

Governor Pritzker,

02/04/2026

Thank you very much for your bold and powerful speech at the State of the State and Budget Address last year. The comparison you made of the Trump Administration to the Nazi Era was both timely and courageous. It was refreshing to hear a leader speak the truth so clearly and forcefully, something far too few Democrats, from state legislatures to Congress, have done. And yet here we are one year later.

Honestly, many Democratic voters feel betrayed by their party. Whether it is the suppression of Bernie Sanders in the 2016 primary, the removal of President Joe Biden during his reelection campaign, or Kamala Harris's decision to collaborate with right-wing military-industrialists such as the Cheney family, repeated bad choices continue to undermine the credibility of our Party.

Even worse, liberals across the political spectrum, whether they are my own friends or complete strangers I encounter on social media, almost universally agree that Democrats are not working hard enough to stop this ongoing coup d'état. Furthermore, the party's messaging has been weak and ineffective. If this continues, the Democratic Party will fail, and with it, our nation may fail. In order to avoid this, Democrats must adopt an emergency, all-hands-on-deck approach.

To fight back against the constant barrage of right-wing media propaganda funded by Facebook, X, TikTok, and Russian bots, Democrats must develop a robust cultural response. What this means is a continuous and aggressive flow of information, art, music, film, literature, and public debate in opposition to fascism and to regain control of the narrative.

That is why I am requesting that you initiate a privately funded artist work program, similar to the Works Progress Administration (WPA) developed by FDR as part of his New Deal, as a way to give artists the ability to quickly and effectively respond to the fascist threat. This new program will provide grants to support artists engaged in work that meets the following three criteria:

- 1) Oppose Fascism.
- 2) Reconnect with our Instate Red Neighbors, This is Not A Partisan Issue.
- 3) Promote Illinois as One Strong, Unified Community.

Who Am I?

My name is Matt Schultz and I am a multidisciplinary artist from Illinois. I have lived in all four corners of this wonderful state. As a resident of Chicago, I co-founded the band Pigface which played a significant role in developing the Industrial Music Movement in the 1990s. I earned my Master of Fine Arts degree in Sculpture from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale on a full-ride scholarship. For twelve years I have taught Art and Design at multiple colleges and universities across the state.

I would like to work with other Illinois Artists to run this collective that you, Governor, are going to personally fund. Our objective is to provide grants to help artists produce creative, urgent and persuasive work that supports the three objectives mentioned earlier.

We Must Act Now, Before It Is Too Late.

This Artist Collective can enhance the Democratic Message in a manner that traditional politics cannot. Art has always had the power to shape the Public Consciousness, and in this fight, it will be no exception.

I eagerly await your response.

Matt Schultz

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