

## Knock Down the Incumbency

May 20, 2019

Over the weekend, I suffered through *Knock Down the House* . . . so you don't have to.

While the documentary heralding four inexperienced Democratic women running for Congress in 2018 cost Netflix \$10 million, I did not have to spend a dime — beyond my regular monthly subscription.

The award-winning film, directed by Rachel Lears, who wrote it along with her husband, Robin Blotnick, is expertly crafted. Unfortunately, it is geared to democratic socialists predisposed to adoring the subjects.

The star is *now* Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), who defeated *then* Rep. Joe Crowley, a

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ten-term, 20-year incumbent . . . the Number 4 Democrat in the House of Representatives.

In addition to Ocasio-Cortez, the movie follows Amy Vilela, seeking to replace a retiring Nevada Democrat; Cori Bush, challenging the Clay Family's



hereditary congressional dynasty in Missouri's 1st district\*; and Paula Jean Swearengin, battling incumbent Sen. Joe Machin in West Virginia's Democratic Party Primary. Of the four challengers chronicled, all of whom received extensive support from two progressive groups, Justice Democrats and Brand New Congress, AOC was the only winner.

"Let's assume all the energy in this room can get you on the ballot and into office," offers a fellow at one of Ocasio-Cortez's early meetings. "How, then, do we overcome the drop in power?"

"I think we really need to have to look at what that power does now," AOC responds. "When it matters, [Rep. Crowley] doesn't stand up for us; when it matters, he doesn't advocate for our interests."

Whatever one thinks of AOC's politics, her point here is not without merit: the idea that we citizens benefit from longtime incumbents who 'bring home the bacon' is . . . baloney.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.

\* At the completion of this term, Rep. Lacy Clay, Ms. Bush's opponent, will have served 20 years. His father, Bill Clay, held the seat for 32 years before that. Together, over half a century. The film alludes to the fact that Clay Jr. gained the seat in 2000 only after the surprise retirement of Clay Sr. on the very last day to file for the office . . . with Jr. filing, instead.