



STATEMENT FOR REP. DIANA DEGETTE

8 MAY 2004

I would like to ask for a moment of silence for Delores Dickman, a life long democratic activist. I know that Delores would have wanted to part of this election cycle – to see the democrats take their rightful place in history.

I'd like to send my heartfelt thanks to all of you. It is because of your unwavering support that I am running for my 5th election. I'd like to especially acknowledge Sharron Klein for her leadership in the county, and Mindy Osburn and Dick Kisseberth for their tireless efforts, as well as the ongoing work of the Denver Democratic Executive Committee. Thank you so very much.

We are at a critical juncture in our history. There are two paths in front of us – one that leads to continued job loss, continued tax breaks for only the wealthiest among us and a mortgage on our children's future, the likes of which we've never seen.

The other path – is the right path – the one that has been less traveled over the last four years. It is the path where Democrats unite and fight for the issues that have been the backbone of this party since its founding – protecting Social Security and a women's right to choose, providing every child with a quality education, and promoting economic prosperity.

We must work hard to win a majority in the State House, and ensure the election of Anne McGihon and Alice Brodtkin, who the Republicans have in their sights and make Andrew Romanoff the next Speaker of the House!

We must work hard to win a majority in the State Senate – and elect Ken Gordon, Peter Groff, and Jennifer Viega – so that we pass legislation that benefits each of us, rather than just a wealthy few!

We must work hard to win a majority in the House – and elect Dave Thomas and Joanna Conti, and replace Scott McGinnis with a democrat who shares our western values!

We must work hard to win a majority in the Senate and take back the seat that Ben Switchhorse Campbell stole from us!

We must work hard to put John Kerry in the White House!

It is clear why we are so energized and why we heap so much scorn on the Bush Administration. It is not because we hate George W. Bush. It is not because we hate the Republican Party. It is because we love Colorado and the United States and we refuse to stand by for one minute as our state and nation are hurt by his wrong-headed policies.

This week alone provided a sad snapshot of the damage the Bush administration has wrought:

- Despite an attempted cover-up by Donald Rumsfeld, the world learned that American soldiers and contractors tortured Iraqi prisoners, destroying what little good will we had left in the Islamic world;
- Alan Greenspan announced that, thanks to George Bush's reckless fiscal policies, the soaring federal deficit now seriously threatens our nation's economy;
- Ignoring a near-unanimous recommendation by scientists, George Bush banned the over-the-counter sale of emergency contraception, a vital tool in the prevention of unwanted pregnancies.

This is not going to be easy. But nothing worth winning ever is.

The Republicans are going to use every dirty trick in the book to protect their hold on power. They have already spent more than \$60 million to impugn the patriotism of John Kerry. Karen Hughes shamefully implied that being pro-choice is akin to being a terrorist. Tom DeLay frantically accused us of disloyalty for telling the American public the truth about the war in Iraq. Rush Limbaugh appallingly claimed that the torture of Iraqi prisoners was no worse than a fraternity prank.

Anyone who calls him or herself a Republican should be ashamed that party of Lincoln and Eisenhower has been reduced to such scurrilous attacks.

But I understand why all they can do is attack. The reality is that George Bush has almost no positive accomplishments to highlight. A record as abysmal as the current administration's would trouble most presidents.

Not George Bush.

A law, like the Patriot Act, that trampled on the Constitution, that authorized the government to spy on its own citizens, that deprived law-abiding citizens and legal immigrants of their rights would trouble most presidents.

Not George Bush.

The relegation of women to second class citizenship by taking away their right to choose, eliminating their access to information about their own health and imposing government dictates on the doctor-patient relationship would worry most presidents.

Not George Bush.

Encouraging increased mercury discharges into our air and the release of dangerous toxins into our water, permanently destroying our last wild lands and turning our energy policy over to big oil companies would enrage most presidents.

Not George Bush.

Taking our nation to war under false pretenses resulting in more than 700 dead and 4,000 wounded American soldiers, alienating our staunchest allies and turning America from a beacon of democracy to a symbol of arrogance to millions of people around the world would never happen under the watch of most presidents.

Not George Bush.

We in Colorado want a president we can be proud of. In the current election, there is only one man who has shown decisiveness and leadership under pressure, who shares our Western values, who will make our country strong and secure again. If we all redouble our

effort and work hard every day through November 2, 2004, then Colorado and the nation will send John Kerry to the White House.

Not George Bush.