

People Above Politics



My motto has been “People Above Politics” – but today we have an example of the exact opposite – Politics over People.

I represent the regular Pennsylvanian. As a 15-year county commissioner I am the one with my boots on the ground, dealing every day with the issues that concern regular people.

It is now, a few months before the primary election, that regular Pennsylvanians – those who are busy working for a living, raising their families, volunteering in their communities - begin to sort through their choices and think about who among these candidates would they want for their next governor.

Unfortunately, the political machines and the power brokers want to define that choice for us ahead of time. They will try to take that choice away from us if they can.

It is for this reason that I find it so sad that the PA Association of Justice, an organization that has done so much for justice in this state, has done such a disservice to the public in their decision to exclude candidates from their gubernatorial forum— namely Max Myers and me.

The Association claims to want to introduce the range of potential candidates, but instead they are presenting a pre-selected few and pretending that this narrow slate is all the choice we have.

They claim that my name has not been included in enough of the polling. Of course not! I am running a grass roots campaign from the heartland of Pennsylvania. Unlike our current governor, and some of my fellow candidates who have taken millions from special interests so that their faces can appear on TV and their names appear in these early and irrelevant public opinion polls – I am out there talking to regular people and getting their support.

Does this lack of big money backing mean that I shouldn't be put forth

as a candidate for governor? Of course not! On the contrary, I hear from people all around the state that they want a governor who appreciates and understand *their* challenges and *their* lives. I would be that governor.

I thought that I could rely on an organization like the PA Association of Justice to help ensure that Pennsylvanians got to choose between the best possible candidates. I think we need to insist that in the future, the Association and the other organizations that organize gatherings and debates do not make this same mistake of trying to pretend that we can only choose among the candidates they select.

Let me tell you about some of my experience with social justice. When William Penn set up counties in Pennsylvania, he assigned the counties specific duties, which included taking care of the indigent. As a 15-year county commissioner, I deal with social justice issues on a regular basis, from our Community Action Partnership where people can earn a GED, to our Housing and Redevelopment Authority constructing and rehabbing affordable homes, to the operation of our County nursing home to care for our parents and grandparents, and Renova Center for Intellectually challenged people. Further, we operate a Children and Youth Department, which oversees adoptions and foster children, and our Area Agency on Aging provides meals on wheels and other services to our seniors. The list goes on.

Commissioner Litz brings local government, small business, and conservation experience to the table.

- Litz is in her 15th year as a Lebanon County Commissioner where she currently serves as chair of the Board. In 2012, she was also elected by her peers from across the state as the president of the commissioners association, and in 2013 served as the Board Chair of the association.
- After her boss had a heart attack, she saved Lebanon (auto) Body Shop and the good paying jobs there.
- Litz is also the president of Swatara Watershed Association, working for clean water.

For more information, visit www.JoEllenLitz.com.