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# Speak Out Now

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## Who Will Defend Our Rights? Not Politicians!

Trump and the Republicans have shown their contempt for women's basic rights. They have justified sexual attacks and violence and presided over massive cuts to women's healthcare funding and protections to access. Last Friday they changed a regulation that allows states to refuse to fund Planned Parenthood, which is often one of the only sources of healthcare for women.

The attacks on women's right to choose and cuts in funding for women's healthcare are not new. They were also carried out under the Obama administration. It should be clear that we cannot depend on politicians to defend women's rights.

Those who marched a year ago showed another way. Millions of people, with homemade signs and pussy hats, marched in big cities and small towns with the message "Hear our voice". They showed the possibility of women taking responsibility for their future. The #MeToo movement has done the same thing, giving women the courage to name the men who harassed or attacked them.

This year, many in the Women's March had a different slogan "March to the polls". This was an attempt by the Democratic Party to corral people who are furious about the actions of the Trump administration to vote for them instead of mobilizing ourselves.

This is not the answer. Women have the power to organize and lead a real fight to defend their interests. But to do this it means organizing our numbers and power. It means depending on ourselves, men along with women.

Women aren't alone facing the attacks of Trump's executive orders. Muslims have been targeted and denied access to the U.S. Another order suspended the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program. This threatens to deport nearly 800,000 young people who were brought here as children by their parents. Trump's recent suspension of the TPS (Temporary Protected Status) threatens to deport hundreds of thousands of people from Haiti, El Salvador and other countries that were given protection in the U.S. from wars,

natural disasters and other threats. If deported, many will face uncertain and often dangerous futures in countries they haven't seen for more than a decade.

Trump's and other politicians' racist and anti-Muslim rhetoric has emboldened racists and we have seen increased harassment and attacks. People are being forced to live in fear. Children are worried that their parents will be taken from them. ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) is threatening increased raids, in Northern California.

Unfortunately attacks on immigrants are not new. Obama's administration deported more immigrants than any other administration in history. It should be clear that putting our faith in the Democratic Party will not protect immigrants.

Looking to the politicians is not our only choice. When Trump first announced his travel ban, tens of thousands of people around the country went to the airports spontaneously to welcome and defend people's right to come into this country.

Recent immigrants are our family members, our friends, our neighbors, the person working next to us, or working where we shop or in the restaurants where we eat. They are not a threat to us. The only threat to us is posed by the 1% and the politicians who do their bidding.

We are certainly able to remove Trump and his kind from office. But relying on the Democrats won't begin to solve the problems we face. We have the power to organize and defend our rights and the rights of all our sisters and brothers.

**Come to a Speak Out Forum: "Report from Palestine"** When Ahd Tamimi, was jailed for slapping an Israeli soldier, her village, Nabi Saleh, came to the attention of the world. Come to a video recorded by Palestinians from Nabi Salah, followed by a live question and answer exchange over Skype.

**Saturday, February 10, 7 pm** (doors open at 6:30)

South Berkeley Senior Center, 2939 Ellis St.

(Near Ashby BART) \$5.00 cash donation

(No one turned away for lack of funds)