

DREAM FOR AMERICA ★

DREAM FOR ACTION ★

AUGUST 15, 2026 | AUSTIN, TX

THE AT&T HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTER

OFFICIAL EVENT PROGRAM

DEMOCRACY
SUMMIT 2026



Dear Attendee,

Welcome to Austin — and welcome to **DemocracySummit 2026: America at 250** —
Creating a More Perfect Union.

Two hundred and fifty years ago, the American experiment began with an extraordinary promise: that a free people could govern themselves, expand the meaning of liberty, and build a country capable of becoming more perfect with each generation. That promise has never fulfilled itself automatically.

Every generation has inherited an America shaped by the choices of those who came before it, and every generation has faced the same fundamental question: **What will we do with what we have been given?**

Today, that question belongs to us.

We are coming of age at a moment when trust in institutions is fraying, political division is deepening, and too many young people are being told that cynicism is sophistication and disengagement is inevitable. We reject that choice.

Dream for America was built on a different belief: that young people are not apathetic. We are searching for community, purpose, leadership, and a reason to believe that participation still matters.

That is why we are here.

Throughout this Summit, you will hear from leaders across public service, advocacy, media, organizing, and every fabric of civic life. You will encounter ideas you agree with, ideas that challenge you, and people whose experiences may be very different from your own. We hope you lean into all of it.

Ask difficult questions. Meet someone new. Listen generously. Debate seriously. Take notes. Trade numbers. Find the issue, organization, campaign, campus, or community where you can make a difference, and then go do something with what you learn here.

Thank you for joining us in Austin. We are honored to have you in the room. Let's get to work.

William He
Founder & CEO
Dream for America



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for a chance to be featured on our platforms!

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SUMMIT 2026



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DEMOCRACY SUMMIT 2026

AUGUST 15, 2026 | AUSTIN, TX

THE AT&T HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTER

VP Kamala Harris* • Sec. Pete Buttigieg* • Sen. Mark Kelly*

Gov. Andy Beshear* • TX Rep. James Talarico* • Sen. Chris Murphy*

Stacey Abrams* • DNC Chair Ken Martin • Rep. Ro Khanna* • Rep. Maxwell Frost*

Former DNC Chair Jaime Harrison • PA Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta

Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton* • Lt. Gov. Austin Davis* • TX Minority Leader Gene Wu

TX Sen. Sarah Eckhardt • TX Rep. Vikki Goodwin • Mayor Gina Ortiz Jones

Former Mayor Ron Nirenberg • TX Democratic Party Chair Kendall Scudder

Amb. Wally Brewster • Mark Updegrove • IL Speaker Pro Tempore Kam Buckner

TX Rep. Jon Rosenthal • MO Rep. Ray Reed • William He

AFL-CIO • Asian Texans for Justice Action Fund • Clayton Tucker • Clayton Wellborne
Color of Change • Debra Cleaver • Evan Hunt • Human Rights Campaign • Jevin Hodge
Jolt Texas • Kaylie Lynn (Lyndigo) • Marcus Emmanuel • Matthew Watkins • Olivia Webster
Planned Parenthood Texas Votes • Pooja Sethi • Powerhouse Texas • Samantha Casiano
Steven Bonnell (Destiny) • Students Engaged in Advancing Texas • Tax the Greedy Billionaires
Taylor Collective • Texas Youth Power Alliance • Tre'veontae Martin • Women's March
Wyatt Sharpe • Yemisi Egbewole • Zach Lambert • Austin City Councilmember Zo Qadri

***virtual keynote address**

DEMOCRACY SUMMIT 2026

7:30 AM – 9:00 AM

DOORS OPEN / CHECK-IN

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

BREAKFAST MIXER

8:50 AM – 9:00 AM

VOICES FROM ACROSS AMERICA

Special Messages to DemocracySummit 2026

@ Zlotnik Family Ballroom

Rep. Maxwell Frost*

U.S. Representative (FL-10)

Rep. Ro Khanna*

U.S. Representative (CA-17)

Sen. Chris Murphy*

U.S. Senator from Connecticut

9:00 AM – 9:15 AM

OPENING CEREMONY

Invocation by Pastor Zach Lambert

Pledge of Allegiance by Olivia Webster

A Performance of The Star-Spangled Banner by Lynndigo

**virtual address will be delivered*

DEMOCRACY SUMMIT 2026

9:15 AM – 9:30 AM

WELCOME REMARKS BY WILLIAM HE & DREAM FOR AMERICA

Olivia Webster

Dream for America National Organizing Director

Cate Kratovil

Dream for America University of Texas Chapter President

William He

Dream for America Founder & CEO

9:30 AM – 10:20 AM

OPENING KEYNOTE SESSION

Jaime Harrison

Former DNC Chair

Gina Ortiz Jones

Mayor of San Antonio

Igor Volsky

Campaign Manager of Tax the Greedy Billionaires

Texas Rep. Vikki Goodwin

Texas State Representative &

Democratic Nominee for Texas Lt. Governor

Pennsylvania Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta

Pennsylvania State Representative &

DNC Vice Chair

DEMOCRACY SUMMIT 2026

10:20 AM – 10:30 AM

BREAK

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

MORNING PANEL SESSIONS

(Concurrent)

PANEL 1:

As Texas Goes: The Next Chapter of the Lone Star State

@ Zlotnik Family Ballroom

Moderator:

Matthew Watkins

Editor-in-Chief of The Texas Tribune

Panelists:

Lt. Col. Evan Hunt, USAF (Ret.)

Retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel &
Candidate for U.S. Congress (TX-03)

Ayaan Moledina

Federal Policy Director of Students Engaged in Advancing Texas

Zo Qadri

Austin City Councilmember

Pooja Sethi

Former Travis County Democratic Party Chair &
Democratic Candidate for Texas House (District 47)



10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

MORNING PANEL SESSIONS

(Concurrent)

PANEL 2:

My Body, My Future: The Fight for Reproductive Freedom

@ Classroom 105

Moderator:

Olivia Webster

Dream for America National Organizing Director

Panelists:

Darcy Caballero

Government Relations & Political Director of
Planned Parenthood Texas Votes

Samantha Casiano

Plaintiff in *Zurawski v. State of Texas*

Texas Rep. Donna Howard

Texas State Representative

Kimberly Taylor

CEO & Founder of Taylor Collective Solutions

Sponsored By:

Planned Parenthood Texas Votes

Women's March

DEMOCRACY SUMMIT 2026

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

MORNING PANEL SESSIONS

(Concurrent)

WORKSHOP 1:

**Power to the Polls: A Youth Voter Registration
& Mobilization Lab**

@ Classroom 106

Presented by:

**Texas Youth Power Alliance
Radical Registrars**

11:30 AM – 11:40 AM

BREAK

11:40 AM – 11:45 AM

REMARKS BY JEVIN D. HODGE

JEVIN D. HODGE

Dream for America Board Member &
Former Vice Chair of the Arizona Democratic Party



11:45 AM – 12:30 PM

**AMERICA AT 250 SHOWDOWN:
LEFT VS. RIGHT ON WHAT COMES NEXT**

@ Zlotnik Family Ballroom

Debate between:

Steven Bonnell II (aka Destiny)

&

Alex Stein

Moderated by:

Wyatt Sharpe

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM

LUNCH MIXER



1:00 PM – 1:20 PM

THE STATE OF OUR UNION

Voices Shaping the Future of Our States & Our Nation

@ Zlotnik Family Ballroom

Stacey Abrams*

Former Georgia House Minority Leader

Lt. Gov. Austin Davis*

Lt. Gov. of Pennsylvania

Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton*

Lt. Gov. of Illinois & Democratic Nominee for U.S. Senate (IL)

Gov. Andy Beshear*

Governor of Kentucky

**virtual address will be delivered*

DEMOCRACY SUMMIT 2026

1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

AFTERNOON SESSIONS – BLOCK 1
(Concurrent)

PANEL 3:

We the People: The Unfinished Fight for Civil Rights

@ Zlotnik Family Ballroom

Moderator:

Tre'veontae Martin

Dream for America Deputy National Organizing Director

Panelists:

Nicolette Ardiente

Programs Manager of Asian Texans for Justice Action Fund

Zhara Baksh

Campaign Manager of Color of Change

Jackie Bastard

Executive Director of Jolt Action

Mo Jenkins

Texas State Director of Human Rights Campaign

Sponsored by:

Color of Change

Human Rights Campaign

Jolt Action

DEMOCRACY SUMMIT 2026

1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

AFTERNOON SESSIONS – BLOCK 1
(Concurrent)

PANEL 4:

Priced Out: Affordability and the Fight for Economic Opportunity

@ Classroom 105

Moderator:

William He

Dream for America Founder & CEO

Panelists:

Leonard Aguilar

President of the Texas AFL-CIO

Illinois Rep. Kam Buckner

Speaker Pro Tempore of the Illinois House of Representatives

Ron Nirenberg

Former Mayor of San Antonio

Missouri Rep. Ray Reed

Missouri State Representative



1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

AFTERNOON SESSIONS – BLOCK 1
(Concurrent)

WORKSHOP 2:

**From Dorm Room to Decision-Maker:
How to Build Power on Campus**

@ Classroom 106

Presented by:

Dream for America

2:30 PM – 2:40 PM

BREAK



2:40 PM – 3:40 PM

AFTERNOON SESSIONS – BLOCK 2
(Concurrent)

PANEL 5:

Powering America's Future: Climate, Energy, & Innovation

@ Classroom 105

Moderator:

Marcus Emmanuel

Dream for America Director of Operations

Panelists:

Texas Rep. Jon Rosenthal

Texas State Representative

Anagha Uppal

Program Director of PowerHouse Texas

Clayton Tucker

Candidate for Texas Commissioner of Agriculture



2:40 PM – 3:40 PM

AFTERNOON SESSIONS – BLOCK 2
(Concurrent)

PANEL 6:

A Republic, If We Can Keep It: Democracy at 250

@ Zlotnik Family Ballroom

Moderator:

William He

Dream for America Founder & CEO

Panelists:

Debra Cleaver

Founder of VoteAmerica & Vote.org

Yemisi Egbewole

Former Chief of Staff of the White House Press Office

Mark Updegrove

Chairman & CEO of the LBJ Foundation

Amb. Wally Brewster

Former United States Ambassador to the Dominican Republic



2:40 PM – 3:40 PM

AFTERNOON SESSIONS – BLOCK 2
(Concurrent)

WORKSHOP 3:

Building Power with Movement Narratives

@ Classroom 106

Presented by:

SEAT (Students Engaged in Advancing Texas)

3:40 PM – 3:50 PM

BREAK



3:50 PM – 4:50 PM

CLOSING KEYNOTE SESSION

Kendall Scudder

Texas Democratic Party Chair

Texas Rep. Gene Wu

Texas House Minority Leader

Texas Sen. Sarah Eckhardt

Texas State Senator

Mini Timmaraju

CEO of Reproductive Freedom for All

Lt. Col. Evan Hunt, USAF (Ret.)

Retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel &
Candidate for U.S. Congress (TX-03)

Ken Martin

DNC Chair

DEMOCRACY SUMMIT 2026

4:50 PM – 5:10 PM

AMERICA AT 250:

NATIONAL LEADERS ADDRESS THE NEXT GENERATION

@ Zlotnik Family Ballroom

Former Vice President Kamala Harris*

Former Vice President of the United States

Sen. Mark Kelly*

U.S. Senator from Arizona

Texas Rep. James Talarico*

Texas State Representative &

Democratic Candidate for U.S. Senate (TX)

Sec. Pete Buttigieg*

Former Secretary of Transportation

5:10 PM – 5:25 PM

CLOSING REMARKS BY WILLIAM HE & DREAM FOR AMERICA

CHAPTER OF THE YEAR CEREMONY

2028 PRESIDENTIAL STRAW POLL RESULTS

5:25 PM – 5:30 PM

A PERFORMANCE OF THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND BY LYNNDIGO

**virtual address will be delivered*

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CITIZENS
UNITED

COLOR
OF
CHANGE

♥ FEEL
↗ GOOD
✱ ACTION



DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY
ACTION

RADICAL
Registrars

BREAKTHRU



WILSON'S
FOUNTAIN



DEMOCRACY
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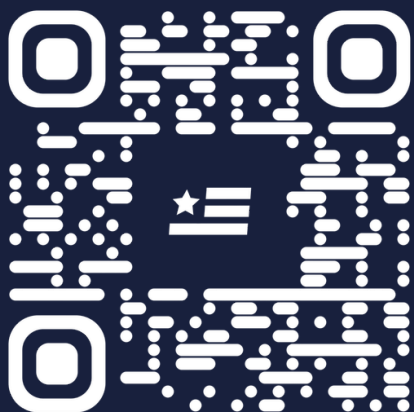
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DREAM★ FOR AMERICA

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PRO-DEMOCRACY
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IN AMERICA



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THANK YOU!

Thank you for being here.

Democracy is not something we inherit once and keep forever. It is something each generation is asked to renew.

As America marks 250 years, we gather at a moment of real uncertainty, but also extraordinary possibility. Our generation is coming of age in a country that is divided, distrustful, and searching for direction. We can respond with cynicism. We can retreat into our corners. Or we can choose to build.

That is what this Summit is all about.

It is about choosing community over isolation, courage over apathy, and participation over despair. It is about believing that America is still an unfinished project, and that young people have both the power and the responsibility to help shape what comes next.

My hope is that you leave Austin with more than notes from a panel or a photo with a speaker. I hope you leave with new friends, harder questions, greater convictions, and one idea you are determined to bring home and to take action on.

Run for something. Start something. Organize your campus. Serve your community. Listen to people who disagree with you. Defend the rights of people you may never meet. Be willing to believe in this country enough to demand better from it.

The next chapter of the American experiment will not be written for us.

It will be written by us.

Thank you for showing up, and thank you for helping us build a more perfect union.

With gratitude and hope, from the bottom of my heart --

William He

Founder & CEO

Dream for America



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