

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Citizens Share Concerns with Absent Rep. David Schweikert

Phoenix, Arizona: After Representative David Schweikert ignored weeks of requests from his constituents' for a Town Hall meeting, two grassroots Indivisible groups from Phoenix came together to invite him to their own joint Citizens' Town Hall Friday night, February 24.

Still, Rep. Schweikert didn't show up, but 223 of his constituents did. They were Republicans, Independents and Democrats. And since their congressman was still not available to them, they addressed their concerns to an empty chair.

The people of his Congressional District 6 shared moving stories and pleaded with him to listen and – asked him to please represent them.

Video and written copies of their concerns will be sent to Rep. Schweikert's office with the uncertain hope that he will listen and respond. (See Addendum for concerns, stories and questions from some of the participants)

One organizer commented, "It's really too bad Mr. Schweikert wasn't here tonight. It was a powerful evening – and he missed the chance to listen to caring, smart people who are counting on him. He could have done so much just by listening."

The Citizens' Town Hall for Rep. David Schweikert was organized and hosted by two new Indivisible groups, both begun since January of this year: Desert Progressives (DP) and Arizona Indivisible CD6 (AICD6).

DP Co-founders Mickey Tucker and Judy Schwiebert opened the meeting by inviting people to join them in taking action on state and national issues. People can subscribe to their newsletter at www.DesertProgressives.org and/or find them on Facebook.

AICD6 co-founder Chris Hanlon shared the story of their leadership in urging Rep. Schweikert to hold a Town Hall, and invited people to join their Facebook page as well. Sharon Kirsch moderated the event.

The Town Hall was held at Shadow Rock Congregational Church, 12861 N. 8th Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona. Staff member Abeth Spencer welcomed the group with the church's motto, "All are welcome here."

For more information or future events, contact Judy Schwiebert at jschwieb3@cox.net or at 602-769-5149.

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Addendum

Concerns, stories and questions
from participants in February 24, 2017.

Citizens' Town Hall

Rep. David Schweikert did not respond to our invitation to attend

Michele S. shared that her husband voted for Rep. Schweikert and says, "My son was diagnosed with a very rare form of cancer when he was 15 years old. He has survived, but has on-going health issues related to his treatment. If there are changes to ACA or if it is repealed, we are concerned about what will happen. What will you do to protect people like my son and our family from losing everything?"

Manuel E. said that it breaks his heart that his teenage daughter, a 6th generation American of Mexican descent, is targeted for extra scrutiny at the mall because of the color of her skin. He asked that with the current president's language and proposals, "What will you, Rep Schweikert, do to represent and defend my children when they are targeted for nothing more than the color of their skin?"

Noah, age 15, and his mother who live in Schweikert's district shared that he is finally doing well in school now because of the special education assistance he receives. Noah asked, "What will happen to my IDEA special education classes?"

Kimberly D. of his district explained, "I have a pre-existing condition. The ACA, while it does have flaws, gives me the peace of mind of knowing that I cannot be turned down for coverage. Will you help me fight for this peace of mind?"

Michelle asks, "Please do not vote to defund Planned Parenthood. Tax money is not paying for abortions. Planned Parenthood helps millions of people every year with quality, low-cost health care – myself included. I would not have my two sons had Planned Parenthood not been around when I was in college. They diagnosed my endometriosis, high blood pressure and even migraines. They saved my fertility."

Emily added, "We now have the lowest abortion rate since Roe V Wade thanks to Planned Parenthood, and they provide important services to underserved Americans. I used them for my own health care in college. Please do everything you can to protect health care and Planned Parenthood."

Mark E. said he is very disappointed Republican who voted for Schweikert. "The inability to dialogue and share my concerns with my elected representative is not how democracy should work. Too many lies have been spread by the Trump administration and I want my representative to do something about it."

Susan C. said, "Donald Trump has been saying that the press is the enemy of the people. Do you agree that a free press is one of the foundations of our democracy? What do you think of DJT's decision to exclude CNN, Politico and the New York Times from Friday morning's press event?"

Gary G. asked, "How should we deal with the assault on the First Amendment? Freedom of Speech, Press, Religion and Assembly are all being threatened. How can the Second Amendment be untouchable while the First Amendment is being undermined?"

Susan E. added, "I am a newly involved constituent of CD6 and am very concerned about the direction our government is going. President Trump is dismantling our democracy, and you, as a Congressional representative, are tasked with being the check and balance. Please be our patriotic representative."

Michael C. said, "The Wall and Muslim ban are two issues that disturb me. Growing up in Arizona I have had many Mexican friends – immigrants – who have been productive members of our America. To treat people as wholesale threats to America is a shameful approach. What will you do to stand up for ethical and moral values that reflect true Christian, Muslim, American and human values?"

Sandy W. said, "My plea is for both the Republicans and Democrats to stop trying to preserve their party's rule and to focus on the people and our issues. I can't imagine any of you when you are within yourself feel that the current direction is best for our country and the legacy you are leaving to your children. Someone needs to start the movement for civility, compromise and ethics. Are you that guy?"

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