

# Opinions

If you're a regular reader, you know we tend to steer somewhat clear of political content. Our focus has always been on covering the local stories and community news that matter most to you. So, you may be surprised to see a new feature: side-by-side guest columns from Iowa's Democratic and Republican parties.

We want to take a moment to explain why.

This monthly feature is part of a statewide effort organized by the Iowa Newspaper Association to promote fairness, balance, and civil dialogue on important issues facing Iowans. Each month, representatives from both major political parties are invited to share their perspectives—up to 750 words each—on the same topic. The goal is to give readers equal access to both viewpoints in a respectful and informative format.

While we remain committed to keeping politics out of our regular news coverage, we believe this is a meaningful way to support open conversation without taking sides. You'll always see both columns printed together (or an editor's note if one side doesn't submit), giving you the opportunity to read, consider, and decide for yourself.

We're starting with this feature because we believe respectful dialogue is more important than ever. And as always, we remain committed to bringing you journalism rooted in trust, fairness, and service to our community.

## Political violence isn't symmetrical. It's escalating on the left, and political leaders must call it out

By: Jeff Kaufmann - Chairman, Republican Party of Iowa

We keep hearing calls to “encourage thoughtful discourse” and “discourage violent rhetoric.” That’s true, and I have. One political party keeps crossing the line, pretending both parties are equally responsible. In fact, the recent surge in political violence is coming overwhelmingly from the left. If leaders want to promote civility, they need to start with the truth. The truth is that the left has a violence problem.

According to data from the Center for Strategic and International Studies, left-wing terrorist attacks and plots in the U.S. are on the rise. In fact, left-wing incidents reached their highest levels in decades, surpassing those from the far right. (CSIS)That doesn’t mean violence from the right should be excused. It shouldn’t. But we can’t build “thoughtful discourse” on top of false equivalence.

A quick look at what’s recently been happening:

–In Virginia, a Democrat candidate for Attorney General openly threatened violence against his Republican opponent and his children.

–Sitting members of Congress on the left have flirted with or outright encouraged political violence.

–There have been two attempted assassinations of President Trump, an attempted mass shooting of Republican members of Congress that nearly killed Steve Scalise, the assassination of Charlie Kirk, and even the assassination of a major health-care executive, all tied to left-wing extremists. What’s worse, all of these have been celebrated by many on the left, after the fact.

That’s not just threats or talk.

Here’s how political leaders, particularly Democrats, should respond.

1. Call it out, directly and by name.

When violence or violent rhetoric comes from your own side, say so. Don’t hide behind buzzwords like “both sides” or “extremists everywhere.” That’s political cowardice. Leadership means naming the problem even when it’s uncomfortable.

2. Stop glamorizing outrage.

Too many Democrats treat the loudest, angriest activists as heroes. Social media mobs are rewarded, not rebuked. Political leaders should draw a clear line between passionate advocacy and violent threats, and stop pretending rage is a virtue.

3. Lead with example, not excuses.

You don’t de-escalate violence by winking at it. Too many political leaders, especially on the left, are afraid of offending the radicals in their own ranks. They tiptoe around the problem instead of confronting it. And every time they look the other way, the temperature rises a little higher.

Civility isn’t weakness, it’s strength. We can highlight the differences between candidates, records, and political party platforms, without calling for the utter demise of our opponents. But it only works if both sides play by the same rules.

If Democrats truly want to discourage violence, they need to start by cleaning up their own house. They need to condemn their own radicals as forcefully as they condemn everyone else’s.

Otherwise, all the talk about “thoughtful discourse” is just that, talk. Because thoughtful discourse doesn’t coexist with threats and intimidation.

## Political Violence is on the Rise. It's Up to Us to Cool the Rhetoric

*Violent rhetoric can not be allowed to become mainstream in American politics*

By Rita Hart - Chair, Iowa Democratic Party

Why can’t we all just get along? This country is subjected to enough political violence every year to make any sane nation reach a breaking point. We can’t stand idly by as killings and terror become normal in America. Each and every one of us should be doing something to bring Americans together as fellow Americans.

It is so easy to become caught up in the us versus them, Republican versus Democrat, left versus right, liberal versus conservative mindset. Advertisements that fill our television screens and mailboxes all claim that candidates and parties are “fighting” for you or “fighting” for certain priorities.

At some point, politics became less about who would be a good candidate to fairly represent the beliefs of their constituents and more about who is the lesser of two evils. The truth is that candidates for public office are rarely evil and nearly always just humans who have been called to public service in a very hostile and divided time in our nation.

No one has all the answers on how we can fix violent rhetoric, but it is obvious to me that each of us must start with our own reactions. We must hold ourselves and our elected officials accountable when it comes to using divisive and violent rhetoric.

That is especially true on social media, where it is so easy to for anyone and everyone to react immediately and often without enough forethought and judgment. It is easy to hide behind a fake or private social media account and say things you wouldn’t normally say if you were speaking to someone person.

Social media has become unbelievably powerful because it works. It impacts others. Words typed out of hate, desperation, or sadness can easily be picked up and shared thousands of times online. Even if an account is private, it’s easy to copy and paste posts until they are shared a million times or more. There’s a reason we say it’s “gone viral”. The question is – is that virus making things better or worse? Is it intended to inform and create positive change or is it designed to incite the hatred and violence that is threatening our very existence as a community, state, country, or nation?

When writing these social media posts, it’s important to remember that we are talking to real people, about other real people and about emotional issues that have real impacts on people’s lives.

I ask myself: “Would you print that thought in your local newspaper with your name next to it? If not, don’t put it online. Share it with your best friend instead.”

In fact, let’s all make an effort to do more by talking to friends, family, and neighbors about the issues that are important to us. One of the reasons divisive online rhetoric has become more acceptable is because we have stopped talking to people who disagree. Let’s all work on our ability to listen and to be curious about someone else’s opinion.

Seek first to understand before seeking to be understood. Never use language that promotes political violence, and tell others that type of language is not acceptable. We can hold elected officials accountable in so many ways that are so much more effective than violent talk or action.

Most elected officials have websites that include their contact information. Call their offices, send them an email, or a handwritten letter that details your concerns. Contact your county political parties, join a protest, or show up to local political events and make your voice heard. Visit iwillvote.com and make a plan to vote on Election Day.

Don’t let yourself fall into that ‘us versus them’ trap, and remember we aren’t at war with ‘the other side.’ We are all trying to make a safer and more prosperous nation for our children and our grandchildren.

The best patriotic and most American way we can build a better country is by negotiating, compromising when it makes sense, and standing up for our values and beliefs through the rights given to us by the Constitution.



A V E R Y M E R R Y

# GUTHRIE CENTER

November 28 and 29 - Shop Small, Shop Local

**Save 25% on all regular price merchandise**

***Be sure to sign up for our gift card to use throughout our store!***

*(no purchase necessary)*

**Bars, cookies and hot cider each day**

*We always accept chamber bucks!*

**Come see us!**



Guthrie Center, IA 641-747-8412



WOMEN FOR PANORA'S FUTURE

# HOLIDAY HOME TOUR

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7  
1 - 4:30 P.M.

## Tickets:

**\$10 in advance: Can be purchased through WFPF members, Panora Public Library, Holiday Boutique Craft Show in Panora Thanksgiving weekend or by calling 712-249-2142.**

**\$15 day of, available at the Panora Community Center**

**Raffle tickets available at Panora Community Center along with complimentary refreshments.**

*Proceeds provide scholarships for Panorama High School seniors and support a wide variety of additional local community causes.*



## City of Panora - Annual Financial Report

STATE OF IOWA 2025 FINANCIAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025 CITY OF PANORA, IOWA DUE: December 1, 2025		16203900700000 CITY OF PANORA PO Box 98 PANORA IA 50216-0098 POPULATION: 1091		
NOTE - The information supplied in this report will be shared by the Iowa State Auditor's Office, the U.S. Census Bureau, various public interest groups, and State and federal agencies.				
ALL FUNDS				
	Governmental (a)	Proprietary (b)	Total Actual (c)	Budget (d)
Revenues and Other Financing Sources				
Taxes Levied on Property	731814		731,814	699,280
Less: Uncollected Property Taxes-Levy Year	0		0	0
Net Current Property Taxes	731,814		731,814	699,280
Delinquent Property Taxes	0		0	0
TIF Revenues	318,469		318,469	315,000
Other City Taxes	144,406	0	144,406	143,629
Licenses and Permits	8,429	0	8,429	14,250
Use of Money and Property	153,501	588	154,089	54,200
Intergovernmental	324,530	123,558	448,088	728,314
Charges for Fees and Service	15,292	3,542,623	3,557,915	3,882,830
Special Assessments	8,798	0	8,798	0
Miscellaneous	71,491	0	71,491	43,700
Other Financing Sources, Including Transfers in	899,318	253,180	1,152,498	965,478
Total Revenues and Other Sources	2,676,048	3,919,949	6,595,997	6,846,681
Expenditures and Other Financing Uses				
Public Safety	360,573		360,573	373,449
Public Works	176,181		176,181	203,860
Health and Social Services	0		0	0
Culture and Recreation	172,326		172,326	202,762
Community and Economic Development	94,578		94,578	88,161
General Government	104,120		104,120	117,942
Debt Service	428,335		428,335	428,419
Capital Projects	803,953		803,953	1,046,921
Total Governmental Activities Expenditures	2,140,066	0	2,140,066	2,461,514
Business type activities		3,461,925	3,461,925	3,641,917
Total All Expenditures	2,140,066	3,461,925	5,601,991	6,103,431
Other Financing Uses, Including Transfers Out	355,775	370,149	725,924	965,478
Total All Expenditures/and Other Financing Uses	2,495,841	3,832,074	6,327,915	7,068,909
Excess Revenues and Other Sources Over (Under) Expenditures/and Other Financing Uses	180,207	87,875	268,082	-222,228
Beginning Fund Balance July 1, 2024	1,654,978	2,266,957	3,921,935	3,854,775
Ending Fund Balance June 30, 2025	1,835,185	2,354,832	4,190,017	3,632,547
NOTE - These balances do not include the following, which were not budgeted and are not available for city operations:				
Non-budgeted Internal Service Funds		Pension Trust Funds		
Private Purpose Trust Funds		Agency Funds		
Indebtedness at June 30, 2025	Amount	Indebtedness at June 30, 2025		Amount
General Obligation Debt	2,500,000	Other Long-Term Debt		0
Revenue Debt	1,589,000	Short-Term Debt		0
TIF Revenue Debt	0			
		General Obligation Debt Limit		4,629,393



# Bayard Fire Department

## Soup Supper

### Saturday, Dec. 13

4:30 - 7 p.m.

Bayard Community Center

### Santa Claus 5 - 6 p.m.

Free Will Donations Welcome

### Raffle for \$1,000 Sommerfeld Gift Card

Funds raised will be used to update fire fighting equipment