

Weaverville, NC 28787

August 14, 2024

Dear Neighbor,

When writing this letter to you, I thought hard about what means the most to me for the 2024 election. One priority is gun laws. My son, age 31, was killed by five gunshots, the first in a hip knocking him down and the last in his neck killing him. Even now, the crime and these words conjure up my anger and grief. The felon had traveled out of his home city and purchased the handgun without a waiting period or background check. As a member of Parents of Murdered Children, I empathize especially with parents of the 378,000 victims of gun violence at schools.

Other importances to me are Social Security and its soundness. A financial lifeline for widows like me, Social Security provides stability too. My earnings as a part-time online educator decreased significantly and then totally when I retired last year, but Social Security insured me against the income losses. Not subject to market fluctuations or investment risks, it had been built on a rock like the wise man's house. Daddy said, "If a structure's foundation is not strong, the rest of it will eventually fall." Policies providing for the gap in Social Security's framework are of great importance.

After Franklin Roosevelt's Social Security Act in 1935, Lyndon Johnson signed into law the 1965 original amendments, Medicare and Medicaid that reduce the financial burdens of health care. I am reminded particularly of my husband's four-year battle with terminal renal cancer: hospitalizations and transfusions, doctors' services, tests and prescriptions for drugs and therapies, medical supplies and travel, and hospice care. Not only is the payout system important to me but also policies safeguarding doctors and high-quality care.

This letter includes a few things that are important to me, reasons for my choice of our next President and Vice President. But I cannot close without referencing my parents and individuals like them. To move ahead, with hard work they overcame dark hours of the Great Depression, WWII, the Korean and Vietnam wars, and racial integration. They define Americans who fly our flag at homes and ballgames, line towns' streets with it on Independence Day, and post it at graves in cemeteries on Memorial Day.

They were farmers, construction and steel workers, locomotive engineers, and women who had been riveters, factory workers, pilots of cargo planes and didn't go back to being just a housewife. These parents wanted a better life than theirs for their children and taught them to work hard, to love God, and to love their neighbor as themselves. These families characterize leaders who work hard, empathize with humanity, communicate clearly, and solve problems and set goals. They have integrity.

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Having checked facts, read sources, and seen and heard speeches and rallies, I know Kamala Harris's and Tim Walz's characteristics and qualifications for President and Vice President, and I have learned what we have in common with them. Not from elite backgrounds, they had to work hard for what they got. They came up through the ranks, acquiring education and experience. Their vitae show roles and service to the U.S. and the people. The Harris-Walz Team will fight for America and us.

ASK, *Who will fight for me?* As a prosecutor and Attorney General in California, Harris implemented a program to reduce children's truancy from school and protected homeowners from losing their homes from unethical foreclosures. In the U.S. Senate, she protected the Affordable Care Act and introduced the Climate Equity Act. As the nominee for President, she has made clear her plans to curb inflation and support working families by lowering food, living, and childcare costs. She will fight for you.

ASK what you want your life to be like after this election. Do you want human rights, freedom to make decisions and choices, a way to live together when we disagree, and stand-ups for the middle class? The Harris-Walz Team has your back.

I myself want also to continue standing at the Tourists baseball games and hearing the national anthem: "O say can you see . . ." I want to know our flag is still here and waving "o'er the land of the free and home of the brave."

Sincerely,

Joy