

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WV Democrats Hold Party Conference New State Chair Elected

Charleston, W.Va. – About 300 local Democratic Party leaders and activists gathered in Charleston for meetings to prepare for the general election. The newly elected Democratic County Chairs and State Committee members held trainings and meetings. The Democratic State Committee elected a new chair and filled other vacancies. Larry Puccio, of Fairmont, was elected State Party Chair to serve the remaining two years of outgoing Chairman Nick Casey's term. Casey resigned as chair due to a pending federal judicial appointment. "I am deeply humbled by the support the State Committee gave me today," said Puccio. "If you support responsible government, providing good jobs with good benefits, workplace safety, and giving people the opportunity to work hard, play by the rules and be successful, then the Democrat Party is your party and it's time for all of us to get involved more than ever." "I wish Larry the best of luck as Party Chair," Casey added. "I have enjoyed my six years as chair and am ready to pass the torch." During Casey's term as chair, the Democratic Party has remained fiscally sound, maintained a fully staffed headquarters, gained eight seats in the Legislature, and reelected a full Democratic Board of Public Works.

Also on Saturday, the Democratic County Chairs met and made plans for the upcoming election. The State Committee also elected Phil Reale, of Kanawha County, as its 2nd Vice Chair to fill a vacancy in that position. Reale also serves General Chairman of the Democratic Legislative Council. Belinda Biafore will continue to serve as 1st Vice-Chair and she is also the State President of the Federation of Democratic Women. Saturday evening Democrats are gathering for a special dinner to honor all of the county Democrats of the Year Award recipients. Karen Coria, of Putnam County, is hosting that event.

Puccio will serve as Chair for the remaining two year term. Democratic Party Chair elections are regularly scheduled every four years in presidential election years. The Democratic State Committee is comprised of two-men and two-women from each State Senate district who are elected by the people on the primary election ballot.

A full list of the new State Committee members and County Chairs are available, by request, from the State Democratic Headquarters (304) 342-8121.