

Resolutions Nourish the Democratic Process

Why pass them? By Jack Sanders

What is the point of resolutions? What happens to the resolutions we pass in our precinct meetings in February and debate so passionately at the County Convention? How do we convert those expressions of political will into public policy?

Passing resolutions is a vital activity of the party. The thought and research behind the resolutions, the debate, and the give and take of the democratic process strengthens the party, creates respect for other opinions, and promotes tolerance for diversity of views. Most importantly, resolutions serve the essential function of defining what we as a party stand for and the issues we think are important, and they help create party unity and a sense of common purpose.

The resolutions also have very practical aspects. They enable the party to speak with one voice. They inform our elected officials of the party's positions. Over the years, our resolutions have supported our Orange County legislators as they have established a reputation for progressive leadership in the state.

Though our elected officials get a copy of our resolutions, we do not convert our resolutions into public policy as well as we might. We need a more focused approach with prioritization and better tracking. (See the article by Julie Tomkovic on this page about the resolution guardian program the Policy and Action Committee has initiated.)

The Process

A typical resolution originates in a precinct meeting, goes to the County Convention, then to the District Convention, and finally to the State Convention or State Executive Committee (SEC) meeting. Similar

resolutions from various sources are combined at each stage of consideration, and resolutions that are purely local in nature are not brought forward at the next level.

In our case, our Platform and Resolutions Committee under Hank Elkins combined and edited the 2007 precinct resolutions, and the County Convention passed 30 resolutions on April 21, including two resolutions introduced from the floor. The resolutions covered a number of areas, including democracy, economic and social justice, health care, energy, education, foreign affairs, and immigration. They were sent to our elected officials so they could act in our behalf.

The resolutions next went forward to the District Convention in May, where all 30 resolutions from Orange County were passed, along with resolutions from other counties in the Fourth District.

The final step was the SEC meeting on August 25.

The state Platform and Resolution Committee under Wayne Goodwin held 11 regional town meetings so that Democrats around the state could comment on the resolution package prior to its introduction at the SEC. Of Orange County's 30 original resolutions, 13 were passed in full or in part by the SEC, and two (End the Winner-Take-All System of Awarding Presidential Electors, and US Relations with Iran) were voted down.

Does the state party have a better process for changing public policy in accordance with party resolutions? Frankly, not much better. Currently the state chair can and does lobby the legislative leadership, but the party does not have a paid lobbyist specifically charged with pushing the party's legislative program. (See the article by Pete MacDowell on this page about possible revisions to the state party's resolution and follow-up processes.) Change is under way!

OC Democrats stand watch over policies

By Julie Tomkovic

I realized how important resolutions are at the first County Convention that I attended about four years ago as I saw each word and phrase thoughtfully analyzed before individuals were willing to commit a yes or no vote.

It made me wonder, "What happens next?" I discovered that some Orange County resolutions don't make it past the district, and some are shot down at the state level. But I still wondered what happened to those resolutions that did make it through the process.

If these resolutions were important enough to Orange County Democrats to attract their votes, I thought, then we needed to follow them through the legislative process, be aware of pending legislation, and take appropriate actions to make our voices heard at the local, county, state, and national level as advocates for change.

We also had living proof that effective follow-through produced the desired result. When one of the health

resolutions that the Orange County Democratic Party voted for two years ago came up as a pending law in the NC legislature, Ruth Zweidinger and others from the Policy and Action Committee became effective guardians, staying in touch with the sponsors and tracking the legislation through from committee to the final vote.

With that example in mind, suddenly the "what next" became

Follow-through by "guardians" makes the difference

obvious. If every resolution passed at the Democratic Orange County Convention had a "guardian" or team of guardians, then we would become much more effective as a party, and the resolution and County Convention process would become much more meaningful. When folks in our various precincts ask who we are, what we believe in, and what do we do about it, we can have more tangible results to show for our efforts.

Last year's County Convention passed 30 resolutions; these can be found on the OCDP website. Since we are playing a bit of catch-up, the Policy and Action Committee decided to find guardians for and track at least half of those resolutions. We decided to follow resolutions #6 (public financing), #7 (poverty), #11 (high quality diverse

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Resolved: let's make politicians accountable

By Pete MacDowell

Resolutions don't mean a thing unless politicians listen and act upon them.

At the last NC Democratic Party State Convention, almost 800 delegates passed 146 resolutions, most of which had worked their way up from the

precinct, to the County Convention, to the District Convention, to the floor of the State Convention. It was grassroots party democracy, and almost no politician listened. There were no more than six state legislators or statewide public officials at the convention. Even in Orange County, where the party prides itself in having a robust and

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Nov. 6 Elections — Get Informed

Candidate signs are popping up on lawns and street corners like mushrooms after a rain, a sure sign that municipal elections are upon us. In these non-partisan elections, citizens will choose mayors and town council members for Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Hillsborough, and Mebane, and members of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools Board of Education.

The elected officials will set policy on the issues that face Orange County: smart growth, affordable housing, energy and the environment, downtown revitalization, taxes, student achievement, and school construction, among others. These issues affect us every day, typically more directly than the national or state issues that get more attention. So study the

issues and the candidates, and vote.

You can start with the **Voter Guide** within. It contains information about the election — the races, Early Voting, and Same-Day Registration — as well as statements by the Democratic candidates on their positions.

Another easy way to inform yourself is to attend the candidate forums sponsored by our Democratic Party precinct organizations.

Carrboro Mayor and Board of Aldermen — October 11, Lake Hogan Farms Clubhouse, 101 Commons Way, Chapel Hill. Doors open at 7:00 pm; the forum commences at 7:30 pm.

Hillsborough Mayor and Board of Town Commissioners — October 12, 6:00-8:00 pm at the Occonechee Steak House, 378 S. Churton Street in Hillsborough.

Chapel Hill Mayor and Town Council — October 27, 3:00 pm at the Chapel Hill Public Library, 100 Library Drive in Chapel Hill.

Other party activities

include tabling at the Carrboro Farmers Market and at polling places during Early Voting. Some additional volunteers are needed for these activities: contact Jack Sanders (967-5155). Contact your precinct chair for specific precinct activities.

Start with the OCDP Voter Guide enclosed, attend the candidate forums listed here, and VOTE!

Orange County Democratic Party
 PO Box 3368
 Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3368

OCDP Voter Guide inside

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OCDP Executive Committee Meets

OCDP Communications Chairman Stan Cheren records the pros and cons during a spirited debate between crowd members attending the Sept. 20 County Executive Committee. The discussion concerned Lake Hogan Precinct's proposed resolution regarding the siting of a new waste-transfer station near the Rogers Road community. Other business conducted at the meeting included the financial report by Paul Guthrie, comments by OCDP Chair Jack Sanders, committee reports, and news of the upcoming municipal elections.



Data Base Volunteers Wanted

Some Orange County precincts are in need of volunteer data base managers who are willing to work online using their own computers to enter contact data for registered Democrats in Orange County. Volunteers can also create canvassing reports for others who in turn contact Democratic registrants, answer questions, deliver newsletters, etc.

This job does not take a lot of time – an hour a week on average with a heavier load during election periods, i.e., from early voting through Election Day or Primary Day. Training is provided – mostly online and over the phone. Some familiarity with Excel is helpful.

Precincts needing volunteers include: Coles Store, Damascus, East Franklin, Eno, Glenwood, Hillsborough, Lions Club, Mason Farm, North Carrboro, Northside, OWASA, Ridgefield, St John's and Weaver Dairy.

Interested? Contact Data Base Committee Chair Nancy Park at oaxntp@aol.com.

Century Club 2007

These are the names of Orange County Democrats who have donated at least \$100 – or couples who have donated at least \$175 – to the OCDP since July 2007. The Party also thanks the many valuable donations that have come in smaller amounts. If you've received this newsletter in the mail, take a look at the enclosed remittance envelope. Consider making a non-tax deductible donation and sharing your issues with the Orange County Democratic Party at P.O. Box 3368, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3368. Please note your employer (if any) in the notation line on your check. **Thank you.**

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The OCDP is most grateful to these donors. Our mission to elect Democrats, promote Democratic policies, and build grassroots democracy in Orange County depends on this vital support.

Legislative Breakfast

It's time for our exciting Annual Legislative Breakfast. Hear the report of Orange County's legislators to the party, and enjoy a full buffet breakfast and good fellowship with fellow Democrats. Don't miss the highlight of the OCDP year!

The Orange County Democratic Party will hold its Legislative Breakfast on Saturday, October 20, 2007, from 8:00-10:15 am in the Trillium Room at the Friday Center in Chapel Hill. Esteemed Congressman David Price will report on the action in Congress, and our distinguished state legislators, including House Speaker Joe Hackney, will report on the recent successful legislative session.

Tickets may be purchased as follows: advance purchase (by October 15) – \$40; at the door – \$50; Teen and UNC Young Dems – \$20 (advance purchase required). Send checks with LB in notation to OCDP, PO Box 3368, Chapel Hill NC 27515-3368. Tickets will be sent by return mail.

Contributors of \$250 or more will be much appreciated and listed as Patrons on the program. Tickets can also be purchased on behalf of Young Democrats or volunteers who might not otherwise attend.

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thoughtful resolution process, our elected officials (with a very few honorable exceptions), run like scalded cats as soon as the resolution process starts.

Why? Because politicians don't want to be accountable to grassroots activists – especially on potentially controversial issues. They want to be re-elected, which they see as a matter of reading the plying and pleasing their campaign donors. The results are pretty predictable: no real progress on the war, health care reform, and campaign finance reform, fighting global warming, and a host of other issues where democratic values are very clear, but powerful interests support the status quo.

Since Jerry Meek, the state party chair, opened up the process and reinvigorated the party, the disconnect between the grassroots party and the behavior of elected officials has been increasingly apparent. Accordingly, he has appointed a special committee to propose changes to the resolution and platform process in the party's plan of organization. The committee, chaired by party Second Vice-chair Delmas Parker, and on which I serve, has been hashing out the issues. It expects to report to the party Executive Committee in January.

One key proposal on which there is strong agreement is that we have to develop a procedure for prioritizing resolutions so that we come up with, for example, a 10-point action plan for the legislature which will make the party's legislative action agenda hard for elected Democrats to ignore and will make political accountability an important part of the democratic process. Hopefully our elected officials will soon find it important to participate in the resolution discussions rather than heading for the exits.

Wanted

The OCDP newsletter is looking for volunteers to write articles, take photographs of events, and do article research. If you are interested in helping out, contact the editor at: woodsedge@mindspring.com.

calendar

Wednesday, October 3

Andy Dobelstein, Professor of Social Policy at the UNC School of Social Work, retired UNC-CH member and welfare reform leader will speak as part of the OCDP series on health care. Andy will talk about the big picture on what health care reform can mean. Location: United Church of Chapel Hill, 1321 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. Dinner is served from 5:45 to 6:30 pm – come anytime; or just come for the 6:30-7:30 pm presentation.

Thursday, October 18

First day of early/one-stop voting. For further information, go to www.orangedems.com/onestopvoting.shtml

Saturday, October 20

8-10 am – OCDP Legislative Breakfast. Join your fellow Democrats for fellowship and hear a report from your legislators on the recent legislative session. Location: the Friday Center in Chapel Hill.

Tuesday, October 23

7 pm – Multiple-author discussion for new book, "Local Democracy Under Siege: Activism, Public Interest and Private Politics," proceeds of book sales to support Democracy North Carolina. Authors: Enrique Murillo, Jr., Thaddeus Guldbrandsen, Marla Frederick-McGlathery, Dorothy Holland, Catherine Lutz, Lesley Bartlett, and Don Nonini. Read about the authors and their great work at <http://www.cira-unc.org/book>, where you will also find a link to order the book. Location: Regulator Books – Ninth Street, Durham.

Saturday, October 27

3 pm – Coker Hills precinct with four other Democratic precincts (Estes Hills, Booker Creek, Eastside, Weaver Dairy) is hosting a Chapel Hill Town Council Candidates Forum. All are welcome to attend. Location: the meeting room of the Chapel Hill Public Library, Estes Drive.

Thursday, November 1

8 am-5 pm – EMILY's List and Lillian's List will be offering a Political Opportunity Program training session for pro-choice Democratic women in North Carolina and surrounding states. The session includes a full-day program on fundraising, message development, direct mail and other important campaign issues. Location: North Carolina Democratic Party Headquarters, 220 Hillsborough Street, Raleigh, NC. Contact Michelle Stephenson at 202-419-3073 or mstephenson@emilyslist.org to obtain further information. [IMPORTANT: Note that there is limited space for first-time participants only – responses are due October 26, 2007].

Saturday, November 3

Last day of early/one-stop voting. For further information, go to www.orangedems.com/onestopvoting.shtml.

Monday, November 5

5 pm – Deadline for receipt of completed absentee ballots by Board of Elections for November 6, 2007 election.

Tuesday, November 6

Precinct polling locations are open from 6:30 am-7:30 pm. The Orange County Board of Elections maintains the list of precinct polling locations at <http://www.co.orange.nc.us/elect/precincts.asp>, or call the Board of Elections at 245-2350 or the Orange County Democratic Party at 933-9662.

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Land Use and Water Resources

By Bernadette Pelissier



University Lake reservoir, Chapel Hill

Individuals sometimes speak at public hearings opposing planned developments because of potential increases in traffic. In Orange County another common concern is the possible effect of a proposed development on the quality and quantity of well water for those who live nearby. Many of us county residents are dependent on well water. We worry about our water because we can't see how much is left underground.

In general, families served by OWASA or Hillsborough probably don't worry about their water supply unless water restrictions are declared, such as during periods of prolonged drought. They know that the towns track the water levels in their reservoirs and in stream flow, effectively managing supply. But should they worry?

What most people do not know is that their reservoir water – also referred to as surface water – is directly related to the groundwater supply used by those of us in the non-municipal areas.

Groundwater and water in our rivers and lakes represent the smallest percentage of water worldwide, yet these are the waters that humans consume. Traditionally, management of water resources has focused on surface water, and groundwater is often considered a separate entity. Yet most surface waters interact with ground water. What we do in one part of the water system affects the other part of the system. For example, Cane Creek Reservoir (which is surface water) is fed by Cane Creek, which in turn is fed by groundwater at seepage

Chapel Hill needs a comprehensive strategy

It's Time for Affordable Housing in Chapel Hill

By Debby Stirling

By the late 20th century... a majority of people working in the town were no longer able to afford in-town housing, and so many people working for the university itself weren't able to afford to live [there] that charter bus lines were doing a brisk business in almost nothing but bringing in from nearby counties a workforce of secretaries and others on which the university depended.

Would it surprise you to learn that this description appears in the entry for "Chapel Hill, NC" on *Wikipedia*, the online free encyclopedia?

Affordable housing? Is it *that* big a problem for us? The resounding "YES" has been coming from many sectors of the community for probably a decade.

In recent years the OCDP's platform and resolutions have stressed that county and municipal authorities should encourage construction of low and moderately priced owner-occupied and rental housing. Like the town's

leadership, Democrats recognize that Chapel Hill's historic and valued diversity is threatened by a robust housing market that drives up housing costs.

Now it appears that some remedies may be on the horizon. At the Chapel Hill Town Council's next regularly scheduled meeting on October 8, Town Manager Roger Stancil is expected to recommend that the Council undertake a thorough study of affordable housing that identifies the whole field of players and problems and culminates in a comprehensive strategy.

Moreover, he wants the resulting recommendations to be implemented beginning early next year.

Stancil has spent much of his first year in the job getting to know Chapel Hill. In a Sept. 16 article in *The Chapel Hill News* he said, "From February through June, I held a series of listening sessions to hear from religious and business leaders, the NAACP, neighborhood activists, the chairs of town boards and commissions, land developers and affordable housing

points throughout its length. So if there is a drought and groundwater resources are depleted, the flow in Cane Creek decreases and the water levels in Cane Creek reservoir decrease.

As development of land and water resources intensifies, it becomes increasingly important to manage ground water and surface water as a single entity. As the County Commissioners consider land use decisions in their deliberations on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, they need to consider the relationship between groundwater and surface water (streams, reservoirs, etc). This can be accomplished by establishing density guidelines and identifying a maximum capacity for development that does not endanger water supply even during periods of drought. To ensure a sustainable water supply for the future, we may also need to consider allowing differing densities in different sections of the county.

Why? The answer lies in the fact that groundwater recharge -- the process of water soaking into the ground to become groundwater -- varies across the county. This means that not all locations can be treated equally. With increasing development, planners must know how much groundwater can be withdrawn without exceeding the rate at which it is recharged.

That may sound simple but it's not. The geology of Orange County, which is a mix of fractured rocks and clay, means that water recharge rates vary widely. Previous US Geological Survey (USGS) studies have identified 12 basins in the county with differing recharge rates. These rates can provide some guidance in determining the maximum housing density and the accompanying water demand that can be supported over the long-term. But in practical terms, such knowledge introduces complications: Our water resources do not coincide with township boundaries within the county so in the future, we may need to plan for watershed areas rather than townships.

So should we worry? No, we should act. It is in the interest of all citizens in this county to ensure that we do not overtax our water resources, particularly since we appear to be experiencing serious droughts more frequently. You can do this by becoming involved in the Comprehensive Plan update process.

We just completed the first phase in the revision of Orange County's Comprehensive Plan, the development of goals. The goal we articulated for water issues is to ensure "sustainable quality and quantity of ground and surface water resources." Between October 2007 and May 2008, the Orange County Planning Board and other county boards will be working on the more detailed objectives related to this water-related goal, among other issues.

You can help by coming to and speaking out at the public hearings next year. Express your desire to ensure that the revised land use plans remains within the limits of Orange County's water resources. You don't need to be an expert. Just ask that the objectives help us reach the stated goal of sustainability and that the appropriate science is used to guide us.

Pelissier served on the OWASA Board of Directors and is currently a member of the Water Resources Committee of the Commission for the Environment. She also serves on the Orange County Planning Board.

Steps you can take to get involved

How will Orange County ensure that we use land in a manner which does not overtax our water resources, both groundwater and surface water?

The Orange County Comprehensive Plan, which addresses issues such as economic development, cultural resources, parks and recreation, and land use, will soon be considered by the Orange County Board of Commissioners. This plan will shape development and land use over the next couple of decades, and will therefore directly affect our water, an indispensable natural resource.

We need to carefully assess our water resources and their impact on future land use. Please come to the public hearings on the Comprehensive Plan update. Tell the County Commissioners that you want a land use plan that ensures we do not deplete our water resources.

You can sign up to receive email updates on the process at: http://www.co.orange.nc.us/planning/compre_cpupdate.asp. You can also download the documents available to date and look at the schedule of upcoming meetings, or call Tom Altieri, comprehensive plan supervisor, at (919) 245-2575 for more information.

Orange County residents are welcome to attend any advisory board meeting. Two local boards are very involved in the topic of land use and water resources: the Planning Board, which meets on the first Wednesday of the month, and the Commission for the Environment, which meets on the second Monday of the month. Check the web site above for meeting locations and times.

organization leaders."

Invited back to Town Hall for a summary session in mid-September, those same participants encouraged the town to address affordable housing.

"They urged us to offset the potential of Chapel Hill's being seen as an elitist, no-growth community," Stancil said. "This perception is counter to the community's deep commitment to social and economic justice."

Robert Dowling, executive director of Orange Community Housing & Land Trust, is hopeful about the process but cautions that affordable housing is a remarkably thorny issue. "For our efforts to succeed over time, we need to understand at the outset that the issue is far more complex than many people realize," he said.

The town currently manages 330 units of public housing (subsidized rental). The Land Trust has another 130 homes and enables home ownership using an innovative formula that *keeps* the homes affordable rather than letting them appreciate beyond

the means of the target population. But contrast that with the fact that *MONEY* magazine's 2007 "Best Places to Live" lists Chapel Hill's median home price as \$343,228.

Dowling believes there is currently a mismatch between the affordable housing we *need* and the housing we're *getting*.

"The latest proposals from developers are to build 1-2 bedroom condos," Dowling noted. "But there are very few single-family homes being proposed for working folk -- for the school teachers, town employees, university and hospital workers, families with children, retirees, and single adults who earn 80 percent or less of the area median income."

Disconnects like this one--along with countless related topics sure to be discussed at Roger Stancil's behest from now until the new year--promise to make this a high-stakes forum that the OCDP will follow closely in the months ahead.

Health Care Reform: The Dangers of Inaction

We asked several local opinion leaders engaged in health care issues about their views of the consequences of continued inaction and what this might look like for the country. Here are their responses.

Rep. Verla Insko

This year the North Carolina General Assembly made significant progress improving access to health care. We

- passed a good mental health parity bill,
- established a high-risk pool,
- authorized the Department of Health and Human Services to increase coverage for children from birth to age 19 up to 300% of the federal poverty level, with families over 200% of FPL buying into the program, and
- increased funding for safety net providers.

Despite these positive steps, next year we will have more people without health insurance and the people who are insured will see their premiums and out-of-pocket costs go up and the coverage and quality of care go down. Slowly but surely, the American public is being conditioned to pay more and expect less – a lot less – from the health care industry.

If we don't address this problem, we will see our children fall further behind young people from other countries in educational achievement and job placement. Businesses will be even less competitive with foreign companies that don't have to include the cost of health care in the cost of their products. The ever-increasing percent of GDP going to health care will erode our economy. And the quality of life will diminish as we become an unhealthy nation.

I believe health care is an essential service. If the federal government doesn't address the issue, the state has an obligation to ensure access to appropriate health care on a regular basis for every resident of North Carolina. It is time for voters all across North Carolina to send the strongest messages possible to candidates at every level, but especially candidates for governor, the General Assembly and the US Congress. The message? That addressing the health care crisis is our number one domestic policy issue and we want action, not rhetoric.

Insko is State House Representative for District 24.



Rev. Robert Seymour

The consequences of inaction on health care in the US are so critical that health care may emerge as the major domestic issue in the 2008 election. For too long we have lived with the illusion that our health care is one of the world's best, when – in fact – the World Health Organization ranks us 37th from the top. Our position in that ranking will probably further decline as the number of people who are uninsured continues to escalate: Two million more have been added during the current administration, totalling 47 million.

The President recently claimed that everyone in our country could get health care by going to a hospital emergency room. This is a sad perception of good medicine. If you have been to an emergency room lately, you probably found it overcrowded and responding to crises situations in a triage mode. Emergency rooms cannot provide routine health care or preventive procedures. The American Cancer Society predicts that its goal of reducing the number of cancer deaths next year will not be met because the uninsured are not screened and fail to receive treatment soon enough.

As the cost of medical care continues to rise, health care will become a major cause of bankruptcy. The cost of insurance makes it too expensive to include in many family budgets or as a business benefit.

Seymour is the retired pastor of Binkley Baptist Church in Chapel Hill.



Ms. Florry Glasser

I think of myself as an optimistic person. But when it comes to the subject of health care, my thoughts can best be summed up in the pessimistic words of my Polish grandmother, "And tomorrow will be worse than today."

What will be the consequences of doing nothing about the unraveling American health care system? The trends are clear and the picture is not pretty.

- Today 1.4 million North Carolinians have no health insurance. With health care premiums rising faster than wages, increasing numbers of people will not be able to afford health insurance.

- In North Carolina alone, since 2000, over 300,000 working North Carolinians have lost their employer-sponsored health coverage. Expect this figure to increase as employers face increasing competition because of globalization.

- Health costs are rising four times faster than wages.
- Health care insurers cherry-pick the healthiest enrollees, leaving sicker patients with pre-existing conditions to face unaffordable premiums, copays, and deductibles or those with no coverage at all.

- Administrative costs of running both a private for-profit system as well as a public program will continue to rise. Bureaucracies in both sectors will siphon off resources that should be going toward health services.

- The United States will continue to spend more on health care than any other country (16% of its GDP) while health outcomes will continue to compare unfavorably with other countries.

As voters, we must ask the candidates what they will do to solve these problems.

Glasser currently serves as board chair of the NC Editorial Forum.



Dr. John Soltys

- Many more people will be without insurance because their employers stopped providing health insurance or they were priced out and could not afford the increased premiums, which are now outpacing the inflation rate.

- Hospitals and insurance companies will continue to shift costs (to maximize their profits) to each other and to patients – who have no power to push back.

- The consequences of these trends are fewer people with adequate insurance, a growing number of people without insurance because they cannot afford it, and an increase in bankruptcy and misery.

This is all happening now and is getting worse every day.

Soltys is a retired UNC-CH physician.

2007 Resolutions Influence State Legislation

Some of our resolutions have made it at least in part into legislation during the recent legislative session. Here are some examples.

— **Election Reform:** a start on Voter-Owned Elections was provided by HB1517, which establishes public campaign funding for the offices of State Auditor, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Insurance Commissioner.

— **Same-Day Registration:** HB91 allows citizens to register and vote on the same day during the Early Voting period this fall.

— **Public Financing of Elections:** a small step was taken with HB 483, which allows Chapel Hill to have a pilot program of public financing.

— **Energy:** S3 requires utilities to generate 12.5% of their electricity from renewable sources or efficiency measures; it also allows utilities to pass costs of financing new power plants along to customers.

The resolutions passed at our County Convention this year can be found at <http://www.orangedems.com/platform.shtml>. Resolutions passed by the SEC can be found at <http://www.ncdp.org/issues>.



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schools), #12 (right to health care), #14 (seniors), #18 (clean energy), #19 (combat climate change), #21 (US relations with Iran), #22 (exit Iraq), #23 (ending US sponsorship of torture), #24 (death penalty moratorium), #26 (repeal Military Commissions Act 2006), #29 (immigration reform), and #30 (policy on civil immigration violation).

We have some guardians already but are actively looking for more, so if you are interested please call the OCDP office and let us know which resolution you are most interested in.

Julie Tomkovick heads OCDP's Policy and Action Committee.

What are we asking resolution "guardians" to do?

—Become familiar with the chosen resolution.

—Seek out a nonprofit organization or PAC already favoring and following legislation on the particular issue.

—Stay in touch with that organization so when they alert you to appropriate legislation at the local, state, or national level you can let the OCDP know. We will then contact the sponsors and provide support and information to our various representatives as they vote.

We want to have an active dialog with our legislators, so that they know our stands on issues, but also to thank those who are working with us, and help motivate other legislators via contact with their constituents across the state.

Guardians can help turn our resolutions into law. Achieving this makes our party relevant to our neighbors in and out of Orange County. Being relevant and active agents for positive change brings more voters to the Democratic Party. It's important work; please join us!

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