

# SOLIVITA DEMOCRATIC CLUB *Beacon*

**HAPPY  
VALENTINE'S DAY!**

FEBRUARY 2022  
SolivitaDemocrats.org

Brian Fillette, president — [President@SolivitaDemocrats.org](mailto:President@SolivitaDemocrats.org)

Ellis Moose, editor — [Beacon@SolivitaDemocrats.org](mailto:Beacon@SolivitaDemocrats.org)



Twelve of the Solivita HOA Board Candidates spoke via Zoom at our January SDC Membership meeting.

## VOTING RIGHTS

**2022** has ushered in an increased sense of urgency for voting rights legislation. While many Republican controlled state legislatures, under the guise of Trump's unrelenting Big Lie of election fraud, have introduced laws to make voting harder, Democrats are making a renewed push to get federal voting legislation through the closely divided Senate, a move President Biden continues to advocate.

Two voting bills are being considered in the Senate.

The first bill is the Freedom to Vote Act, a compromise bill crafted by Senate Democrats after Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., said he wouldn't support a more expansive House bill, the For the People Act.

The second bill is the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, an update to the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, signed on as a co-sponsor. A version of the legislation has already passed the House.

Both bills have the support of all 50 Democrats and independents in the Senate. But without the support of 10 Republicans, or a change to the Senate rules to bypass the 60-vote requirement, the legislation is likely to fail.

### Here's a summary of what's in the voting rights bills:

#### Limits gerrymandering

Currently, governors and state legislatures have the primary responsibility of drawing up boundaries for the 435 U.S. congressional districts. Both political parties have in the past sought to maximize their advantages through this process.

The bill attempts to end partisan redistricting by setting standards while providing judicial remedies for states' failure to comply.

#### Makes voting easier

Election Day would become a federal holiday, giving many voters more time to get to their voting stations.

States would have to establish automatic voter registration systems through their motor vehicle agencies, voters would have at least 15 consecutive days to cast ballots before Election Day, and every voter would be able to request a mail-in ballot.

The legislation would impose minimum standards on how people could be removed from voting rolls and how states provide drop boxes for early voting ballots. — *continued on page 2.*



**WED. FEB. 9TH  
7:00PM**

**MEMBERSHIP  
MEETING**

**IN THE BALLROOM  
AND ON ZOOM**

**Doors Open at 6:30PM  
Meeting at 7:00PM**



We are celebrating Black History Month



Our featured speaker will be



#### ANGIE NIXON

*FDP Political and Coalitions Director and  
Florida House District 14 Representative*

She will bring us up to date on what is happening with the Florida Democratic Party.

She will advise us on how we can help move our Democratic Issues forward!

# FYI

## Solvita Dems Hold the Lead As of latest reported numbers

Pct 411:	9/1/21	1/3/22	+/-
Dems	2417	2441	+24
Rep	2305	2329	+24
Other	86	92	+6
Indep	1670	1681	+11
Total	6,341	6,543	+202

Pct 420:	9/1/21	1/3/22	+/-
Dems	445	431	-14
Rep	325	330	+5
Other	22	22	0
Indep	247	252	+5
Total	1,039	1,035	-4

Polk Co.:	9/1/21	1/3/22	+/-
Dems	157,146	155,443	-1703
Rep	170,846	171,029	+183
Indep	129,018	130,093	+1075
Total	464,964	464,642	-322

Florida:	12/31/20	12/31/21*	+/-
Dems	5,315,954	5,089,697	-226,257
Rep	5,218,739	5,123,799	-94,40
Indep	3,799,799	3,829,372	+29,573
Total	14,565,738	14,287,711	-278,027

\* Florida reports numbers quarterly.



### Websites of interest:

#### POLITICS:

- [www.FlaDems.com](http://www.FlaDems.com)
- [www.FISenate.gov/topics/ppaca](http://www.FISenate.gov/topics/ppaca)
- [www.PolkDemocrats.org](http://www.PolkDemocrats.org)
- [www.PolkElections.com](http://www.PolkElections.com)
- [www.Democrats.org](http://www.Democrats.org)
- [www.ProgressFlorida.org](http://www.ProgressFlorida.org)
- [www.DemocraticGovernors.org](http://www.DemocraticGovernors.org)

#### MEDIA:

- [www.BestOfTheLeft.com](http://www.BestOfTheLeft.com)
- [www.NPR.org](http://www.NPR.org)
- [www.Snopes.com](http://www.Snopes.com)
- [www.FactCheck.org](http://www.FactCheck.org)
- [www.PolitiFact.com](http://www.PolitiFact.com)

— continued from page 1.

Uniform national standards would be set for voter identification requirements.

Tightens financial contribution rules

“Dark money” donations to candidates would have to be disclosed and the transfer of funds between organizations to hide the identity of contributors would be outlawed.

Online political advertisements would have the same disclosure requirements as ads on other media.

### Enhances election security

New protections for non-partisan state and local officials administering federal elections would be provided at a time when those officials face increasing threats.

There would be greater safeguards for election records and infrastructure to secure ballots and voting systems.

### Brings back U.S. oversight of states

The U.S. Department of Justice would resume oversight of election law changes in states that have had a history of discrimination. That power was weakened in a 2013 U.S. Supreme Court ruling.

### What can we do?

While the outcome of voting rights legislation is uncertain. We must ensure that we do whatever and whenever is necessary to always VOTE! And implore family, friends, and neighbors who share our values and beliefs in the principles of democracy to always VOTE!

Make sure you are registered to vote well before the 2022 elections. In a few clicks at the Polk County Supervisor of Elections website <https://www.polkelections.com/> you can check your voter registration status, register to vote, request a vote by mail ballot, and more.

And you can call (863) 534 - 5888 or email [info@polkelections.com](mailto:info@polkelections.com) the Polk County elections office if you need help or have questions (Mon-Fri 8am – 5pm).

See the Florida Division of Elections website <https://dos.myflorida.com/elections/for-voters/election-dates/> for important 2022 election dates and deadlines including the following:

### Voter registration deadlines for 2022 elections are:

Primary Election: July 25

General Election: October 11

### Vote-By-Mail ballot request deadlines for 2022 elections are:

Primary Election: August 13

General Election: October 29

### Early voting periods for 2022 elections are:

Primary Election: August 13 - 20

General Election: October 29 - November 5

### Election Dates for 2022 are:

Primary Election: August 23

General Election: November 8



*Thanks for all that you do, and most of all, thank you for being who you are.*

### Brian Fillette

President, Solivita Democratic Club

[president@solivitademocrats.org](mailto:president@solivitademocrats.org)



**Our 2022 Board Members:**

**Brian Fillette, President**  
[President@SolivitaDemocrats.org](mailto:President@SolivitaDemocrats.org)  
 704-641-2978

**Ellis Moose, Vice President/  
 Beacon Editor/Webmaster**  
[Beacon@SolivitaDemocrats.org](mailto:Beacon@SolivitaDemocrats.org)  
 863-852-7294

**Rochelle Quinn, Treasurer**  
[RQuinn777@gmail.com](mailto:RQuinn777@gmail.com)  
 863-496-5313

**Joan Sprain, Secretary**  
[Joan.Sprain@AOL.com](mailto:Joan.Sprain@AOL.com)  
 651-261-9166

**Kate Kohout,  
 Membership Chair**  
[KateKohout@yahoo.com](mailto:KateKohout@yahoo.com)  
 863-496-0481

**Kay Oubre,  
 Ways and Means Chair**  
[Oubre95@gmail.com](mailto:Oubre95@gmail.com)  
 863-496-5350

**Dorothy Schwartz,  
 Publicity Chair**  
[SchwartzAPN@aol.com](mailto:SchwartzAPN@aol.com)  
 732-207-3358

**Celeste Williams, Campaign/  
 Special Events Chair**  
[CelestynWilliams1@gmail.com](mailto:CelestynWilliams1@gmail.com)  
 407-924-1766

w

*The Board of Directors meets the first Tuesday of each month via ZOOM.*

**Precinct Captains:**

**Leonard Guminski, Pct. 411**  
[MariaDLenG145@yahoo.com](mailto:MariaDLenG145@yahoo.com)  
 586-321-4711

**Celeste Williams, Pct. 411**  
[CelestynWilliams1@gmail.com](mailto:CelestynWilliams1@gmail.com)  
 407-924-1766

**Could Be You (1 Female, 1 Male),  
 Pct. 411**  
**Solivita west of Marigold Ave.**

**José Garcia, Pct. 420**  
[TopCop2070@gmail.com](mailto:TopCop2070@gmail.com)  
 516-319-4118

**Could Be You (2 Female, 1 Male),  
 Pct. 420**  
**Solivita Bella Viana and  
 Venezia**

**Ellis Moose, At Large**  
[Beacon@SolivitaDemocrats.org](mailto:Beacon@SolivitaDemocrats.org)  
 863-852-7294

**Congressman Darren Soto Hosted a Press Conference to Highlight Benefits of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for Public Transportation**



Viviana Janer, Darren Soto, and Mayra Uribe at the Downtown Orlando SunRail station

**Soto was joined by local commissioners to discuss the need for SunRail expansion and increased public transportation funding for Central Florida**

**K**ISSIMMEE, FL – On Friday, January 7, 2022, Congressman Darren Soto (FL-09) hosted a press conference with Commissioners Viviana Janer and Mayra Uribe to speak about the recently passed Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and highlight the need for increased public transportation funding for Central Florida. The three rode the SunRail from Poinciana to the press conference in Downtown Orlando to promote their efforts to seek federal funds to increase rail service to weekends. As a result of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Florida will receive funds to upgrade roads and bridges with a focus on climate change mitigation, improve public transportation options, and create thousands of good-paying union jobs.

“As the representative for Florida’s 9th Congressional District, I am constantly having conversations with constituents and other elected officials about the need for increased public transportation options in Central Florida,” said Congressman Darren Soto. “As we work with the Biden Administration and Congress to Build Back Better, a major portion of our focus has been on reinforcing existing structures to ensure that they continue serving the community for years to come. Expanding SunRail to other parts of Florida and increasing service would allow Floridians to depend on the rail to get around and help the state create jobs.”

**B**efore the event, Congressman Soto sent a letter to President Joe Biden and Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg requesting their consideration for a federal ridership survey to expand SunRail services to include weekends.

“As you are undoubtedly aware, Florida has seen massive growth over the past decade. According to the U. S Census Bureau, Central Florida is the state’s fastest-growing region,” wrote Soto. “Unsurprisingly, this growth places a strain on our existing infrastructure. Federal investment into SunRail would help connect Central Floridians to better-paying jobs, alleviate traffic for millions of commuters, promote commerce in the region, and improve the quality of life of our constituents in Orange, Osceola, Seminole, and Volusia counties.”

If the federal survey results are positive, Florida will have the opportunity to apply for funds through SunRail to secure additional trains needed to make weekend service a reality.



**Our elected representatives need your input**

**Let them know your positions on issues!**

Contact your elected officials and media at:

**Sen. Rick Scott (R)**  
United States Senate  
Phone: 202-224-5274

**Sen. Marco Rubio (R)**  
United States Senate  
Phone: 202-224-3041

**Rep. Darren Soto (D)**  
US District 9 Office  
804 Bryan Street  
Kissimmee, FL 34741  
Phone: 202-225-9889

**Gov. Ron DeSantis (R)**  
The Capitol  
400 S. Monroe St.,  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001  
Website: [www.flgov.com/](http://www.flgov.com/)

**State Rep. Sam Killebrew (R)**  
FL House District 41 Office:  
Phone: 850-717-5041  
Email: [sam.killebrew@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:sam.killebrew@myfloridahouse.gov)

**State Rep. Fred Hawkins (R)**  
FL House District 42 Office  
Phone: 850-717-5042

**State Sen. Kelli Stargel (R)**  
Phone: 850-487-5022  
Email: [stargel.kelli@flsenate.gov](mailto:stargel.kelli@flsenate.gov)

**MEDIA:**

**The Orlando Sentinel**  
Editorial Dept.  
633 N. Orange Avenue  
Orlando, FL 32801

**The Lakeland Ledger**  
Editorial Dept.  
P.O. Box 408  
Lakeland, FL 33802

**SDC Beacon Newsletter**  
c/o Ellis Moose  
217 Sorrento Road  
Poinciana, FL 34759-4065  
[Beacon@SolivitaDemocrats.org](mailto:Beacon@SolivitaDemocrats.org)

**“Happy Valentine’s Day” February is...**

- ♥ **February is Black History Month** in the United States and Canada. Since 1976, the month has been designated to remember the contributions of people of the African diaspora.
- ♥ **February 1: Lunar New Year**, one of the most sacred of all traditional Chinese holidays, a time of family reunion and celebration. The Lunar New Year is also celebrated at this time in Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and Mongolia.
- ♥ **February 1: National Freedom Day**, which celebrates the signing of the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery in the United States in 1865
- ♥ **February 2: Candlemas**, a Christian holiday that celebrates three occasions according to Christian belief: the presentation of the child Jesus, Jesus’ first entry into the temple, and Virgin Mary’s purification
- ♥ **February 3: St. Blaise Day** (The Blessing of the Throats), the feast day of St. Blaise of Sebaste celebrated by the Roman Catholic Church and some Eastern Catholic Churches
- ♥ **February 3: Setsubun-Sai** (Beginning of Spring), the day before the beginning of spring in Japan, celebrated annually as part of the Spring Festival
- ♥ **February 3: Four Chaplains Day** commemorates the fifty-fifth anniversary of the sinking of the US Army transport Dorchester and the heroism of the four chaplains aboard.
- ♥ **February 5: Vasant Panchami**, the Hindu festival that highlights the coming of spring. On this day, Hindus worship Saraswati Devi, the goddess of wisdom, knowledge, music, art, and culture.
- ♥ **February 14: St. Valentine’s Day**, a Western Christian feast day honoring one or two early saints named Valentinus. This holiday is typically associated with romantic love and celebrated by people expressing their love with gifts.
- ♥ **February 15: Lantern Festival**, the first significant feast after the Chinese New Year; participants enjoy watching paper lanterns illuminate the sky on the night of the event
- ♥ **February 15: Parinirvana Day** (or Nirvana Day), the commemoration of Buddha’s death at the age of 80, when he reached the zenith of Nirvana.
- ♥ **February 16: Maghi-Purnima**, a Hindu festival especially for worshippers of Lord Vishnu. Devotees take a holy bath on this day and also carry out charity work.
- ♥ **February 16: Magha Puja Day** (also known as Maka Bucha), a Buddhist holiday that marks an event early in the Buddha’s teaching life when a group of 1,250 enlightened saints ordained by the Buddha gathered to pay their respect to him.
- ♥ **February 21: Presidents Day**, a federally recognized celebration in the United States that honors the birthdays of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln birthday, as well as those of every US president
- ♥ **February 25–March 1: Intercalary Days or Ayyám-i-Há**, celebrated by people of the Bahá’í faith. At this time, days are added to the Bahá’í calendar to maintain their solar calendar. Intercalary days are observed with gift-giving and special acts of charity.
- ♥ **February 27: Meatfare Sunday** (The Sunday of the Last Judgment), traditionally the last day of eating meat before Easter for Orthodox Christians



## Here's What's Goin' On In Florida Politics...

### Gerrymandering in Florida — Coming to a District Near You

By Todd Smyth, SDC Member

**T**he term “gerrymandering” refers to the political manipulation of electoral district boundaries with the intent of creating undue advantage for a party, group, or socio-economic class within the constituency. Two principal tactics are used in gerrymandering: “cracking” and “packing”. “Packing” is used in order to concentrate many voters of one type into a single electoral district to reduce their influence in other districts. Packing is more likely to be used for partisan advantage when the party controlling the districting process has a statewide minority, because by forfeiting a few districts packed with the opposition, cracking can be used in forming the remaining districts. Cracking” involves spreading voters of a particular type among many districts in order to deny them a sufficiently large voting bloc in any particular district. In this case urban voters could be spread out into areas of rural voters to the point that their impact is limited.

**F**lorida has a history of gerrymandering being implemented by the Republican party. In 2010 Florida voters overwhelmingly (over 60%) passed a Constitutional Amendment banning partisan gerrymandering. Florida’s district map drawing process was still left up to the legislature, which was controlled by Republicans. In the 2012 elections Republicans got 51% of the states House votes but ended up with 63% of the House seats 17 to 27. This map was then challenged and overruled by the Florida Supreme Court in 2015. The trigger for this ruling was Florida District 5 which resembled a snake and purposefully packed minority voters into one district. A compromise could not be reached between the Florida House and Senate, so the FL. Supreme Court stepped in and settled the matter and included another seven house districts in the new district maps.

**T**oday’s district maps were recently redrawn (happens every ten years after the census) and do not change the maps much. Governor DeSantis just recently has tried to introduce his own district map, which would once again increase the partisan advantage even more so for Republicans. Fortunately, the Florida state Senate has recently rejected what DeSantis has proposed, most likely because they remember how the courts got involved. DeSantis has appointed two of the Florida Supreme Court judges so it appears his calculation could be based on potential partisan rulings by the judges he appointed.

**A**s far as the impact of gerrymandering is concerned, Florida ranks **THIRD** as the most heavily gerrymandered state in the country. Most of the gerrymandering centers around the heavily populated Miami area as well as some others where minorities are concentrated. Due to the computer age, gerrymandering is now even more detrimental in its impact as computers allow for very precise district map drawing, mainly for the purpose of partisan advantage. Our current very partisan federal Supreme Court saw fit to rule 5-4 that gerrymandering is a “political matter” and an issue they should not rule on. In essence, our Supreme court abandoned their responsibility to protect the Constitutionally based premise that all people have fair and equal representation. Due to this ruling, the gerrymandering problem is now left up entirely to the states, which ironically is where partisan gerrymandering became out of control in the first place. Justice Elena Kagan delivered the dissent and commented “The practices challenged in these cases imperil our system of government,” she said. “Part of the court’s role in that system is to defend its foundations. None is more important than free and fair elections.” Gerrymandering is, in effect, a disaster for our representative form of government.

# UPHOLDING SENATE TRADITIONS!!

By Joe Tobin, SDC Member and Beacon Contributor

## THE GREAT DELIBERATIVE BODY!! GOD SAVE THE FILIBUSTER!!

**To filibuster or not to filibuster** – a bouncing tennis match conundrum in the current Senate. The word “filibuster” may be derived from the writings of Count Phil E. Buster, a French author and a member of the aristocratic Buster family. After deep examination of documents supporting both sides of the debate, I offer my thoughts on this one word so unique and yet so divisive within the traditions of the United States Senate.

**Group Decision Making.** Across the world, lots of decisions are made among families, teenagers and club members, boards of directors, administrative, legislative and judicial bodies, and even to the choosing of a new pope. The concept is simple: (1) somebody has an idea to do something and proposes it to a group for votes; (2) the group either accepts or rejects the proposal; (3) if the “ayes” win, then the proposal is off and running. Pretty simple!

**While the process of group decision-making sounds simple,** it unfortunately does not always make for happy people or keep a group together.. The winners can push their noses into the faces of losers or strut around like proud peacocks — not always the best techniques for cementing good relations. On the other hand, losers can quietly walk away, take temper tantrums, join protest movements, form new coalitions or load the rifle. No doubt, group decisions have a powerful influence in determining the creative or destructive forces for life on the planet.



### Thoughts on the Senate.

The history of Senate and its individual members is fascinating because there are so many stories to tell – a part of Americana that cannot be ignored. However, I believe the atmospheric description of the Senate chamber as a “solemn and deliberative body of men and women” has been oversold to the public. One would think that the learned spirits of Hammurabi, Solomon, Plato and Aristotle help guide Senate members in their deliberations.

**The reality is senators are first and foremost politicians.** As a group they are well schooled in the ways of Washington and the Capitol.

They can sweet talk, speak frankly, play dumb or hit hard when the occasion arises. And bless their traditions – how so many of the chosen 100 cherish them! If one group wants to play hard-ball or weasel on a particular vote, then they can easily consult the files stored in the Capitol attic and labeled “Senate Traditions – Use Cautiously.” The “Tips on Filibusters Techniques” files was especially useful to Republicans during the Merrick Garland versus Amy Barrett hearings. Great deliberators or well-seasoned politicians!!!

**The Filibuster.** So, what’s my thoughts on the filibuster? For better or worse, I follow the advice of WWII dive bomber pilots (my uncle was one): “fly in, hit hard and get the hell out.” Forget the filibuster! Put it to rest if there is little or no collegiality. If 51 Democrats have the necessary votes to win their proposed legislation or nominations, let the other side find ways to handle their losses. The Senate is not a haven for kumbaya comforting. Besides, the Senate needs to move on and synchronize their voting procedures concurrent with other legislative bodies in this country. I rest my case.



Get in the action...go to [PolkDemocrats.org](https://www.PolkDemocrats.org)



You may think the editors of *The Beacon* are undisciplined hacks. But, you should know that we follow very specific publication guidelines to bring our members the highest quality newsletter possible. Below are a smple of the rules we (sometimes) follow:

## RULES FOR BEACON WRITERERS;

1. Verbs HAS to agree with their subjects.
2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
3. And don't start a sentence with a conjunction.
4. It is wrong to ever split an infinitive.
5. Avoid cliches like the plague. (They're old hat)
6. Also, always avoid annoying alliteration.
7. Be more or less specific.
8. Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are (usually) unnecessary.
9. Also too, never, ever use repetitive redundancies.
10. No sentence fragments.
11. Contractions aren't necessary and shouldn't be used.
12. Foreign words and phrases are not *apropos*.
13. Do not be redundant; do not use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.
14. One should NEVER generalize.
15. Comparisons are as bad as cliches.
16. Don't use no double negatives.
17. Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc.
18. One-word sentences? Eliminate.
19. Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.
20. The passive voice is to be ignored.
21. Eliminate, or delete, commas that are not necessarily necessary.
22. Never use a big word when a diminutive one would suffice.
23. Kill all exclamation points!!!
24. Use words correctly, irregardless of how others use them.
25. Understatement is always the absolute best way to put forth earth shaking ideas.
26. Use the apostrophe in it's proper place and omit it when its not needed.
27. Eliminate quotations. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know."
28. If you've heard it once, you've heard it a thousand times: Resist hyperbole; not one writer in a million can use it correctly.
29. Puns are for children, not groan readers.
30. Go around the barn at high noon to avoid colloquialisms.
31. Even IF a mixed metaphor sings, it should be derailed.
32. Ask yourself this, who needs rhetorical questions?
33. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.
34. Proofread carefully to see if you any words out.



ABOVE: Typical monthly *Beacon* editorial staff meeting.



ABOVE: Two *Beacon* reporters in their formative years.



ABOVE: *Beacon* proof reading department.

And finally...to keep with media standards; **INTOLERANCE OF ERRORS FOUND IN THE BEACON WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!!!**

**SDC is making an impact in our community by helping feed healthcare workers and families in need.**

A total of 75 meals were delivered to the Poinciana Medical Center on January 28; thanks to the generous contributions from members the SWANS and the Solivita Democratic Club.

SDC also has supported the efforts of local food banks. See the letter from St. Rose of Lima Food Pantry below.



**St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church  
Food Pantry Ministry**

*Defeating Hunger with Love*

January 11, 2022

Brian Fillete, President  
Solivita Democratic Club  
787 Aviara Lane  
Kissimmee, FL 34744

Dear Mr. Fillete,

Thank you very much for the Solivita Democratic Club's generous donation to the Lima Food Pantry. This donation will go a long way toward helping the families in our community who are struggling with food insecurity.

We are currently feeding an average of 230 families per week, over 900 families per month. This equates to about 36,000 pounds of food being transferred from our facilities to families in need monthly. Our mission is to provide all those that come to our pantry with food to sustain themselves and their families. Donations like yours make the efforts of many easier and bring compassion and empathy to those who need us the most.

Your monetary support allows our food pantry to ease hunger and provide support to those in need. Your generosity is greatly appreciated and we hope that our pantry, the volunteers and those we help continue to be in your prayers.

Sincerely,

Fr. Emmanuel Akalue  
Pastor, St. Rose of Lima

Rosa Claeboe  
Co-Director, Food Pantry