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For positive change on all levels, support Democrats on Nov. 4

Sean Meloy 

Election Day is Tuesday and after two years, the presidential race will finally be complete. There are a lot of other candidates, however, who have been working just as hard as Barack Obama to get elected and make positive change for people like you and me.

Last week I talked about Mark McCracken, who is running for Congress and wants to help Barack Obama achieve his goals in Washington D.C. Although they will make important changes in Washington, there are candidates running for important offices here in Pennsylvania

The most important of these are those in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. There are two races I will talk of, for Republicans divided the student voice right down College Avenue into two state house districts.

If you live on campus, you have the chance to defeat an ardent opponent of Penn State, Republican representative Kerry Benninghoff (district 171). He has consistently voted against further appropriations for our university and support for students. These are the funds that go to help lower the skyrocketing tuition and help our university become prestigious through conducting research. Furthermore, Benninghoff voted against funds for CATA, the service students and community rely on every day to move around State College with ease.

Kerry and the College Republicans have been touting House Bill 2818, which was nothing more than a political ploy.

Benninghoff introduced this bill that would give \$1500 in tax credits to students just two days before the legislature adjourned, nullifying any chance of its passage.

This was an insulting action towards students, and shows the true character of Kerry Benninghoff. On-campus students make up 1/6 of this man's district and he claims to "represent" them. It is time we assert ourselves and vote him out of office.

Democratic candidate Joanne Tosti-Vasey is the woman who deserves to win the title of representative in district 171 because she will actually think of young people and Penn State University when she votes on legislation.

She is a woman of true character who has a history of advocating for those who don't have a voice in government, and will work to further ours in Harrisburg. She has pledged to increase appropriations to Penn State and to help students (as well as everyone in the state) get affordable healthcare. She wants to improve our economy and environment by working with Governor Rendell to continue growing Pennsylvania's "green" jobs sector.

She differs from her opponent by being a proponent of equal rights for all peoples, especially equal rights for members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and women in the workplace.

Joanne Tosti-Vasey is the change we need in Harrisburg to help not only students, but all Pennsylvanians.

If you live off-campus, you are lucky to have a true representative in Democrat Scott Conklin (district 77).

Scott is running for reelection and has worked hard to fight for further appropriations to PSU, funding for research, CATA and health services for students. In his two years in office, Scott has been a true friend of students and I urge you to send him back to Harrisburg to continue his work.

I would also like to remind you of those running for State Row offices. Auditor General Jack Wagner is running for reelection and certainly helped students by working to expose the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) corruption that was taking money away from Pennsylvania students.

Rob McCord is running for treasurer and will responsibly invest and distribute the higher education funds we receive every year.

Lastly, John Morganelli is running against Tom Corbett for the office of Attorney General. Corbett runs his office like John Ashcroft and Alberto Gonzalez of the Bush Administration, which all I feel I need to say about his record and what he truly thinks of the law.

We need positive change to come about in this country, and I know the Democratic slate of candidates offers that. I encourage you to research all of these candidates for yourself. Please ensure you go out and vote for all offices on Tuesday, and make sure you vote for positive change: for Democrats.

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