

The Virgin Islands Consortium

In Letter To Editor, St. Thomas Elections Board Member Announces Resignation

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Editor's Note: *In this letter, Diane Magras, who served on the St. Thomas-St. John Board of Elections, announces her resignation from the board, which she said was based on personal and business obligations, as well as the devastation wrought by Hurricanes Irma and Maria. But she also lambasted the board for what she wrote was the improper vetting of candidates over the years, which she opined led to "fraudulent elections." The opinions of this letter are solely those of the author, Ms. Magras, and not that of The Virgin Islands Consortium, its newsroom, Editorial Board or other staff.*

Dear Editor,

I have submitted my resignation from my official position on the now defunct St. Thomas-St. John District Board of Elections, effective immediately.

My reluctant decision is based on a combination of overwhelming personal reasons, business obligations and the ongoing recovery from devastation brought by Hurricane Irma that have made it impossible to continue to serve the public as a member of the STT-STJ Board of Elections.

In contemplating my resignation, I would like to share with the public thoughts that began to slowly creep into mind as to the documented history of real events relative to my firsthand experiences underscoring activities not only of individual Board members, but what should otherwise have been the uncompromising will, by the Boards of Elections as a body, to at all times act solely in the best interests of voters, to never violate established laws that govern their conduct and administration of their duties, and never violate the public trust.

And after all is said and done, improperly vetted candidates and fraudulent election outcomes have always been at the heart of what has become years of compounding, unresolved allegations, evidence, controversy, challenges, fizzled hearings, audits, investigations and lawsuits specific to a small handful of perpetually re-elected Board of Election members, haven't they?

Yet, with all the resources on their side, the effort has evolved into a spectacular, continuing battle to challenge Board members' abdication and evasion, at each step of the way, for the singular purpose of unmasking the truth and holding them ultimately accountable for their unlawful decisions and actions by invoking long overdue justice.

With recent, negative news stories relative to the latest antics by Board of Election members fresh in mind, it is appropriate to offer the following time capsule as a parting gift to the People of the US Virgin Islands.

It represents the culmination of undaunted effort not only by myself, but further highlights the excessive sacrifice of time, hardship, self-education and money by many honorable citizens and candidates who acted in good faith, but forced collectively to accomplish the immense work of incompetent, indifferent or compromised local and federal officials, investigators, prosecutors and law enforcement, to include the local and district courts, in order to compile irrefutable evidence and substantiate allegations, beyond a reasonable doubt, relative to unlawful, across-the-board election processes and election tampering, as policy and practice, with special emphasis on 2012 to present.

Here are "conservative" numbers relative to evidence indicating a prevailing pattern of conduct that would meet the minimum standard for probable cause and rise to the level of preponderance, always made accessible or submitted on a reasonable, regular and real-time basis to authorities with jurisdiction:

Documents (1,035), archived photos (665), archived audio recordings (450), archived video recordings (80), archived newspaper articles (500), archived television news reports (75), Requests for Public Information (30).

If you were to ask what each of the 2,835 pieces of evidence represent, I ask that everyone who has witnessed the unresolved election controversies for donkey's years

indulge their memories for a moment and dredge our common recollections back into view.

I'll wager there are remaining questions as to why voters were funneled into the same voting machines for twenty-six years when the contractual stipulation was the equipment be restricted to a maximum of ten years of use. Or maybe you recall the numerous election outcomes that were certified out of public view in the absence of quorums and even the election night blockades intended to prevent the press and the public from witnessing incoming vote tallies and threatened with arrest.

Vivid memories should come to mind relative to the territory-wide petition drives conducted by fed-up voters intended to recall the majority of Board of Election members for wholesale misconduct, only to have their achievement stolen at the last minute by a bizarre District court decision. Yet, subsequent Election System Audit (EAC) findings indeed revealed the VI Election System and its Boards could not account for millions of dollars in federal Help America Vote Act monies, but strangely no referral forwarded to the USDOJ for further criminal investigation and possible prosecution.

Perhaps the outright lies concealing non-compliance to the Military Overseas Voter Empowerment Act (MOVE) resulting in forcible placement under one of many Federal Consent Decrees ring a bell. Certainly, the 2012 election debacle must stir memories of broken security seals on ballot boxes and 3,000 ballots that are unaccounted for to this day. Claude Walker – we await any investigation status, as well as replies to Requests for Public Information and answer relative to the Quo Warranto inquiry submitted to your office nearly two years ago.

Who can forget the reluctance by former AG Vincent Frazer to settle the issue whether multiple convictions for failure to file tax documents rises to the level of moral turpitude opened the door for a favored candidate to run for office and win, but later was involved in pardoning the same individual after the court put an end to the mind game. Maybe the stalled, May 2014 release of Vincent Frazer's phony investigation results relative to the 2012 election outcomes just six months before the 2014 election strike a chord – no violations of American Bar Association Rule 8.4 there, right?

Surely voters remember the 2014 election when, in spite of having a new electronic, voting system costing taxpayer's hundreds of thousands of dollars, everyone was forced to place their ballot in a box, not only depriving them of their federal entitlement to correct their ballot up to three times, but involuntarily relinquishing determination of their voter intent to subjective third parties via physical counting of ballots.

That doozey was made possible by a Joint Boards of Election decision to make an illegal policy change just six days before the General Election, while conveniently ignoring the mandate requiring forwarding of that decision to both the Legislature and Governor's Office as the necessary step prior to giving it legal force and thus be imposed on voters.

Can anyone answer the critical question as to what legal election outcome was remotely possible after that? Not a peep from Ken "Election Reform" Mapp nor federal candidate Stacey Plaskett.

Think about it. Missing cartridges, missing votes, and eye-witness reports of illegal hand-offs of jump drives. Think of all the recorded radio talk show chatter revealing identical electronic vote counts in multiple polling places and on-air admissions boasting vote-rigging.

Requests for Public Information would have extracted answers to these issues and more to include why no action has been taken relative to recorded mistreatment in the form of verbal abuse, physical assault and death threats to certain female Board of Election members have not been addressed. Inquiries into the status of various public officials' membership in secret societies, where allegiance and competing blood oaths were uttered contrary to their oath of office have also gone unanswered.

True, history would have been changed and the entire government landscape changed in favor of the people of the US Virgin Islands had due process and equal protection abuses not been dished out to those who wanted straight answers to straight questions, but instead, upheld their oath in the performance of their official duties and settled the rotting election problem once and for all.

Here are names of agencies and relevant oath-sworn authorities overwhelming evidence was made available to, and subsequently ignored by each in turn. These include first and foremost, the small handful of recurring election members who continue to control Boards in both districts, Virgin Islands Police Department and Internal Affairs, selective media, VI Civil Rights Commission, incoming Senators to each Legislature to include its Legal Counsel, the Office the VI Attorney General to include Vincent Frazer, Claude Walker and sundry Assistant Attorney Generals and investigator(s), VI Inspector General, the Governor's and Lt. Governor's office, US Attorney Ronald Sharpe and US Assistant Attorney Alfonso "What do you want me to do about it?" Andrews, the VI Superior Court, VI Supreme Court, and District Court, the VI Bar Association, Office of Disciplinary Counsel of the VI Supreme Court, several Federal Bureau of Investigation Directors and agents, Federal Election Commission, Election Assistance Commission, Department of Interior, US Department of Justice Office of Public Integrity, select members of Congress. Meaning, anyone who should have listened, including our dogs.

The bottom line is, without seriously reviewing anything, either every authority at every level would have us believe the time, money, suffering and energy expended to compile 2,835 pieces of evidence substantiating the probability of election fraud was always wrong all of the time, or it is most likely those potent sources of evidence are in fact chronologically pieced together into a timeline which highlights the unified effort by key individuals to run statutory timelines out to obstruct in the name of justice, and cause potential charges, prosecution and convictions from ever seeing the light of day.

As a reminder, our own VI Supreme Court held expiration of a statutory timelines does not make an otherwise illegal candidate legal, nor does it make otherwise illegal election outcomes, legal. Remember these words during the upcoming 2018 election season.

Again, I thank everyone for their support and prayers and ask you do the same for my successor on the Board, Harriet Mercer, as the next highest, lawful vote-getter.

Diane Magras – St. Thomas.

Feature Image: Diane J. Magras-Urena (Credit: Facebook)

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