



CooperstownOneonta Indivisible

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ONEONTA HANDS OFF RALLY ATTRACTS HUNDREDS EVEN IN THE POURING RAIN

April 5, Oneonta, Otsego County NY - CooperstownOneonta Indivisible, Butternut Valley Indivisible, Cherry Valley Indivisible, Indivisible for Schoharie County and Otsego Residents for Democracy held a “Hands Off” Rally at noon in Muller Plaza. Rally goers who faced driving rain and chilly temperatures joined hundreds of thousands across the country to tell the Trump administration, “Hands Off!” Hands off Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and hands off the hundreds of services and public protections that people rely on and that the Trump administration and Elon Musk are carelessly and cruelly cutting to finance tax cuts for the wealthy.

The “Hands Off” rallies were biggest day of demonstrations since Donald Trump’s inauguration. The rallies, called for by Indivisible, MoveOn, Third Act, and other national pro-democracy groups took place in more than 1200 locations in all 50 states.

“It was inspiring to join with so many voices demanding that our government put the people first, not the desires of billionaires,” affirmed Donna Latella, leader of Cherry Valley Indivisible. “Our Hands Off protest was a clear and powerful stand for what truly matters to Americans: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and all the important services that protect and support our communities.”

In addition to Otsego County, Oneonta rally attendees hailed from several central New York State counties including Chenango, Delaware, Herkimer, Schoharie, and Ulster. A group of visiting Canadians made their presence known and showed their support for Americans standing up to Trump. Other groups represented at the rally were the Oneonta Democratic Club, the Otsego County Democratic Committee, and United University Professions (UUP).

Oneonta mayor, Mark Drnek, who spoke at the rally, called the protest, “a good day for democracy.” He stated, “the patriotic spirit of the crowd, the songs of freedom, and the

impressive numbers who braved the icy rain were moving. It was a memorable moment in a what I'm confident is burgeoning movement. I was proud to be a part of it."

Other speakers at the rally included Cherry Valley Indivisible Leader, Donna Latella, Otsego County Democratic Committee Chair, Caitlin Ogden, Councilmen Don Matheson, Otsego County Democratic Committee member, Leslie Berliant, and Oneonta Democratic Club member, Valerie Cole.

"What a crowd!" enthused Cooperstown resident, Marcie Foster, "It's so vital that we stand up and fight for everything Trump and Musk are trying to rip away. My daughter is eight; I want her to grow up in a country that fights hard for improved education, not one that takes it apart. I want her to have a healthy environment, not a planet damaged by climate change. It was great to see so many people, even in the pouring rain, fighting for what's good for our kids' futures."

The Oneonta "Hands Off" rally was organized and peaceful. Attendees listened to speakers, sang songs and joined in chants that celebrated America's democracy. Rally goers' signs, songs, and chants defined patriotism as care for America and all her people and communities. Mayor Drnek led the crowd in the Pledge of Allegiance.

"Hundreds of us from all over NY were in Oneonta cold and wet, but we were joyful and determined to bring attention to the cruelty and incompetence of this administration," stated CooperstownOneonta Indivisible leader, Virginia Kennedy. "We were standing up for the public services that our hard work and taxes pay for while Donald Trump was golfing in Florida. We were standing up for veterans' services while Donald Trump couldn't be bothered to honor the four service men killed in Lithuania because he was eating fancy food with other billionaires at a \$1 million a plate fundraiser. We were rallying for our fellow citizens losing their retirement money because of his ridiculous tariffs, while Donald Trump was arranging golf tournaments with Saudi Arabia. America is not a corporation to profit the rich; America is our democracy, and we'll continue to fight hard for its survival for all the people, not just the extremely wealthy."

For more information on Saturday's rally or local Indivisible groups, please email Virginia Kennedy at CooperstownOneontaIndivisible@gmail.com.

Photos follow.

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Photos continue

