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OpEdNews Op Eds 8/1/2026 at 9:05 AM EDT H1'ed 8/1/26

[20 Actions To Protect American Democracy](#)

By [Robert Weiner](#) and [Khel Gordhan](#)

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Originally for the PuLSE Institute

To Bankole Thompson, a wonderful colleague for decades-1st African American Newspaper Editor to interview Obama, former MI Chronicle top editor, Detroit News opinion columnist, Radio host, first journalist in history to serve on the Board of Martin Luther King Jr.'s civil rights organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Cong. Conyers' close friend, and of course Founder and Chairman of PuLSE, which has become America's leading anti-poverty organization. Perhaps a hundred collaborations-with you, Bankole- including chapters in two of your books, with the latest, *Hope on The Mountain of Fear* (and who allowed us and him to be spot-on with the Housing Bill as Chapter 1!) Bankole was close to Cong. Conyers, where I was for 6+ years (and a lifetime of friendship after that) before I went to the Clinton and Bush White Houses and then created our ongoing, award-winning national op-ed writing group, recruiting young journalists as co-authors, after I worked with Claude Pepper, Ed Koch, Charlie Rangel, Cong. Conyers, and Ted Kennedy.

AND to Tina Patterson, President and General Counsel of The PuLSE Institute & and all its Operations since 2018, with her works cited by the Georgetown University Law Center, with lifelong work to help people overcome challenges, including in the state appellate defender's office. She is rightly proud to have worked as a federal government attorney for the Social Security Administration -- more on that later.

SO much to thank you and PuLSE for, and everyone here!

To live up to the Conscience of Democracy Award right here at the famous Detroit Athletic Club- is a true highlight!

Here's what I want to do with my 2-4 minutes. Here are 20 actions CONGRESS and the next PRESIDENT have to do in the next 3 or 4 years to correct the damage both of these four years, if he remains, and the first four Trump years:

#1) As all presidents do, and what Congress can do, reverse EVERY executive order of Donald Trump. Every one! And if you think that's unusual, it's NOT. Every President who comes in does that about the EO's of the President of the opposing party.

#2) Pass the John Lewis Voting Rights ACT to counter the racist Jim Crow-like rulings of the Supreme Court.

- 3) Amend the Federal Tort Fund so it's not an end-run around the 1.8 B slush fund to pay Jan 6 rioters like election deniers ALREADY -Trump supporters Ashley Babbitt and National Security violator- in the dinner photo with Putin -- American General Michael Flynn.
- 4) Expand the Supreme Court-- quit messing with the word "reform" and term limits, which will take forever. The Court has been expanded by Congress SEVEN TIMES. JUST DO IT, to counter the McConnell-Trump theft of three seats, including Merrick Garland's, and inserting Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, and Barrett with made-up rules on timing.
- 5) IMPLEMENT the housing bill to reduce housing and rent costs and give young people and families opportunity.
- 6) Price Scams-- USE THE LAWS AGAINST GOUGING to bar them as I urged in the WH briefing room. It is the LAW. The feds are supposed to block them.
- 7) Reverse Citizens United-- I hosted former Sen Leader George Mitchell at the NPC, and he said it's the worst decision of the Court in his lifetime, allowing unlimited money in politics.
- 8) Reverse Immunity for Presidents. Pelosi said it's BS, not in the law, and she's right.
- 9) Tear down EVERY Bourgeois Narcissistic Megamillion Dollar piece of construction and renaming Trump has done to our iconic federal structures.
- 10) ACTUALLY DECLARE OR BLOCK ENDLESS WARS. We're close now on this one-- both House and Senate have passed resolutions, but put teeth with money you control.
- 11) END TRICKLE DOWN TAX POLICIES AND PROGRAM CUTS: I lectured at London School of Economics on the two parties' different approaches, and EVERY HAND IN THE ROOM stayed down when I asked should we cut programs and do tax breaks for the rich, AND EVERY HAND went up saying the better policy for government is programs and jobs and tax breaks for middle and lower incomes. Mitch McConnell actually tried to block a Library of Congress study that said you get 5X the bang for the buck with jobs for lower incomes versus tax breaks for the wealthy. The guy who wrote the study put out the study anyway! True story, look it up!
- 12) SPEAKING OF MITCH MCCONNELL, I bet his secret deathbed wish -- and bless his soul when that happens-- will be that he voted for Trump's conviction instead of reversing his statement that "Trump is responsible for Jan 6 and will be held responsible."
- 13) Fund the Obamacare premiums as we did during Covid. Health Bankruptcy is, if not THE leading cause of poverty.
- 14) Social Security. Correct a 22% shortfall in 2032-- and that's NOT bankruptcy, by the way -- By raising the Cap on income to a million, not the 120K-something it now is. Former House Leader Steny Hoyer, lifetime friend, asked me, how do we come out with tax increases? BY supporting fair taxing of the wealthy. And I got Senate Leader Reid in a conference call with all D "talkers" to stop his calling for Social Security "reform" because that means cuts. Same with Obama economic leaders Gene Sperling and Jason Furman. When they proposed reforms in Social Security benefits, I asked them both in a WH briefing (look it up) if they realized that cutting Social Security means more seniors immediately go into

poverty. President Obama, the NEXT DAY in a news conference, said "we're not going to cut Social Security benefits as a compromise to get a tax deal " when he announced a tax compromise with the Republicans.

15) Let's SUPPORT and FUND the federal judges who have been blocking ICE detention centers, murders, illegal detentions, and stopping illegal deportations. BUT YES FUND BORDER PERSONNEL to stop illegals in the future from entering. SO PASS THE IMMIGRATION BILL-- REMEMBER-- LIKE THE HOUSING BILL-- which Trump blocked because he didn't want anyone but him to have a victory on the issue! Congress actually built a coalition to pass it. That bill also would allow the 11 million dreamers to stay.

16) Rehire the nonpartisan Inspectors General Trump fired who assure each agency follows the law, and rehire Chris Krebs, the Cybersecurity Director Trump fired for saying the 2020 election was the safest one ever.

17) ENFORCE THE EMOLUMENTS CLAUSE so Presidents can no longer gift, sell, and buy for their own wallets. 200 Members-- all D-- filed against Trump to block profits from the Trump hotel -- and THIS Court ignored it.

18) Reverse the RFK anti-vaccine personnel and policies that have created record measles outbreaks in SC, TX, and the nation, and AIDS prevention around the world without which thousands are dying.

19) As Jack Smith told Nicole Wallace last week, prepare preventive injunctions to stop ICE and National Guard voter intimidation-- predicted by Trump-- interfering in polling places.

20) Instead of sending out tweets literally pooping from a plane on the 8 million No Kings protesters, while he wears a Christ halo in another tweet, COMMEND THE No Kings movement FOR LEADING US TO THE moment we have now with 8-15 point leads and a chance, with all of our work, to ACTUALLY CHANGE THE GOVERNMENT, THE COUNTRY, AND OUR NATIONAL CONSCIENCE for the better.

In conclusion, with these 20 actions and more because the news happens 24-7 every day, we have the chance to do good for the most people possible. That's the politics I've learned, which is the right thing to do with our lives! And which Bankole, Tina, and all of you are doing every day.

Thank you so much again!

Robert Weiner was the chief of staff for Rep. Claude Pepper's House Aging Committee, and a spokesman in the Clinton and George W. Bush White Houses. He was also Communications Director of the House Government Operations Committee, and Senior Aide to Four-Star Gen/Drug Czar Barry McCaffrey and Reps. John Conyers, Charles Rangel, Ed Koch, and Sen. Ted Kennedy.

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