Republican Weeds

By Mandy Weaver, WDP Communications Director

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I'm really tired of Republicans asking me to clean up their messes.

It seems like lately I'm being inundated with op-eds from Republican activists, articles with quotes from Republican legislators, Facebook posts from well-meaning moderates, texts from Republican Governor candidates, and catchy yet somehow ominous numerical slogans- all telling me that the only way to save our state from Republican extremists is to… Help elect Republicans to office?

Hmmm.

Hey, I'm all for creating a coalition of shared values that reaches across party lines to make positive change in the state I love. In fact, that would be my dream come true! But that's not what I'm being asked to do, is it?

What I'm being asked to do is abandon my own values and weaken my own party -the one that actually fights for those values- in order to join with the Republicans on a project of… what, exactly? Rooting the extremism out of the Republican Party? Electing the Republican who will harm my state the least? Really?

What a sad little project.

I really want no part of it.

This isn't about hating Republicans. I have many, many Republican friends and family members. How could I not, as a

5th-generation native of the reddest state in America? I love them, and they love me.

The Republican Party in Wyoming, at its best, stood for personal freedom, local control, and a government that stayed out of people's lives. But that's not the party we've been living with. It's not new and it didn't just appear out of thin air.

The extremist WYGOP and Freedom Caucus planted these seeds over the course of years, nurtured by complicity and apathy within their own ranks. Frank Eathorne was elected not once, but twice, to lead the Wyoming Republican Party. He was at the January 6th insurrection and helped originate the brand of politics the Freedom Caucus now embodies. WYGOP's platform is one of the most extreme in the nation. It didn't write itself! It was created and voted on by members of every county party in the state. This patch of thorns didn't grow wild. It was deliberately cultivated.

If they're tired of getting scratched, it's time for the party that grew these weeds to roll up its sleeves and start digging- not ask their neighbors to abandon their own property and come fix the mess they made.

And even if we wanted to grab a shovel, there aren't enough Democrats to change the outcome in 95% of races. That's just a fact.

So instead of asking me and my fellow Democrats to clean up this mess, I'd love to see my Republican friends get to work in their own garden- run as precinct people to change the direction of their county parties, work at the state level to be a voice of reason, and show up in their own primaries to send candidates worth voting for to the general.

It's time for them to tend their own garden, pull their own

weeds, and rebuild a party they can be proud of.

And Democrats will be over here, tending the garden *we* want to grow.