

Letter to the Editor Toolkit

Paul Evans for House District 20

www.PaulEvans.org

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A Message from Paul

Dear Friend,

First, let me thank you for working to help me represent the Monmouth, Independence, and West Salem community. My hope is to give everyone in our area the information needed for making their decision this coming Election Day, November 4th.

I am running for the Oregon House of Representatives because I believe Oregon should guarantee opportunity for all our citizens; provide a safe environment; protect our basic rights to think, to act, and to live without fear; and promote the future even as we provide in the present. I am running because we need leaders with the courage to act and who have a proven record of leadership.

We face a difficult challenge against an opponent with large corporate donations. However, there will be no other candidate running for the Oregon House of Representatives in District 20 better prepared for the rigors of serving you in the Oregon Legislature. 2014 is the time for us to fight for the Oregon we know is possible. Oregon needs people with a record of public service, demonstrated leadership skills, and proven experience. Now is not the time for “on-the-job” training.

Without the collective action of grassroots supporters – like you – the success of our campaign would not be possible. We need your help now more than ever. Together, we can work to represent the interests of the small businesses, working families, and students from our area.

Onward!



Paul Evans

Why are Letters to the Editor Important?

The letters to the editor section is one of the few arenas for public discussion to have survived throughout large portions of the mass media's history. Many editors and scholars believe that this section is 'among the few outlets available to the public for voicing opinion,' 'the community's heartbeat,' and 'a debating society that never adjourns' (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2002)¹.

Though the text limit that editors allow to be published is around 100-250 words, they are powerful. Letters to the editor have the ability to reach broad audiences (predominately white, conservative men)², creating an interactive discourse between community members that can help shape public opinion and perceptions on the topics that they cover. In just a few words, the author has the ability to create a narrative that can appeal to an individual's logic, emotion, and credibility and shape the discourse that newspaper readers encounter. To do this, letters to the editor are needed from a variety of Paul's supporters, allowing us to reach out to individuals that are often not present among social media, while employing different perspectives from diverse authors.

¹ Wahl-Jorgensen, Karin. "The construction of the public in letters to the editor: Deliberative democracy and the idiom of insanity." *Journalism*, Vol. 3: 183-204 (2002).

² Sparks, M. K. and E. Perez. "Women Not Heard in Letters Columns." *The Masthead* Vol. 43, No.2: 14-15 (1991).

Know Your Audience

As described on the previous page, the majority of individuals that write and read letters to the editor are white, conservative men; however, this discourse reaches many beyond that demographic as well. Before beginning to write, think about what readers you are trying to reach out to most. You may attempt to reinforce Paul's supporters, help those that are "on the fence" make up their minds (hopefully to support the campaign), or to try to persuade those who may have already decided not to vote for Paul. You could also try reaching out to specific communities, such as veterans, women, and people of color, among others - it's up to you!

Whoever you choose to write to, though, make sure to tailor your letter to their needs. In other words, what do you think that they would need to read and know to support the campaign?

Choose a Specific Topic

After choosing who you are specifically writing to, consider what matters most to them – what priorities of theirs are similar to Paul's? With such a limited text amount it would be hard to write about more than one thing. However, the one topic you do choose shapes the content and how you present it. You can even search through recent newspapers to see either what topics others have already covered, or what the theme for incoming letters seems to be centered around. No matter what you decide, just remember, be very specific and focused about the information that you choose to present.

Use Strong, Urgent Language

This is an exciting time, and we want to share that excitement with others! We don't want to sound too "laid back" when writing, so let your passion shine through! For example, consider the sentence, "I hope you will vote for Paul" versus "Paul is the most qualified candidate for this district and we must make sure our interests are represented at the capitol!"

Be Positive, and Focus on Paul

Unfortunately, we've all seen those advertisements where one politician attacks their opponent, often times much to the annoyance of the audience. In this campaign, we want to keep the spotlight on Paul and all of his qualifications to represent House District 20. We're committed to keeping this campaign focused on Paul's strengths rather than our opponent's weaknesses, and want this race to be friendly and issue-centered rather than dabbling in "mudslinging." We hope that you will help support us in this mission so that together we are able to show all constituents in the community what Paul has to offer.

Draw the Reader to a Conclusion

We often think that we have to communicate something explicitly for the message to reach our audience, but this isn't so. By drawing readers to the conclusion that we want to make, we are able to communicate the same message while saving breath (or in this case, words)! For instance, let's say you decide to write a letter about Paul's experience in the military and as a veteran. By describing his experience as a veteran, the reader can assume that Paul understands the needs of veterans and can conclude who you want them to vote for in the election.

Read it Out Loud

It might seem obvious, but it's still worth saying – proofread before you send your letter to a newspaper. If you leave any spelling or grammatical errors, the editors are unlikely to publish your letter, and we want to make sure that your hard work is fruitful. One helpful way to make sure there are no typos is to simply read what you've written out loud; if you stumble in your speech or get confused with something you say, it's a good indicator that you might need to go back and fix something.

Still Stuck?

Are you still unsure about what you want to write about and how to go about it? First, don't worry; whatever you choose to do will be helpful to Paul's campaign. If you're experiencing "writer's block," think back to what first inspired you to support Paul. Do you know him as a personal friend, is there a specific platform of his that coincides with one of your top priorities, or are you simply a local Democrat? You don't have to know everything about Paul to write about him, because it's your thoughts about him that matter most. If you're having trouble, a good place to start is simply sharing why you support Paul – and there's no wrong answer.

Sample

"In the midst of the recent VA hospitals scandal, we need to know that our elected officials are committed to protecting those that serve this country, regardless of whether they are overseas or back home. There's no doubt that Paul Evans is the only candidate qualified for such a job. With extensive experience in the Air Force since 1993, serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, and a proven track record as senior policy advisor to Governor Kulongoski on emergency management, military, and veterans' affairs, Evans' qualifications are clear. Now, it's our turn to give something back to our troops – an advocate."

After reading this, consider the follow questions:

1. What is the central topic?
2. Who is the letter attempting to reach out to?
3. How does the rhetoric appeal to an individual's logic, emotion, and credibility?
4. Is each word an essential piece?
5. What changes would you make?
6. Are there any spelling or grammatical errors?
7. Does the letter insult the opponent?
8. How did the author create a sense of immediacy with the reader?

Paul's Biography

Paul Evans was born in Salem, Oregon. Raised in the small town of Monmouth, Evans graduated from Central High School (Independence, Oregon) in 1988. At age 18, he was elected to serve his community as a city councilor, one of the youngest elected leaders in the nation. Like his cousin, father and uncle before him Evans joined the volunteer fire department and served with Polk County Fire District #1 throughout college. Following graduation from Western Oregon University (Western Oregon State College) in 1992, he signed up with the United States Air Force earning a commission 31 March 1993 and qualification as an Air Weapons Controller.

Evans spent a little over four years on active duty with the 728th Air Control Squadron with missions throughout Central/South America, Europe, and Southwest Asia. Upon completion of his initial military commitment in 1997, Evans returned home to continue his education and begin a civilian career. He returned home to lead the city as Mayor, serving in the Oregon Air National Guard, educating students at Western Oregon University and Oregon State University, teaching Sunday school at Monmouth Christian Church, working with the Monmouth-Independence YMCA to support youth programs, and volunteering as a senior firefighter with Polk County Fire District #1.

Shortly after the September 2001 attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center, the 116th Air Control Squadron, Evans' Oregon Air National Guard unit, was recalled to active duty. For most of 2002 he collaborated with city leaders and community members from locations around the country. Knowing that his skills were needed in the evolving Global War on Terror, Evans chose not to run for a third term of office. Since 2002, he has served on active duty overseas including Iraq in 2003 (and 2005) and Afghanistan in 2006, as well as on a priority homeland security missions throughout the throughout the Continental United States.

After returning from Iraq in 2005, Evans returned to teaching at Western Oregon University. He ran for the Oregon State Senate (District 10) in 2006. Despite a spirited campaign Evans lost the election. Ironically, he was in Afghanistan during the last phase of the campaign because of an unanticipated deployment schedule

change. Upon return from overseas, Evans was asked to join the senior policy staff of Governor Kulongoski. He served the Governor as a senior advisor for Emergency Management, Military, and Veterans' Affairs for just over three years.

During his tenure, Evans led recovery planning for the TOP-OFFICIALS IV exercise (the largest homeland security exercise in US History), directed initial state-level storm recovery efforts in response to major disasters throughout Northwest Oregon in 2007 and 2008, coauthored the Governor's Recovery Framework in 2008, collaborated with appointed and elected state leaders on regional preparedness and resiliency initiatives, and served as the Chair of the Governor's Task Force on Veterans' Services. He continues to work on veterans' initiatives as a "hobby lobbyist" with 21st Century Veteran.

Evans departed the Governor's Office in April 2010 to accept the position of Chief, Protection and National Security Division for High Impact Technology (HIT). His portfolio included oversight of emergency services equipment and infrastructure product development, marketing, and sales. This work provided him with added exposure to international issues with an emphasis on trade within the Pacific Rim. Evans left HIT in February 2012 to found Mayberry Enterprises (a policy consulting business) and Northwest Passage Trading Company (an import/export business).

Paul Evans continues to teach communications, politics, and veterans' policy as a professor at public colleges and universities throughout the Willamette Valley, and serves as the Advisory Board Chair for the Portland State University Emergency Management & Homeland Security Professional Training Program. Evans released *VeteranSpeak: An Introduction to the Language of Veterans'* in September 2012. In 2008, Paul served as Chair of the Governor's Task Force on Veterans' Services.

Paul's Resume

PROFILE

Results-oriented seasoned leadership/management professional with over twenty (20) years of non-profit, private, and public sector experience. Background includes: strategic policy development, tactical problem-solving; direct and indirect sales negotiation; communication training and delivery; proven team-building experiences; legislative advocacy; public relations; and issue research.

WORK HISTORY

Communications Faculty, Chemeketa Community College (Permanent): Jul 2013 - Present

President, Northwest Passage Trading Company: Nov 2011 - Present

Division Chief, Protection and National Security, High Impact Technologies: Apr 2010 - Feb 2012

- National and International product and program development for technologies designed to support homeland security efforts and infrastructure protection with special emphasis on sales in Singapore, Taiwan, and Vietnam
- Strategic leadership team member, focusing on practical technology design, business development, corporate image, government relations, public/private partnerships and strategic market positioning
- Lead private sector representative for Portland State University Emergency Management (EM) and Homeland Security (HS) certificate program/s

Senior Policy Advisor to Governor Ted Kulongoski: primary advisor for Emergency Management, Military, and Veterans' Affairs, Feb 2007 - Mar 2010

- Senior advisor for Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security: Lead for TOP-OFFICIALS IV Homeland Security Exercise; staff advisor for Oregon Homeland Security Council
- Designated with primary responsibility for 24/7 readiness of statewide emergency response/recovery capacities; senior liaison for Governor Kulongoski to Clatsop, Columbia, and Tillamook Counties during 2007/8 Disaster Recovery efforts
- Chair, Governor's Task Force on Veterans' Services and senior advisor for implementation of 2009/10 Veterans' Agenda including education, employment, health care, housing, reintegration, retirement, and transportation programs

MILITARY EXPERIENCE:

Public Affairs Officer: Joint Forces Headquarters (JFHQ), Oregon Air National Guard, Aug 2010 - May 2013 (Retirement)

- Action officer responsible for development, planning, and implementation for Joint Visitors Bureau – National Security Exercise VIGILANT GUARD (2012)
- Member, interagency workgroups tasked with Joint Operations Center (JOC) improvements for emergency management and homeland security missions throughout Oregon

Air Battle Manager (Master): 116th Air Control Squadron, Oregon Air National Guard, Nov 1997 - Jul 2010 (active duty USAF Nov 1992 - March 1997)

- Director of Operations: 116th Air Control Squadron, Oregon Air National Guard, Aug 2008 - Jul 2010
- Assistant Director of Operations/Mission Crew Commander: 73rd Air Control Squadron, Kandahar, Afghanistan, Nov 2006 - Jan 2007 (OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM)
- Assistant Director of Operations/Mission Crew Commander: 727th Air Control Squadron, Balad Air Base, Iraq, Feb - Jun 2005 (OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM)
- Mission Crew Commander: 728th Expeditionary Air Control Squadron, Baghdad Air Base, Iraq, Apr - Aug 2003 (OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM)
- Senior Air Defense Coordination Officer: US Air Force NCR 2003-5, G-8 Summit (2004)
- Air Battle Manager/Senior Director: 728th Air Control Squadron, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, Sep 1993 - 1997 (including mission/s in support of OPERATION SUPPORT JUSTICE IV, POKER BUFF II, LASER STRIKE, DENY FLIGHT, SOUTHERN WATCH)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

- Instructor, Portland State University Emergency Management & Homeland Security Certificate Program: Crisis Communications and Disasters Course
- Adjunct Instructor, Political Science: Portland State University, 2009 - Present; Western Oregon University 2009 - 2010
- Adjunct Instructor, Communications: Chemeketa Community College, 2012 - Present; 2008; Oregon State University, 2000-1; Western Oregon University 2000-1, 2005-6
- Course Coordinator, Argumentation: Oregon State University 2001

POLITICAL/POLICY EXPERIENCE:

- Chair, Advisory Board for Emergency Management & Homeland Security Leadership Development Certificate Program (PSU), Jun 2011 - Apr 2013
- Veterans and Military Families Council, Democratic National Committee, Feb 2010 - Present
- Board of Directors: Central School District 13J, Jun 2008 - Jul 2011
- Chair: Oregon Veterans for Obama, Jun - Nov 2008
- Democratic Nominee: Oregon Senate District 10, Jan - Nov 2006
- Mayor: City of Monmouth, Jan 1999 - Dec 2002
- President: Monmouth-Independence Firefighter's Association, Jan 1999 - Jan 2000
- Board of Directors: Western Oregon University Alumni Association, Sep 1997 -Dec 2002
- Councilor: City of Monmouth, Jan 1989 - Dec 1992

FORMAL EDUCATION:

- Squadron Officer School, Air University, United States Air Force, Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base, May 2004
- Masters of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies (Environmental Policy, Rhetoric and Social Influence, and American Politics): Oregon State University, Mar 2001
- Reserve Commission: United States Air Force Officer Training School, Lackland Air Force Base, Mar 1993
- Bachelor of Science, Public Policy and Administration: Western Oregon State College, Jun 1992

AFFILIATIONS:

- International Association of Emergency Managers
- Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America
- KMUZ 88.5 FM/www.KMUZ.org Program Host: "In the Arena..."
- MacLeay Grange #293 (Salem, Oregon)
- Military Officers Association of America, Life Member
- Salem Sunrise Rotary Club, Rotarian
- Veterans' of Foreign Wars (Post 661), Life Member

Issues

Paul believes there are four functions we are responsible for sustaining:

Guaranteed Opportunity

- Improved funding, structure, and systems for top-tier Preschool through Higher Education (P-20) achievement
- Greater access to life-long workforce preparation and training for all Oregonians
- Celebration of the value of labor through pay equity for men and women of all cultures, races, and religions

A Safe Environment

- Improved health of our natural world (air, lands, and waters)
- Improved safety for all citizens from disaster: human-caused as well as natural events
- Improved security of our borders, our corrections institutions, and our neighborhoods

Protection of our Basic Rights to Think, to Act, and to Live without Fear

- Vigorous support of a “Pro-Liberty” agenda including the right to privacy and women’s reproductive health equity
- Robust defense of all living persons rights to full expression under the law
- Celebration of our diversity of people, place, and policies

Promoting the Future and Providing in the Present

- Strategic investments in “Good Stewardship” policies and programs
- Regionally tailored community development and economic sustainability
- Facilitation of community shared “core” sustainability principles for community development, growth, and prosperity: Vision 2050

Paul believes the following issues warrant our immediate attention:

Jobs & Our Economy:

- Reset of the Minimum Wage to at least \$10.10/hour in 2015 (with annual cost of living adjustments)
- Small business incubation with preference incentives for local development/ownership
- Regional innovation hubs/capacities investments for non-profit/private/public “innovation gardens”
- Targeted micro loans and tailored credits for local small business manufacturing
- Implementation of lifelong education and workforce training opportunities through restructured private/public student assistance programming
- Transformation of public revenue structure and systems in support of sustainable economic growth priorities

P-20 Educational Priorities:

- “QEM-Plus 3” baseline funding formula: implementation of Quality Education Model funding targets with additional above baseline support for community developed workforce development priorities
- Mandatory “Civics” curriculum (12-year program for students at each grade level)
- Maximum Class sizes, maximum student-teacher-support staff ratios, and mandatory teacher training support requirements
- Statewide investments in regional workforce priorities through community colleges, trade apprenticeships, and benchmark private/public partnership incubators
- State-sponsored incentives for community/business/retired seniors volunteer incentives

Sustainability:

- Comprehensive review of “smart growth” land use planning structures and systems (expansion of urban development toolkit)
- Expanded incentives for organic renewable micro power production and regional energy surplus for export

- Incentives for regional infrastructure investments in technology and transit: affirmative steps towards promoting alternatives to transportation as well as modes of transportation in support of sustainability principles: Vision 2050
- Implementation of local, regional, and statewide food security initiatives
- Promotion of standardized carbon-cost market valuation as well as sustainability opportunity costs

Resiliency:

- Capital reinvestments: critical infrastructure, support infrastructure, 22nd Century Priorities
- Baseline standards for public safety staffing in at all levels of government in support of statewide resiliency planning, response, and recovery expectations
- Development of statewide conversation regarding foundations for 22nd Century Economy: review, restructuring, and retooling associated with economic resiliency
- Development of statewide “resiliency standards” for added certainty supporting existing and potential business development: focus upon Oregon emerging as the best choice for Pacific Rim businesses

Veterans:

- Development of sustainable funding for Campus Veterans’ Service Officer program at all community colleges and public universities
- Development of statewide network of “Veteran Courts” for providing earliest intervention for returning veterans and families
- Investment in reintegration services for education, employment, skills development, and start-up business opportunities
- Implementation of “Ending Veteran Homelessness” campaign using available federal funds for veterans’ housing for targeted outreach to end homelessness among veterans by 2020

Thank You

In order to win this election, it's going to take a great deal of effort from many in our community, which is why your support is so vital. We face many challenges in today's world, and with your help we can make the Monmouth, Independence, and West Salem area a better place to reside by ensuring that all of our basic freedoms are granted. One of the guiding principles of our campaign comes from Oregon's former Governor Tom McCall, who said:

"Heroes are not giant statues framed against a red sky; they are people who say this is my community. It is my responsibility to make it better."

Running a campaign for State Representative is, by no means, an easy feat. But with the collective action of our family, friends, and neighbors, we can truly make this a grassroots effort – but we have to act now!

We can't thank you enough for the work that you have done for this campaign. However, we face an opponent with access to big money and many political consultants. The ongoing support of individuals like you is what will make our efforts successful. Can we count on you to commit to continue helping us win this election? If so, please consider further opportunities on the next page.

Thank you, truly. You are the "nuts and bolts" of this campaign – and with your help, there's no doubt that we will win.

Other Opportunities

To win, Paul needs all the help he can get from community members like you. Here are some additional things you can do to help support his election to represent the Monmouth, Independence, and West Salem district in Oregon's state legislature:

- Allow the campaign to use my name as a supporter.
- Go door-to-door with other volunteers to talk to voters about why you support Paul's election.
- Make phone calls to members of the community about Paul's campaign.
- Put up a lawn sign in your front lawn to let those on your street know that you support Paul.
- Host a house party to raise money for the campaign.
- Donate to Paul's campaign yourself – whether its \$5, \$10, or \$100, your contributions help!
- “Like” Paul's Facebook page and “follow” him on Twitter.

For more information about Paul Evans' campaign for State Representative of House District 20, please visit www.PaulEvans.org