

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **MEDIA CONTACT**

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### **CENTRAL OHIOANS HOLD MASSIVE CONSTITUENT TOWN HALL: REPRESENTATIVES FAIL TO SHOW!**

Yesterday afternoon, over 1,400 central Ohioans packed the Valley Dale Ballroom in Columbus to attend a town hall hosted by Indivisible Central Ohio during the congressional recess. A full video of the town hall can be found here - [Indivisible: Central Ohio Town Hall](#). Although residents showed up in force to voice their concerns about the Trump/Musk assault on Ohioans' healthcare, jobs, veterans, and social security, their federal representatives failed to show. Representatives Carey and Beatty declined their invitations citing prior engagements, with Congresswoman Beatty sharing a statement read on her behalf. Senators Moreno and Husted failed to respond at all. Their empty seats on the stage served as a stark reminder of their absence.

Indivisible Central Ohio volunteer Ann Shroyer opened the town hall with a summary of the moment we're in. "Here's what we have facing us - violent insurrectionists pardoned, thousands of government employees illegally fired by algorithm - implemented by an unelected son of Apartheid who has not been approved by the Senate. . . . A vaccine denier in charge of a massive measles outbreak, a wrestling exec in charge of destroying public education . . . , the DOGE Department run amok in our personal data and government contracts . . . The USAID program destroyed, farmers left with no place to sell grain, federal contracts and grants frozen - leaving Ohio companies and universities without needed millions for programing and investment. We have threats to medicaid, SNAP benefits, and now Social Security. . . . Those hurting are being mocked, chainsaws raised overhead in displays of hubris and hate, bodies of water renamed at no one's request, and rights trampled at every turn. What should we do? Who should we turn to for help to re-establish the rule of law? Where are our Senators and Congress people from the LEGISLATIVE BRANCH?!!!"

When the Senators failed to show, Indivisible Central Ohio took a page out of Musk's playbook and called on Tech Support to step in with the use of AI. ChatGPT answered some of constituents' most pressing questions, honestly detailing dire predictions for Ohio as a result of the Doge and Trump cuts.

Attendees also heard directly from multiple individuals impacted. Town Hall guest speakers included:

**Leah Hackleman-Good:** Fired employee due to federal cuts:

**Arnold Scott:** District 6 National Vice President of the American Federation of Government Employees, representing federal employees in Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio, spoke about the impact of devastating federal job cuts;

**Reverend Catherine Duffy:** Co-Founder of non-profit The Garden for All, spoke about the threat to farmers and food pantries because of federal program cuts;

**Retired Major General Dennis Laich and Colonel Adam Miller:** spoke about negative impact on military readiness because of current leadership and hardship for veterans as a result of VA cuts;

**Norm Wernet:** Ohio State Director at Alliance for Retired Americans, spoke about threat to Medicaid and consequences thereof;

**State Representatives Anita Somani and Beryl Brown Piccoloantonio:** spoke about impact of federal cuts on the Ohio state budget; and

**Jason Perlman:** political director at Ohio AFL-CIO, spoke about the importance of unions and fighting back against fascism, encouraging attendance at Tesla protests.

Ohio members of Congress missed out on hearing the incredible stories shared by these speakers, as well as those whose statements were read by volunteers because they were afraid their jobs might be at risk if they shared their stories publicly. Every speaker had critical information to share, but none more than Major General Laich who warned us that none of the soldiers who have died in battle while serving our country “sacrificed and died to support fascism. They sacrificed and died honoring their oaths in defense of democracy.” Had Senators Husted and Moreno had the courage to attend, they would have heard Major General Laich’s closing plea: “I’m asking you today. Will you stand with me. Will you stand against fascism. Will you stand for democracy?”

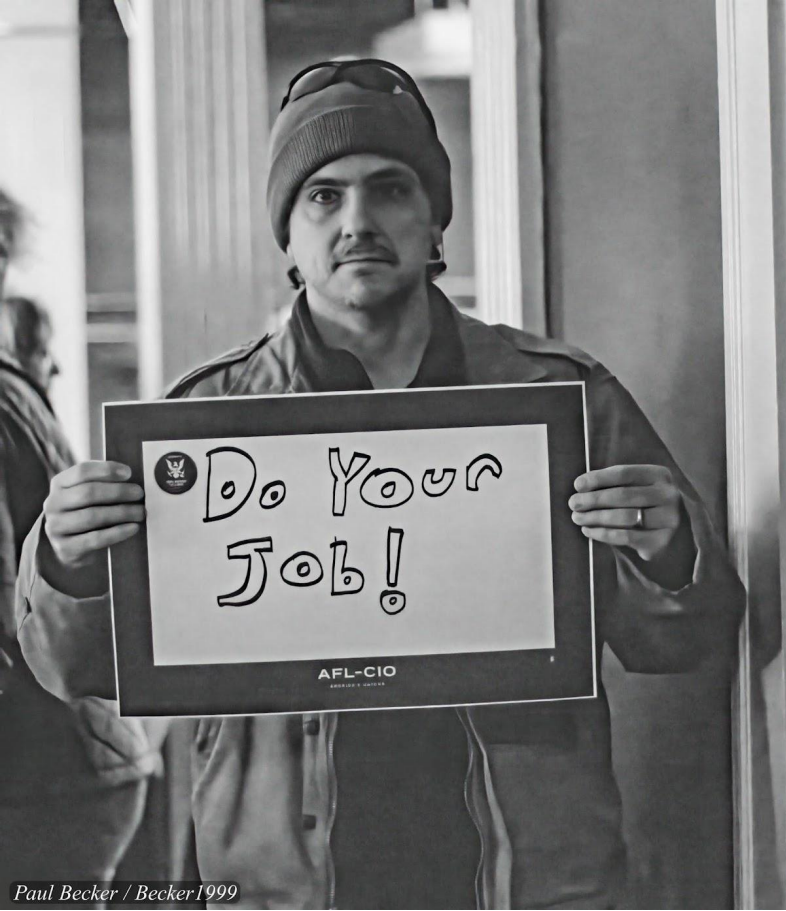
Unattributed photos of the event shared below were taken by Christina Paolucci:







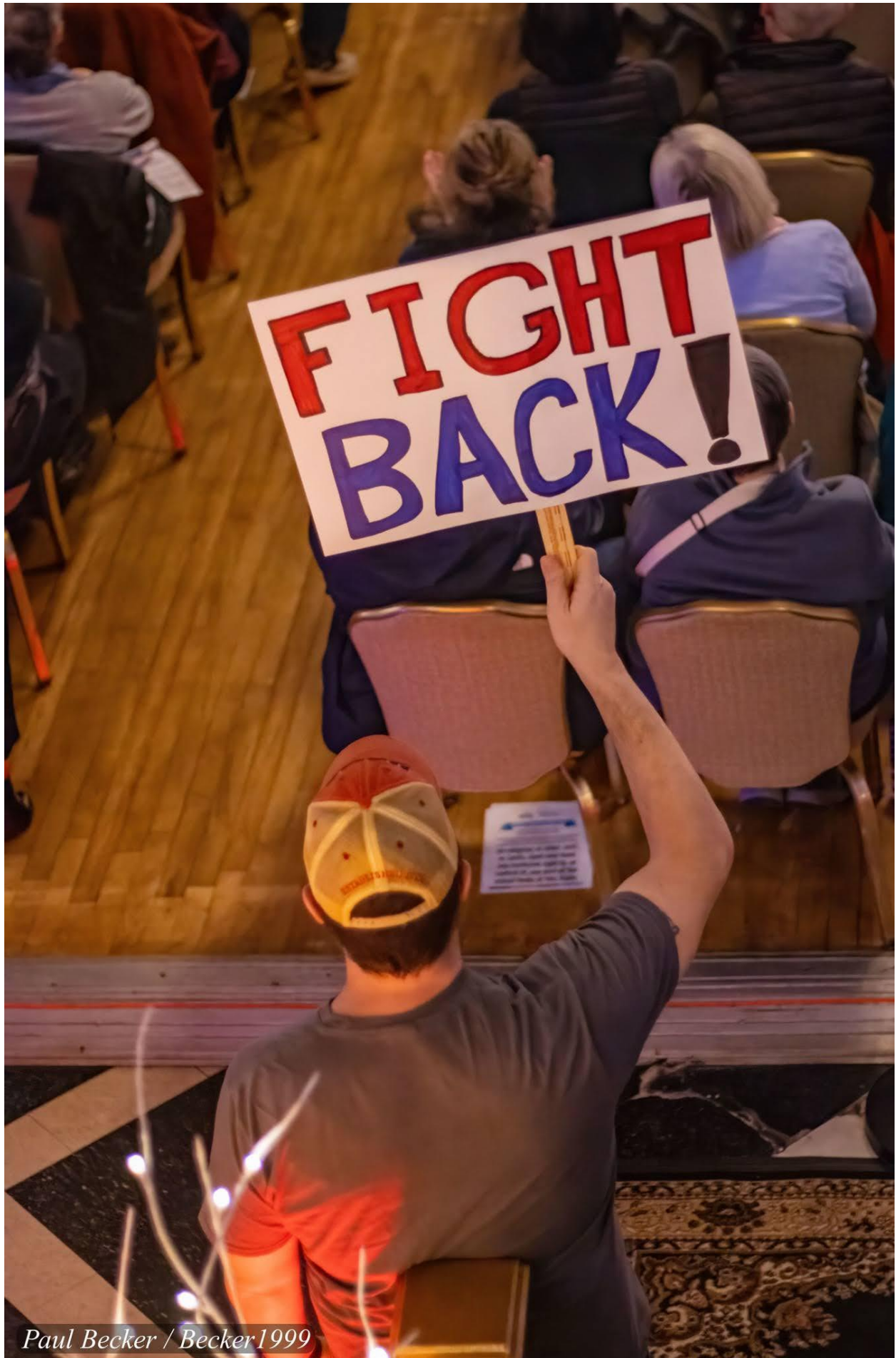
Photos by Paul Becker:



*Paul Becker / Becker1999*



*Paul Becker / Becker1999*



More photos can be found here:

<https://christinapaolucci2.sproutstudio.com/gallery/march-22nd-town-hall>.

Video can be found here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1taryyZDTTUFNXqZho8TnfRWxJFwRvSIR/view> (crowd gathering, interviews with attendees as they arrive, venue standing room only)

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