



October 16, 2026

Kevin McCabe, Chairman
Middlesex County Democratic Organization
266 Fernwood Avenue
Edison, NJ 08837

HAND DELIVERY AND E-MAIL

Dear Chairman McCabe,

We are active Democratic Party members, current and former elected officials (including County Committee representatives) and voters. We are writing to make you aware of concerning behavior by the Democratic Party and its leaders in Piscataway. We hope that you will take immediate action to rectify the ongoing exclusion of two female Democratic Council members and ensure that our Party treats all its members, but especially those from underrepresented backgrounds and vulnerable communities, with dignity, respect and equal opportunity.

As you know, our community elected two new, At-Large Democratic Council members in 2024. However, Council Member Sarah Rashid and Council Member Laura Leibowitz are continually and repeatedly excluded from activities by the Mayor and the other Council Members from events and activities they organize and in which they participate. As Democrats, we expect that when someone is elected to serve on the Township Council, they will be included in all Council activities in order to do their job and represent their neighbors. We expect that they will be afforded the same opportunity to be able to work with the Mayor and the rest of the Council for the improvement of the community.

Instead, Democratic Mayor Brian Wahler and his Administration are actively excluding the first Muslim municipal official ever elected in Piscataway and the first female Jewish Council Member elected in decades. They are often not given notice when the rest of the Council will be at a public event, including the most recent yard sale and the Pride flag raising. On the Township's Facebook page, there are no photos of either of these two Council members, including major events like the Memorial Day Parade and the September 11 Memorial, although they were present.

The same is true for the Township's quarterly newsletter, which is mailed at taxpayer-expense. Other Council members regularly host "branded" events that feature their name and image, also paid for by taxpayers. At-Large Council Members Leibowitz and Sarah Rashid have no such opportunities. They have been denied equal Township and Party support for events, including the Autism Awareness Fair that Council Member Leibowitz organized earlier this year.

Council Members Leibowitz and Rashid were elected almost two years ago. To date, they are not included on the Piscataway Democratic Organization (PDO)'s listing of local elected officials. Their pages on the Township website do not include their biographies, although all other Council members have extensive personal histories and photos. At the Piscataway Y Community Center, there are framed photos of other council members, but none of Council Members Leibowitz and Rashid. Instead of their photos, there are simply two empty picture frames.

In addition, the Mayor has authorized the use of taxpayer money to produce several videos that disparage and misrepresent the two Council members' votes. These videos do not present why the vote was cast and do not include all the facts. They are AI-generated content in the style of our current President. They are simply hit pieces against these two elected officials; no other videos have been produced except ones castigating Council Members Rashid and Leibowitz when their votes differ from the Mayor's agenda.

Indeed, the Mayor and PDO Chair Gabrielle Cahill are behaving much like Trump. They are using public dollars and Party resources to advance their own agenda against others who hold a different viewpoint. These kinds of divisive and potentially discriminatory activities are especially harmful now, as the Democratic Party works to bring voters out during this historic election time. In addition, silencing elected officials denies voters their right to be fully represented by the elected officials they chose. The ongoing erasure of two female elected officials from historically marginalized communities reflects poorly on our Party and its leadership.

Despite publicly claiming to want unity with progressives and other stakeholders in the Party, the PDO has refused to provide any support for Democrat Shantell Cherry, a longtime community leader. A Black woman, Ms. Cherry has served continuously on our Board of Education since 2014, including as Board President and Vice President. Ms. Cherry won the June 2026 Primary to represent Ward 1 and is the only Ward candidate in Piscataway to have a Republican opponent on the November ballot. The PDO has not issued an endorsement for Ms. Cherry and has refused to include her in PDO meetings. In fact, the organization has not mentioned her at all. Would they, like Trump, prefer a Republican to win the seat?

We do not understand how the Party and its leaders can knowingly allow this behavior to continue. Residents and voters deserve to know whether the Middlesex County Democratic Organization, which supports and promotes the PDO's candidates and representatives, believes the residents of Piscataway benefit from the exclusion of these two duly elected council members. If not, what is the Party doing to help our Democratic voters be fully represented by their elected officials? The Middlesex County Federation of Democratic Women endorsed Ms.

Cherry. Why isn't the PDO doing the same and supporting her for Ward 1? Is any of this in the best interest of the Democratic Party and our governance?

Now more than ever, the Democratic Party needs to lead with integrity. We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible about what the Middlesex County Democratic Organization and you will do to ensure that the elected officials our voters chose are receiving equal treatment in their official capacity in order to do their jobs and further providing enthusiastic support for the Democratic candidates in contested races.

We would appreciate meeting with you at your earliest convenience to discuss these concerns. Gina Register can coordinate a conversation and can be reached by email at registergina@gmail.com or by cell at 732-768-0438.

Sincerely,

Gina Register, MCDO Member, Piscataway W3, D8

Neil Cammarano, MCDO Member, Piscataway W2, D11

William Pastras, MCDO Member, Piscataway W3, D8

Staci Berger, MCDO Member, Piscataway W3, D9; Piscataway Progressive Democratic Organization, Chair

Laura Leibowitz, Piscataway Township Council Member At Large, MCDO Member, Piscataway 2-11

Sarah Rashid, Piscataway Township Council Member At Large

Shantell Cherry, Democratic Nominee, Piscataway Township Council, Ward 1

Mindy Goldstein, Piscataway Progressive Democratic Organization, Treasurer

Viola Stone, Piscataway Progressive Democratic Organization, Recording Secretary

Loretta Rivers, Piscataway Progressive Democratic Organization, Financial Secretary

Abdul-Basit Haqq, Former MCDO Member, Piscataway

Laura Tarbous, Piscataway, Former MCDO Member, Piscataway, W1, D5

Herb Tarbous, Piscataway, Former MCDO Member, Piscataway, W1, D5

William Irwin, Piscataway, Former Board of Education President

Laura Zurfluh, Chair, Cranbury Democratic Committee

Abby Stern Cardinale, Chair, Highland Park Democratic Committee; MCDO District 3 Representative

Jessica Irons, Cranbury Democratic Committee

Dan Harshbarger, Cranbury Democratic Committee

Sadaf Jaffer, Former Assemblywoman, LD16, Montgomery

Joyce Ship-Freeman, Former Council Woman, Edison

Lucinda Holt, Highland Park Democratic Committee

Robert Holzapfel, Highland Park Democratic Committee

Debra Rainwater, Highland Park Democratic Committee

Nina Jochnowitz, MCDO Member, Old Bridge

Carrie Snyder, MCDO Member, South Brunswick District 12

Joseph Bouvier, Chair, Merchantville Democratic Committee

Kate Delany, President, South Jersey Progressive Democrats

Nicholas Bhim, Piscataway, Holmes Marshall Fire Company, Firefighter

Gail McCafferty, Piscataway

James Balog, Piscataway

Srinivas Neelakantan, Piscataway

Gayle Nelson, Piscataway

Hannah Aberin, Piscataway

Allison Brachmann, Piscataway

Quiyana Butler, Piscataway

Katherine DeMenna, Piscataway

Brian Eggert, Piscataway

Habeebah Haqq, Piscataway

Samuel Irwin, Piscataway

Jeffrey Lane, Piscataway

Prashant Patel, Piscataway

Susan Pickoff Piscataway

Sarah Radford, Piscataway

Brian Rak, Piscataway

Valerie Robinson, Piscataway
Joanne Rutherford-Pastras, Piscataway
Mediha Sandhu, Piscataway
Dr. Karen Schindler, Piscataway
Inieka Stafford, Piscataway
Zoë Walsh, Piscataway
Carol Potenza, Piscataway
Linda Cammarano, Piscataway
Dr. Khaled Zayed, Piscataway
Emily Bhim, Piscataway
Nancy Salgado-Cowan, Piscataway
Donald White, Piscataway
Zoey Rivers Brogsdale, Piscataway
Isaiah Rivers Warrick, Piscataway
Cielo Salgado-Cowan, Piscataway
Craig Aumack, Piscataway
Elizabeth Aumack, Piscataway
Maggie Ball, Piscataway
Christine Belinfante, Piscataway
Tatianna Cherry, Piscataway
Megan Crandle, Piscataway
Kesha Johnson, Piscataway
Jessica Kratovil, Piscataway
Teresa Matthews, Piscataway
Rebecca McLelland-Crawley, Piscataway
Wendy Miller, Piscataway
Dr. Atif Nazir, Piscataway

Ellie Pastras, Piscataway
James Register, Piscataway
Lola Samuel, Piscataway
Rachel Sy, Piscataway
Tara Texiera-Frederique, Piscataway
Jennifer Wallace, Piscataway
Jacqueline Weber Fritz, Piscataway
Fred White, Piscataway
Jessica Walker, Piscataway
Nicole Morio, Piscataway
Dupree Cherry, Piscataway
Hannah Beal, East Brunswick
Bonnie Wilson, East Brunswick
Deborah Finnegan, East Brunswick
Jennifer Urquhart, East Brunswick
Waheed Bajwa, East Brunswick
John Hsu, Edison
Jennie Vila, Edison
Steven Nagel, Edison
Carol Tanzi, Edison
Thea Dahlberg, Highland Park
Jessica Hunsdon, Highland Park
Laurel Kornfeld, Highland Park
Doreen Wilson-Bailey, Highland Park
Rebecca Scheer, Maplewood
Derek Demeri, New Brunswick
Susan Miller, New Brunswick

Rami Jochnowitz, Old Bridge

Ruth Queen, Old Bridge

Krista Fischer, Old Bridge

Heather Taylor, Plainsboro

Rano Banerjee, Plainsboro

Kevin Eldridge, Scotch Plains

Celene Clayton, Whippany

Patricia Casey, Debra Haury, Vir Patel, Zorimar Rivera Nunez, Megan Rose

Election Materials that exclude Shantell Cherry.

RE-ELECT TOWN COUNCIL

MAYOR
WAHLER'S TEAM
Delivering Real Results

WARD 2 DENNIS
ESPINOSA

WARD 3 SHARON
CARMICHAEL

WARD 4 MICHELE
LOMBARDI

www.PiscatawayDemocrats.org

Piscataway Democrats/Connect With Groups 170 3rd Ave. Piscataway, NJ 08854

