



DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF WISCONSIN

Weekly News From Your Wisconsin Democratic Party Chair

Follow this newsletter to keep current on the events shaping our state and the work our party is doing to win in 2022 and beyond.

Dear fellow Wisconsin Democrats,

This week, the field of state Supreme Court candidates expanded from three to four—and the stakes in the race came into sharp focus.

When Wisconsinites voted a few weeks ago, they voted for their right to make their own health care decisions and to love who they wish to love. They also voted in favor of democracy. The freedoms that voters fought for in the governor's race—and the race for Attorney General, Senate, and down ballot as well—remain just as critical in the Spring election.

But two candidates for state Supreme Court are running with the goal of wielding our state's highest judicial body as a weapon to advance a far-right anti-freedom agenda: Dan Kelly and, after her entry into the Supreme Court race this week, Jennifer Dorow.

The two other candidates, Judges Everett Mitchell and Janet Protasiewicz, would preside fairly and independently, grounded in principles of equal justice and the rule of law. Until one of them emerges after the February 21 primary, WisDems will be neutral between them. But it's already clear that Dan Kelly and Jennifer Dorow would be absolute disasters on the state Supreme Court.

We remember **Dan Kelly**—because we beat him in April of 2020. Now, this Walker-appointed, Trump-endorsed former state Supreme Court justice is making another appearance. Kelly is a radical who pre-decided cases based on what his donors and friends want. He put the partisan special interests before the people of Wisconsin and the law. As a private attorney, he defended the GOP's gerrymander in court in 2011; if he served on the state Supreme Court, he'd keep defending gerrymandered maps there. Kelly [said this](#) of affirmative action and slavery “morally, and as a matter of law, they are the same.” He also [said](#) that a 2013 U.S. Supreme Court case, which required the

legal definitions of "marriage" and "spouse" be applied to same-sex couples, would devoid meaning from marriage as an institution. Wisconsinites were right to give him an early retirement in 2020. But now, an advocacy group controlled by Dick and Liz Uihlein—the country's biggest GOP donors, who financed Stop the Steal and floods of the hideous ads attacking Mandela Barnes—has announced it will spend "millions of dollars to help educate voters in support of Justice Dan Kelly."

And now Dan Kelly isn't alone on the extreme-right flank: **Jennifer Dorow** announced her campaign on Wednesday. Dorow is capitalizing on the tragedy in Waukesha: presiding over the trial of the Waukesha Christmas parade massacre led to a ton of TV coverage and made her a minor celebrity. But the people who saw her on TV might not realize that she's a hard-core right-wing partisan. A graduate of [Pat Robertson's](#) far-right Regent University School of Law, she was appointed to the bench by Scott Walker, and has named *Lawrence v. Texas*, the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision which decriminalized LGBTQ relationships, as among the "[worst Supreme Court decisions of all time](#)."

History has shown what a conservative, partisan court will do. The current GOP-backed majority selected a hyper-partisan gerrymander in our legislative maps that put the GOP a hair's breadth away from dual-chamber supermajorities. The court banned absentee ballot drop boxes, made it illegal to assist family members or others in delivering their absentee ballots, and empowered our GOP-run state legislature to spend unlimited taxpayer dollars on private attorneys—leading to debacles like the Gableman investigation. Dorow and Kelly would push for more of the same. And the next court will rule on the 1849 abortion ban. A fair court would rule that this long-superseded law is void. But we know that neither Dorow nor Kelly would rule fairly.

This Supreme Court race is Wisconsin's own referendum on abortion freedom. It's Wisconsin's referendum on democracy. It's our one chance to end the authoritarian misrule of the far right.

There's so much more on the ballot—from critical mayoral, city council, school board, judicial, and other races, to referenda, to a state Senate [special election](#) that could prevent a GOP supermajority in that chamber. If you or anyone you know might think about running for office this spring, this is go time: let us know that you're thinking about running [via this form](#), or nominate someone who *should* run. And there's more besides that: we're scheduling listening sessions all over Wisconsin to draw lessons from everything that happened this year, and inform our program going forward. Scroll down to learn more about all of that.

But the Supreme Court race stands out, because its impact on all of our futures is so extraordinarily vast. We've got 123 days. Let's make sure every Wisconsinite knows the stakes.

In solidarity, Ben

FIGHT

Senate Republicans Vote Against Rail Workers

Congress voted in [favor](#) of President Biden's negotiation with the rail labor union this week, averting a rail shutdown and a potential hit to the economy.

As typical, Republicans voted against expanding benefits for workers. Senate Republicans - including Ron Jonnson - [blocked](#) a measure that would provide seven days of sick leave to the union.

The President [signed](#) the deal this morning, which provides a 24% pay bump to workers.

Senator Baldwin Leads the Fight for Marriage Equality in the U.S. Senate

On November 29, due to the hard work of Wisconsin's great Senator Tammy Baldwin, the U.S. Senate took a [monumental step](#) towards the codification of marriage equality (with a final tally of 61-36!).

This bill was first introduced in 2009 and has had a long journey to passage. In its near-final iteration, it ensures that no matter the race, gender, sexual orientation, or identity of a couple, they will have equal protections under the law.

Without surprise however, it did not have the support of Senator Ron Johnson who voted against the bill, calling it "[unnecessary](#)."

The Respect for Marriage Act comes at a critical moment. Following the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, the Respect for Marriage Act will provide essential protections for same sex and interracial marriage before the U.S. Supreme Court can put their activism over established precedent. This bill also communicates a much-needed message of solidarity at a time when our communities are experiencing an increase in hateful white supremacist and anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric that is resulting in horrific violence nationwide.

This bill will be a critical part of Baldwin's legacy. Of Baldwin, [The Cap Times](#) wrote that she has been a "quiet but determined trailblazer throughout her political career" and Republican Susan Collins [called](#) her leadership on this "critical."

INCLUDE & RESPECT

Eat 30 Gala | December 3



The Hmong American Center celebrates the Hmong New Year, Noj Peb Caug. Join the Center on Dec. 3 for their [Eat 30 Gala](#) concert at 7pm in Wausau. Eat 30, which refers to the new year, represents the number of days in a month that traditionally, Hmong people prepare meals to celebrate. During this time, community members dress in their best cultural attire to attend festivities, spend time with loved ones, and rest from a year of hard work.

Milwaukee Hmong New Year | December 10

[Join the WisDems AAPI Caucus at the Milwaukee Hmong New Year](#) event, one of the biggest celebrations in the state! Hmong New Year is an annual fall celebration to honor ancestors and gives thanks for the completion of the harvest. The event will be hosted at the Wisconsin Expo Center in West Allis on Dec. 10. The Democratic Party of Wisconsin is proud to be a Silver Sponsor again this year and will host a booth with voter information about the upcoming April elections. All volunteers will receive complimentary day and evening program tickets.

EMPOWER The Grassroots

Listening Sessions



Thank you again for your support to elect Democrats up and down the ticket this fall. Without your support we would not have been able to re-elect Governor Evers, Attorney General Kaul, and many more of our incredible candidates.

As we prepare for the upcoming 2023 spring election, we want to hear from **you** about what went well, and how we can improve moving forward. **I will be hosting in-person regional listening sessions, along with other party leaders** over the next several weeks.

Please register for the session using the links below. We hope that you will be able to join us and invite other community leaders to attend. **Please note that we will be scheduling additional listening sessions in the coming weeks.** If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to our Political Director Nick Truog at nicholast@wisdems.org.

[Milwaukee Regional Listening Session w/ Chair Ben Wikler](#)

Date & Time: Monday, December 5th at 7:00 PM

Location: 8405 W. Lisbon Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53222

RSVP Link: [Here](#)

see next page for more locations and dates.

[Rhineland Regional Listening Session w/ Chair Ben Wikler](#)

Date & Time: Monday, January 9th at 12:00 PM

Location: TBD

RSVP Link: [Here](#)

[Stevens Point Regional Listening Session w/ Chair Ben Wikler](#)

Date & Time: Monday, January 9th at 5:00 PM

Location: TBD

RSVP Link: [Here](#)

[Green Bay Regional Listening Session w/ Chair Ben Wikler](#)

Date & Time: Monday, January 9th at 7:30 PM

Location: 118 S Chestnut Ave, Green Bay, WI 54303

RSVP Link: [Here](#)

[Fox Valley Regional Listening Session w/ Chair Ben Wikler](#)

Date & Time: Tuesday, January 10th at 8:00 AM

Location: 480 N Main St, Oshkosh, WI 54901

RSVP Link: [Here](#)

[Ozaukee Regional Listening Session w/ Chair Ben Wikler](#)

Date & Time: Tuesday, January 10th at 12:00 PM

Location: 1930 Wisconsin Ave, Grafton, WI 53024

RSVP Link: [Here](#)

[Waukesha Regional Listening Session w/ Chair Ben Wikler](#)

Date & Time: Tuesday, January 10th at 5:00 PM

Location: TBD

RSVP Link: [Here](#)

[Racine Regional Listening Session w/ Chair Ben Wikler](#)

Date & Time: Wednesday, January 18th at 5:00 PM

Location: TBD

RSVP Link: [Here](#)

[Kenosha Regional Listening Session w/ Chair Ben Wikler](#)

Date & Time: Wednesday, January 18th at 7:30 PM

Location: TBD

RSVP Link: [Here](#)

[Eau Claire Regional Listening Session w/ Chair Ben Wikler](#)

Date & Time: Monday, January 23rd at 5:00 PM

Location: TBD

RSVP Link: [Here](#)

[La Crosse Regional Listening Session w/ Chair Ben Wikler](#)

Date & Time: Monday, January 23rd at 8:00 PM

Location: TBD

RSVP Link: [Here](#)

2023 County Party Office Support Applications

For County Parties interested in receiving financial support for their current or future office space in 2023; applications are [now open](#)!

Regardless of whether your county party owns, rents or will seek an office in 2023; please **apply** no later than 5 pm, Saturday, December 10. If you have any questions about the request form or the office support program, reach out to our Party Affairs Manager at morgan.jeidy@wisdems.org.

Read Chair Wikler's 2022 Election Recap

What happened in Wisconsin on November 8, 2022



Ben Wikler

Community (This content is not subject to review by Daily Kos staff prior to publication.)

Need a midterm debrief? Chair Wikler wrote all about what happened on November 9, 2022 in Wisconsin. Read it [here](#). (If you've been reading the chair's weekly newsletter, this will be familiar to you—it's an expansion of the analysis sent out the week after the election!)

Run For Local Office, Become A Monthly Donor

Considering Running for Local Office?

It's time to run for elected office! Wisconsin Progress offers local candidate trainings to help those interested in running for local office learn how to run a successful campaign. Head over to wisconsinprogress.org/trainings for more information on how to attend and take the first steps toward running for office and making a lasting difference in your own community. There are still [trainings](#) across the state, as soon as Saturday, December 3 in Oshkosh.

Again, if you are or a friend is interested in running, fill out our form [here](#).

Become a Monthly Donor

The easiest way to help support our work across the state is by [signing up to be a monthly donor for the Democratic Party of Wisconsin](#). These funds **directly** allow us to hire and plan sustainably, work to elect a progressive Wisconsin Supreme Court majority, and save democracy!

[Chip in any amount to join the fight!](#)



Paid for by the Democratic Party of Wisconsin, Ben Wikler, Chair

Our mailing address is:

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