

THE INFORMED DEMOCRAT OF SWFL



Why I'm a Democrat

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By Brad Smith

I'm a Democrat because I believe the fundamental reason any society exists is to help its members live and improve their lives in safety and with dignity. *All* its members.

I'm a Democrat because I believe trust is the foundation upon which a society rests and trust requires behavior that is trustworthy. I believe this trust requires an absence of tyranny of minorities of every sort. I believe our similarities are much greater than our differences and our differences are a source of richness and strength.

I'm a Democrat because I believe a successful society is built on hope and compassion, not on grievance and anger. I believe a successful society is built on respect, honesty, and civility, not on schoolyard bullying and name calling, looking for an angle, outright cheating, or "might makes right."

I'm a Democrat because I believe while every person is responsible for the consequences of their behavior, every person deserves a fair chance -- a fair chance to dream, to strive to achieve those dreams, and to pay the price and reap the rewards of that striving and achievement. I believe a fair chance includes a chance to fail and an opportunity to learn from and grow from failure. I believe failure is a badge of effort and perhaps courage, not a soft spot for insult.

I'm a Democrat because I believe every person has value and can contribute to society. I believe society benefits when every person can depend on society's support in aspects of life over which they have little control, such as preventative and curative health care, intellectual and physical limitations, and consequences of their birth circumstances. I believe support differs from a guarantee of results, the responsibility for which must ultimately rest with each person. I believe each person owes the nation service in forms needed by the nation that are consistent with each person's beliefs and life circumstances.

I'm a Democrat because I believe each person owes to the nation their attention to and thoughtful views about matters that affect them and the nation owes each person thoughtful consideration of opinions different from prevailing ones. I believe the highest service by a person to their nation is thoughtful voting and I believe the nation owes each qualified person the unencumbered opportunity to vote in elections at all levels.

Brad Smith is the Deputy Treasurer of the Lee County Democratic Party as well as a member of the State Committee.