

THE INFORMED DEMOCRAT OF SWFL



Poli Sci 101

What Is a Political Party?

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“A political party is an organization that sponsors candidates for political office under the organization’s name.”

Crack open an introductory American Government textbook and that’s the definition you’ll find. The chief business of the Democratic Party is to recruit candidates and help them win elections. This means encouraging good people to run for office and offering them support.

Here in Lee County, the Democratic Party has a team of experienced political advocates and army of volunteers who will aid candidates’ campaigns through promotion, exposure and hands-on assistance with outreach, voter engagement, and (crucially) getting out the vote.

To be successful, Party and candidates need to work well ahead of the next election. Where there are multiple Democratic candidates for an office, they’ll face off in a primary election in August, 2026.

Already several people have decided to seek the Party’s nomination for various state and federal offices. Among them:

Running for Governor: David Jolly, a former Tampa-area Republican Congressman, currently an anti-Trump political pundit on CNN and MSNBC who’s switched his registration to the Democratic Party.

Running for Senate: Josh Weil, seeking to oust Ashley Moody, the unelected DeSantis appointee replacing Marco Rubio. Weil is a public school teacher and administrator from the Orlando area who ran for Congress in the 6th district’s special election to replace Michael Waltz. Though Weil lost the race, he showed himself to be a prodigious fund raiser and in a very short campaign in a heavily Republican district, he shaved 10% points off the victory margin Republicans enjoyed when Waltz was elected less than five months earlier. Lee County Democrats had a chance to meet Weil when he headlined the Party’s June fundraiser.

Running for US House of Representatives (District 19): Howard Sapp brings 30 years of life experience as an Air Traffic Controller, an award-winning gospel artist, and a proud father & husband to the race for the seat currently occupied by Byron Donalds. Howard will work to support all of our community members in Fort Myers by advocating health, peace, equity, safety, and prosperity for all residents.

The Lee County Democratic Party is looking to field more great candidates for a long list of offices including state senators and representatives and others. Find out more on our [Run for Office page](#).