

Thank you all for this opportunity. I am humbled and honored you have entrusted me with this responsibility. I am looking forward to working with each one of you. This is a responsibility that I do not take lightly.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank Blaine Lotz. Over the past eight years, Blaine has been the captain of this ship, focused on how to improve our county and our clubs. Blaine, through your leadership, the Beaufort County has established three extraordinary clubs in South and North of the Broad and Sun City. Through your hard work, we have an inspired and motivated membership and talented people who are bringing fresh perspectives to key roles. Thank you Blaine for defending and protecting our values as democrats.

On a personal matter, thank you for being a good friend and more than a friend, a mentor to me, for believing in me, and allowing me to collaborate with the county. I am more than honored to follow in your footsteps as County Chair, - big shoes to fit.

I also want to thank another good friend, whom I respect and admire a great deal - Bill Walker, president of our South of the Broad Democratic Club. He, too, served as a mentor, and who from day one, welcomed me into the Lowcountry democratic family. He believed in me, challenged me and encouraged me to be part of the team. Thank you Bill for your trust and friendship. Also, thanks to Peter and all the members of the Nomination Committee and County Executive Board.

As Executive Committee Chair, the first thing we need to do is conduct an assessment of the county's past elections plans.

We need to identify and articulate the resources and activities the County needs to help our candidates win elections.

We need to outline a sustainable budget to fund our efforts to help

local, state and national candidates win elections.

Our Executive Committee will draft a strategic plan for the upcoming elections and discuss it with all of you and the Clubs in the following weeks. We will concentrate on building upon our strengths, improving our human resources and seeking out opportunities to enable us to flip precincts throughout the County.

Our main goal will be to engage voters to ensure that Beaufort County elects more Democrats.

We will empower our members and dedicated volunteers to accomplish this goal by providing the tools and support our clubs need to Get Out The Vote!

Here, today, we have some of our potential and declared candidates for the upcoming elections, but we still need more people to step forward and run for office.

This upcoming election is about the leadership we need to bring our people together.

What we do in the coming months will define South Carolina for years to come.

President Obama said:

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones that we've been waiting for.”

So, we are the ones who will come together to elect new leaders,

- who will improve the lives of working families,
- who will raise the minimum wage to a living wage, and
- who will create jobs by rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure, our roads and bridges.

We need to elect new leaders,

- who will fight to end our broken criminal justice system,
- who will promote a single-payer health care program and, guarantee healthcare for all.

We need to elect new leaders,

- who will protect women's rights,
- who will fix, once and for all, our broken immigration system, allowing families to achieve the American Dream and create a path to citizenship for our Dreamers.

We need to elect new leaders,

- who will consider serious guns-control policies because our children deserve the right to live. Since last year we raise up our voices to protect our communities and our values, we have the power, we have the message, we have the votes out there, we could reach a new blue sky.

Working together, we can make this happen.

I pledge to you, my full and dedicated efforts.

Thank you and God Bless.