

Over 50 NH reformers Walk in "Granny D's" Footsteps from Dublin to Hancock to celebrate "Revive Democracy Weekend"

Dublin, NH – On Saturday, August 23rd, dozens of activists converged on Dublin, NH near the former home of legendary reformer Doris "Granny D" Haddock (1910-2010) to continue her long walk democracy. The 6-mile walk was the latest in a series of Granny D marches across the state being spearheaded by the nonpartisan Coalition for Open Democracy and its NH Rebellion campaign, together with PACE: Promoting Active Civic Engagement.

The walk was led by NH Rebellion founder Professor Lawrence Lessig of Harvard Law School, who on Friday night delivered the final Amos Fortune Forum lecture of the season to a packed house in Jaffrey to kick-off the "Revive Democracy Weekend." Lessig's theme was the cause to which Granny D devoted the final decade of her life, including her cross-country walk at the age of 90: campaign finance reform.

In his address, Lessig cited recent polling data showing that 96 percent of Americans believe that private funding of elections has a corrupting influence on politics, while 91 percent have little hope the system will ever change. He called on attendees to join the walk and "give hope" to fellow citizens who have all but given up on Washington.

The walk concluded with a public celebration in Hancock center, where over 60 walkers and onlookers from NH, MA, VT, NJ, DC, and TX were treated to Ben & Jerry's ice cream donated by the company's co-founder, Ben Cohen, in Vermont. At the celebration, Lessig and Daniel Weeks, Executive Director of the Coalition for Open Democracy and a Temple native, addressed the crowd about the importance of democratic reform to end the system of corruption in Washington.

"Today more than ever, American democracy is under assault from wealthy special interests spending billions of dollars to fund campaigns and lobby the government to advance their own self-interest," said Daniel Weeks. "We may not have the money to match them, but can put on our walking shoes and take the streets and peacefully demand a government that is of, by, and for the American people," Weeks said. He also shared how Granny D inspired him to join the reform movement as a student when he heard her speak at ConVal High School in 2000.

Former state senator Jim Rubens, a contender for the Republican nomination for U.S. Senate, was also on hand to signal his support for citizen-funded elections as a means of ending the corruption of special interest money in Washington. Rubens is facing a difficult primary contest against former Senator Scott Brown of Massachusetts and former Senator Bob Smith.

The aptly-named "Granny D Memorial Walk" was also an opportunity for citizens to enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Monadnock Region and reflect on the personal sacrifice made by previous generations of reformers in pursuit of a stronger democracy for all. After conducting high-profile walks across the state in January and along the NH seacoast on July 5th, Open Democracy and the NH Rebellion decided to walk the very same route from Dublin to Hancock that Granny D herself often walked while "training" for her cross-country trek in 1999-2000.

Revive Democracy Weekend was sponsored by PACE, Coalition for Open Democracy and its NH Rebellion campaign, and by Stamp Stampede. For more information, visit www.opendemocracy.me