

Address to Colorado's District 3 Assembly Delegates  
Root Routledge, PhD, CD3 Candidate for U.S. Congress  
April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Virtual Assembly

## Introduction

Hi everyone! My name is Root Routledge, speaking to you from Durango, Colorado. I'm running for U.S. Congress from Colorado's 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District, which is 29 counties covering all of Western and Southwestern Colorado — what we call the “West Slope” from Wyoming to New Mexico. My website is [RootForCitizenCongressman.org](http://RootForCitizenCongressman.org), which has links to my written material.

**Delegates:** Although I would like for this address to be widely shared among the general population; this message is directed to elected *county delegates* from our 29 CD3 counties, some of whom will be elected as *district delegates* to our (now virtual) April 17<sup>th</sup> Congressional District Assembly, where you will vote on who should be our elected Representative to address the challenges of a very uncertain and perilous future. See also my [2-minute candidate video talk to CD3 Delegates, 3/20/2020](#).

**Primary Election:** This is a crucially important decision; and I challenge all of you to step up to the responsibility of due diligence. To do your homework investigating what each candidate offers and our respective backgrounds and experience relative to the needs of the future — regardless of whom you've “pledged” to support. I've been a district delegate twice before, in 2016 and 2018. No so-called “pledge” is binding on any of the 350 or so district assembly delegates. You are free to make an informed decision based on a new understanding of the strategic threats we face; and who can best address them.

**Not a Popularity Contest Based on Name Recognition:** We need to break the typical “popularity contest/name recognition/money raised” election themes. With respect to the money cynicism; it's not how much one has raised, but what you can do with what you've got. Two candidates have hundreds of thousands of dollars each; but even with a low budget, I am here. We need to focus on the challenges ahead and which candidate has the core competencies to realistically offer the best chance at turning the corner toward a viable future for us all, and address the strategic threats we face. That candidate will be the one who can easily beat the Republican incumbent, Scott Tipton. My goal is to convince you that that candidate is me — Root Routledge.

## Political Landscape

Let's begin by taking a sober look at the political landscape.

### *War for the Future*

**System Failure:** If you didn't know it before, you know now that we are in the midst of what I've been calling for years a “*war for the future*.” This is an unprecedented moment in world history. While this coronavirus pandemic has shocked capitalist system complacency focused on short-term daily markets, it has exposed massive system failures on multiple fronts, each mutually exacerbating as they interact. Everyone is scrambling with band aid solutions to deal

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with these system failures, while trying to look like they are on top of it. When the professional experts are allowed to lead, we are able to lurch somewhat in the right direction.

**A Different Political Landscape:** The political landscape from now throughout the next 10 years and beyond is unlike anything before. It will be played out in the industrial sectors of our economy; and hence it's about the very power structure of our economy. It is politically naïve to think that one of us three candidates will go to Washington with the friendly face of a freshman Representative, ready to "reach across the aisle" to Republicans to find solutions. Past political experience on a different political landscape is not a core competency.

**Republicans** don't have solutions; all they have to offer is [neoliberal corporate Wall Street dogma](#); for which they now want "[public socialism](#)" to [bail them out once again](#). I guess everyone is a "socialist" during a pandemic. Regardless of the problem, they lead with their ideology of "letting rich owners of capital decide the fate of our future by focusing on growing more money for themselves."

**Corruption:** And, let's not lose track of the fact that they have been [actively undermining and sabotaging the very functionality of our people's government and our democracy](#); in fact, weakening the very response competencies we rely on. Everything is interconnected and interacts, often in unforeseen ways. We are witnessing how it has crippled the ability of our very fragile systems to respond to snowballing crises on the timeframe and scale an effective response to the system collapse calls for.

**Leadership:** Experienced system thinkers like Bernie Sanders are leading the way in Congress to deal with the fallout. And, to deal not only with the crisis at hand, but with the massive failure of this administration from its initial denial and the inadequacy of its delayed response — especially early testing so we know what we're dealing with where, instead of flying blind and hoping for the best. Naomi Klein, author of *The Shock Doctrine* about *Disaster Capitalism*, cautions us all to guard against Republican "[Coronavirus Capitalism](#)" and view this as the case for transformative change offered by the comprehensive Green New Deal. That applies directly to even the capacity and resilience of our healthcare infrastructure.

**A Battle for Political Power:** This *war for the future* not only involves a battle of ideas; it is a struggle for transformational political power — and a progressive vision for the future. Is enough of our crippled democracy left, where the people can take the power we must have to put in place the direction, policies, programs and funding we need for a decent shot at a viable future for all of us? How do we create a more democratic society? The 2020 election will be telling.

### *Reframing our Values Worldview*

At its core, that future must be based on reframing of our [values worldview](#) from the autocratic *money-and-markets* domination and control of society by concentrated wealth and power of corporate oligarchs; to a democratic *life-and-living-Earth* value system, which places principal value on the wellbeing of our people, our communities, our relationships and our

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environment. This vision is future-focused on viability for the long term, which includes building up our ability to respond rapidly and effectively to catastrophe.

That includes, of course, the rapidly expanding life-threatening pandemic we are now dealing with; as well as the equally life-threatening climate crisis, which although the characteristic system response is on a longer timescale, the threat is strategic in that we are at risk due to the irreversible long time-lags of physical phenomena that threaten our very existence in the long run.

**Just Transition:** At the value-system's core must be love, compassion and care for one another, our communities, and for Mother Earth's life-nurturing and life-support systems. That is central to a **just transition to a viable future**. Our response requires a deep understanding of the geophysical climate system and our interrelated ecosystems, with an explicit awareness of how they interact with our democracy, our health system, and our economic system.

### Looking Ahead

#### *Strategic Vision*

We are ill-prepared for this *war for the future*. That is why I spent over a year writing a 164-page book, available in pdf form through my website; title: [Strategic Vision for a Viable American Future](#).

We need to understand the *structural dynamics* that has led us to one of the greatest global economic catastrophes of our lifetime. I am a strategic thinker; and as a scientifically educated systems engineer with a PhD in Industrial Engineering, an MBA, MS in Environmental and Ecological Statistics, I have been working on systems problems all my professional life.

So, I have structured my approach to these "*gateway issues*" into four interrelated areas in order to fundamentally transform our system: *Healthy Democracy; Healthy Population; Healthy Economy; and Healthy Environment*. These serve as measures of outcome, as well.

We are dealing with cascading crises. We already have two comprehensive strategic policies, with lots of implementation detail that would address the scale and urgency of the crises we currently face: **Medicare For All**, and the **Green New Deal**.

Healthcare must be viewed morally as a human right, with a national healthcare budget to cover costs; not our current "pay-as-you-go" out of pocket expense, which blocks access to medical treatment. We must have a comprehensive program to deal with our collapsing environment and its implications for society and future viability. These are plans ready to go and we need to fight for them. There is a massive growing movement in favor of both of them.

But, in terms of both problem understanding and solutions, they interact with the other two areas. We are seeing [how fragile our democratic institutions are](#) and there is policy legislation to deal with it, called [HR1: For the People Act](#).

Our 2-tiered **economy is collapsing**. It is both fragile and immoral, dooming the most vulnerable working people and poor to suffer the worst, which makes this a most profound [moral decision](#)

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[arena](#) for our society. A full 80% of our population is living paycheck-to-paycheck and struggles even with an unexpected \$400 expense. A new moral framing must undergird our response. We need *real policies* focused on *real needs* of the *real people* affected. We need a safety net system that minimizes the suffering of the most vulnerable. This is not about yet again bailing out corporate capitalism, while leaving ordinary people behind.

*A healthy population* is dependent on a *well-functioning infrastructure*. This can all be overwhelming when we come to realize the scope and urgency of the tasks at hand. How must we think, and what must we do, to be prepared for a future with an ongoing stream of “shock events”, which result in a series of unprecedented crises? On what timescale?

### *Transformational System Design for a Viable Future*

This coronavirus crisis is testing the responsiveness, capacity, fragility, robustness and resiliency of all our societal systems. Not just our healthcare system; but our supply chains and our economic system overall. Myopic piecemeal solutions will not address the core problems of system design that are exacerbated by shocks to the system.

It will take comprehensive systemic policies, like *Medicare For All* and the *Green New Deal*, to deal with the strategic threats bearing down on us over the next decade. We must turn the corner now. That takes courage to think big — transformational, as Bernie says.

Root Routledge is the only one of the three candidates with the demonstrated systems background, vision and experience to deal with these strategic threats. It's not that [Diane Mitsch Bush](#) or [James Iacino](#) don't suggest ideas that are good. What either one offers are simply narrow, piecemeal and tactical; and typically are already part of bigger picture systemic policy solutions. They are not strategic and neither Diane nor James has demonstrated that they even know what effective policy solutions are already out there ready to fight for. There is no time to be learning from scratch, or for conventional politicians wanting to climb the political ladder, to think that reaching across the goddamn aisle to Republicans is what the goal is. We are in a *war for the future*; we are out of time. The battlefield conditions and circumstances are harsh and pressing.

Diane and James have not done their homework. I have. This is what you will discover if you dig into the strategic threats we face and critically examine our respective capabilities to address them. You delegates need to look at this crucial election as more of a *needs assessment* and the *core competencies* we need to address it — with the *best chances of success*.

For example, compare our websites and you will see that I am already taking on the Republican incumbent Scott Tipton and his failed policies (“[Climate Justice in Coal, Oil & Gas Country](#)”) with guest newspaper columns in fossil fuel dominant counties that address not only the severe local impacts of transitional policies away from coal, oil and gas as future energy sources; but how to address the economic impacts on workers and their communities with comprehensive systemic policies.

I am asking for you to vote for me, Root Routledge, for the best chance of a viable future for America. My point is to educate. You can tell that from my “[Leading On Climate](#)” materials.