, CA-41) are recruiting members of Congress to a letter stating: “We will vote against any and every cut to Medicare, Medicaid, or Social Security benefits -- including raising the retirement age or cutting the cost of living adjustments that our constituents earned and need.”

Already, 44 members of Congress have signed the Grayson-Takano letter and 6 more have released public statements. Click here to see if your representative has pledged no cuts!

House Republican demands to tie Social Security cost of living increases to the debt ceiling are outrageous. Since Social Security is paid for by the payroll tax, it has NEVER contributed a penny to our nation’s debt.

Ask your Representative in Congress to make the strongest possible statement against Social Security cuts by signing the Grayson-Takano Letter today.

We’re working with the Other 98% to track members who have already signed the letter, and have noted whether or not they’ve supported earlier measures along similar lines. The members need to hear from their constituents: We will not stand for any cuts to Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid, and we will not stand with any member of Congress who votes for them.

Here are some important tips to keep in mind when calling your representative about the Grayson-Takano Letter:

Determine if your member of Congress has signed a previous letter opposing cuts, such as the 2013 Schakowsky-Ellison letter to keep Social Security out of budget talks, or has progressive credentials like membership in the Congressional Progressive Caucus. You should bring that up when you ask them to sign the Grayson-Takano Letter. Ask them to stand up for Social Security now as they have in the past, and challenge them if they claim to have changed their views.

Be polite but firm; feel free to follow our script below

If a member of Congress has signed—or agrees to sign—the Grayson-Takano letter, but is not yet on the Cicilline Resolution, please ask them to sign it as well. The Cicilline Resolution opposes the use of Chained CPI, and we would like to build up the number of members on both.

If you don’t get a chance to speak to a person on the phone, please leave a detailed message or follow up by e-mail. They will be tracking all messages from their constituents.

Here is a sample call script:

Hi, my name is [NAME] and I’m calling from [TOWN, STATE].

As a constituent, I want [MEMBER NAME] to publicly oppose any deficit reduction or debt ceiling deal that cuts Social Security benefits. That is why I am asking [MEMBER NAME] to sign onto the Grayson-Takano letter to vote against any deal that cuts benefits.

Can you please tell Rep. [MEMBER NAME] that I want [HIM/HER] to publicly stand against any cuts to Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid benefits?

[Answer]

Thank you. And can you please tell your press secretary that I called and asked Rep. [MEMBER NAME] to make a public statement against cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security benefits?

[Answer]

Close the call: Thank you for your time!

ERA Continues –

The following provides a helpful as well as current review of ERA. Due to space availability, the remainder will be shared over the next month or two. Have some fun. Test yourself and see if you know the answer after you read the question.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN’S ORGANIZATIONS - ERA Task Force

THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

By Roberta W. Francis, Co-Chair, ERA Task Force

National Council of Women’s Organizations March 2013

The proposed Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the United States

Constitution is a political and cultural inkblot, onto which many people project their greatest hopes or deepest fears about the changing status of women. Since it was first introduced in Congress in 1923, the ERA has been the object of both enthusiastic support and fervid opposition. Interpretations of its intent and potential impact have been varied and even contradictory. The following answers to frequently asked questions about the ERA are provided to encourage evaluation of the amendment based on facts rather than misrepresentations:

### 1. *What is the complete text of the Equal Rights Amendment?*

Section 1: Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or

by any state on account of sex.

Section 2: The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions

of this article.

Section 3: This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.

2. *Why is an Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution necessary?* The Equal Rights Amendment would provide a fundamental legal remedy against sex discrimination for both women and men. It would guarantee that the rights affirmed by the U.S. Constitution are held equally by all citizens without regard to sex. The ERA would clarify the legal status of sex discrimination for the courts, where decisions still deal inconsistently with such claims. For the first time, sex would be considered a suspect classification, as race currently is. Governmental actions that treat males or females differently as a class would be subject to strict judicial scrutiny and would have to meet the highest level of justification – a necessary relation to a compelling state interest – in order to be upheld as constitutional. To actual or potential offenders who would try to write, enforce, or adjudicate laws inequitably, the ERA would send a strong preemptive message – the Constitution has zero tolerance for sex discrimination under the law.

3. *What is the political history of the ERA?* The Equal Rights Amendment was written in 1923 by Alice Paul, a leader of the woman suffrage movement, who earned three law degrees. It was introduced in Congress in the same year and subsequently reintroduced in every Congressional session for half a century. The original text of this “Lucretia Mott Amendment” was “Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.” In 1943 Alice Paul rewrote the ERA (now called the “Alice Paul Amendment”) to its current wording (see Question 1), modeled on the language of the 19th Amendment: “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.” The 19th Amendment is the only explicit guarantee of equal rights for women and men in the Constitution. On March 22, 1972, the ERA finally passed the Senate and the House of Representatives by the required two-thirds majority and was sent to the states for ratification. An original seven-year deadline was later extended by Congress to



Milly Krause  
Vice President



June 30, 1982. When this deadline expired, only 35 of the necessary 38 states (the constitutionally required three-fourths) had ratified the ERA. It is therefore not yet included in the U.S. Constitution. The Equal Rights Amendment has been reintroduced in every session of Congress since 1982. In the 112th Congress (2011-2012), ERA ratification bills were introduced as S.J.Res. 21 (lead sponsor, Senator Robert Menendez, D-NJ) and H.J.Res. 69 (lead sponsors, Representative Carolyn Maloney, D-NY, and Representative Judy Biggert, R-IL). A bill to remove the ERA’s ratification deadline ex post facto and make it part of the Constitution when three more states ratify was introduced as S.J. Res. 39 by Senator Benjamin Cardin (D-MD) and as H.J.Res. 47 by Representative Tammy Baldwin (D-WI). In the 113th Congress, which convened on January 3, 2013, Senator Menendez has reintroduced the ERA as S.J.Res. 10. It is anticipated that the other bills will be reintroduced soon after Congress reconvenes from its Easter recess in April 2013.

So, where are we now – have you made your calls to Senators’ Rubio & Nelson to co-sponsor SJR15? Call Sen. Nelson at 202-224-5274 and Sen. Rubio at 202-224-3041.

Look for more Q & A next month.

Milly Krause



CAMPAIGN NEWS

As Americans, there are few rights more precious to us than our right to vote. Sadly, the Supreme Court’s recent decision to gut a key provision of the 1965 Voting Rights Act seriously weakened the ability of the Justice Department to fully protect voters from discrimination.

The Supreme Court’s ruling is nothing short of a giant step backwards for America – and with Rick Scott in of-

fice, the ensuing threat to our rights is very real.

By eliminating the Justice Department’s authority to pre-clear legislative changes to election laws, the Court’s decision guarantees that laws engineered to suppress minority voting will be able to take effect.

Brace yourself for another wave of “Florida election reform” legislation from the same right-wing Republicans who tried to suppress Democratic vote in the 2012 election. While it’s too early to tell how they will make voting more difficult for minorities this time, one thing is almost certain: Rick Scott will sign that legislation into law – just like he did before.

As governor, I will veto any legislation that attempts to suppress voter registration or inhibits the ability of voters to cast their ballots free from political interference.

As Democrats, we believe in fairness. We believe the will of the majority, no matter how well intentioned, should never impede or infringe upon the rights of any minority -- especially when it comes to their right to vote!

That’s the way it should be – and we should settle for nothing less.

## Scheduled Events



### Next Meeting

Saturday August 10th  
at Mamaw’s

Indian Harbour Beach  
on the Eau Gallie  
Causeway at 11:30.



## CONVENTION SCHEDULE-AT-A-GLANCE

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26:

4:00 -7:00: Registration, Convention Atrium  
4:00 - 6:00: Executive/State Board Meeting. Palm West  
4:00 - 5:00: Workshop I - "How to Get High Tech with Your Club," Sago I  
6:30 - 8:30: Welcoming Reception and Opening Ceremonies - Grand Ballroom D, E

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27:

7:15 - 9:00: Registration, Convention Atrium  
9:00 - 7:00: Vendor Tables open. Silent Auction Items ready for bids  
9:00 - 11:30: Business Meeting, Grand Ballroom C  
11:00 - 12:00: Registration, Convention Atrium  
12:00: Lunch, Banner Parade; Keynote Speaker Nadine Smith, Equality Florida, Grand Ballroom B  
2:00 - 3:00: Workshop II, Sago Palm I  
2:00 - 3:00: Workshop III, Sago Palm II  
3:00 - 3:15: Break, Vendor Tables Open  
3:15 - 4:15: Workshop IV, Sago Palm I  
3:15 - 4:15: Workshop V, Sago Palm II&III  
4:30 - 5:30: Regional Caucuses, location TBD (posted)  
6:00 - 7:30: Registration, Atrium  
6:00 - 6:30: Cocktails, Atrium  
6:30 - 9:00: Dinner, Keynote Speaker Nan Rich, Grand Ballroom A&B  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28:  
7:15 - 9:00: Registration, Atrium  
9:00 - 7:00: Vendors Open, Silent Auction Items available for bid  
9:00 -11:45: General Session, Grand Ballroom C  
11:45 -12:30: Registration, Atrium  
12:15: Silent Auction Closes  
12:00 -2:00: Lunch, Grand Ballroom B; Keynote Speaker Elena McCullough  
1:30 - 2:00: Live Auction  
2:15 - 4:00: General Session, Election of Officers, Grand Ballroom C  
4:15 - 5:30: Registration, Atrium  
6:00—6:30: cocktails, Atrium  
7:30 - 9:30: Dinner, Keynote Speaker: Elizabeth Colbert Busch, Grand Ballroom A&B; Live Auction

### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29:

9:00 - 11:00: State Executive Board Meeting, Presentation of 2014 Convention, Sago 3

**TIMES AND LOCATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE UNTIL 9/26**

## Strong, Informed, Diverse



**Democratic Women's  
Club of Florida  
September 26-29, 2013  
Edgewater Beach Resort  
Panama City Beach, FL**

**So. Carolina Candidate**

**ELIZABETH COLBERT BUSCH**

**Gubernatorial Candidate SEN. NAN RICH**

**Florida Rep. MIA JONES**

**Florida Democratic Party Chair**

**ALLISON TANT**

**Congressional Candidate GWEN GRAHAM**

**Advocate Elena McCullough \* Nadine Smith, Equality FL**



## Super Mule

"The Supreme Court struck down the part of the Voting Rights Act which protected minority voting in areas where it needed to be protected. Their reasoning is that we don't need it anymore. Racism is basically over in America, so let's get back to talking about Trayvon Martin and Paula Deen." –Bill Maher

"That Edward Snowden dude got out of Hong Kong, flew to Russia, has been in the Russian airport the whole week, but still no one can find him. When Sarah Palin today heard that he may be incognito, she called for a full scale invasion of Cognito." –Bill Maher

"Texas state Senator Wendy Davis singlehandedly stopped a draconian abortion bill from getting passed in the Texas state legislature, stood up their filibustering for 12 hours. So I guess Todd Akin was right – women can shut that whole thing down." –Bill Maher

"Conservative rock star Ted Nugent says that he is thinking about running for president in 2016. Nugent said it's always been his dream. Then Democrats said, 'Ours too!'" –Jimmy Fallon

"Despite his prostitution scandal several years ago, Eliot Spitzer is running for comptroller of New York. He's paying someone \$800 a day to collect signatures to put him on the ballot. He said it's the second best \$800 he's ever spent." –Conan O'Brien

Televangelist Pat Robertson said he wishes Facebook had a 'vomit button' he could push whenever someone posts a picture of a gay couple kissing. Of course, the other option would be for Pat Robertson to stop searching online for gay men kissing." –Conan O'Brien

"With Anthony Weiner and Eliot Spitzer running for political office, New York City is changing its nickname to 'The City That Never Sleeps With Its Wife.'" –Conan O'Brien

"Mexico has replaced the U.S. as the world's fattest nation. The U.S. is now number two. The Mexican government has done a lot of research. It turns out their people eat way too much Mexican food." –Conan O'Brien

Political experts are saying Joe Biden needs to start doing more fundraising if he wants to run for president in 2016. A lot of people are saying they'd definitely donate to a Biden campaign. Most of them are Republicans, but still." –Jimmy Fallon

Former New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer announced he is running for New York City comptroller, and one of his opponents is the madam who supplied him with hookers. There's a tough choice for the voters. One is involved in the most degrading profession of all time, and the other ran a whore house." –Jay Leno

"Eliot Spitzer resigned from the governor's office five years ago after he was crushed by a pile of prostitutes or something. But now he's back and what makes this news especially interesting is that one of his opponents, a woman named Kristin Davis, is the madam who supplied him with call girls. It's the classic story of boy meets girl, boy pays for sex with girl, boy resigns in disgrace, and then boy runs against girl he paid for other girls for the office of comptroller. In Africa, they call it Hooker Matata." –Jimmy Kimmel

"Republicans are already trying to paint Hillary Clinton as too old to be president. In fact, a new ad claims she's so old that she could be a Republican." –Conan O'Brien

"This week at the White House, President Obama will present George Lucas with the National Medal of Arts, while Joe Biden will present him with some fan mail for Yoda." –Jimmy Fallon

"NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden has been offered asylum in Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Bolivia. Or as Snowden put it, 'Prison it is!'" –Jimmy Fallon



# SBDWC Boosters

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Bessie Barnes  
Terry Sanders  
Seeta Begui  
Milly Krause



Our sincere Thoughts and Prayers are extended to all the US troops stationed in Afghanistan, around the world and also to their families everywhere.

We pray for the safe return of the troops, a speedy end to the war and the wisdom of our leaders to guide us in this conflict.



**Our next meeting** has been moved to Saturday August 10th at Mamaw's in Indian Harbour Beach on the Eau Gallie Causeway at 11:30. We will confirm our delegates and program ads at this meeting. Please plan on attending.

The meeting has been moved from the first Saturday to the 10th because many of our members want to attend the fundraiser Seeta Begui is holding for Serene Harbor Domestic Violence Shelter on the 3rd from 12 until 3:30PM, at the Tortoise Island Club House. Cost is \$30.00 per person. Anyone wishing to donate time, food, desserts, drinks, door prizes and funds for the shelter should contact Seeta.

Start planning now to attend the Champagne and Chocolate fundraiser for our own club to help defray expenses to go to the DWC Convention in September. This fundraiser will be held at the Hilton on the Ocean in North Indialantic on September the 7th. We are planning a really fun event. This will also have our annual Blue Donkey Sale at this time so we are asking everyone to find something to donate to this. We will have more details to share at our next meeting. Save the date!

## Become an SBDWC Booster

Your ad will appear in the newsletter as well as in the archive at <http://sbdwcnewsletter.com> where thousands can view it. A link included in your ad will be "clickable" so as to send greater traffic to your site.

Help us find Boosters to cover the costs of printing our newsletter. Cost for a one line listing is \$20 for 6 months or \$35 for a year. Cost for a two line listing is \$30 for 6 months or \$45 for a year, additional lines extra.

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