

The Honorable Richard M. Cebra
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Members of the Maine Republican Party State Committee,

Please find the attached memoranda concerning Mr. Bryan Daugherty's March 9, 2013 letter requesting appeal of the January 17, 2013 Penobscot County Republican Committee election of officers.

I write to you today with deep concern for the controversy that has surrounded the Penobscot County election. Since January 17, 2013, our party has become one that is consumed with intrigue, mistrust, and an undercurrent of malice toward others within our Party who do not share our every opinion and belief.

This is no way for a party, especially one that values honesty, transparency, a belief in the ability of the people to manage their own affairs and a strong faith in self-governance, to operate.

Because of this controversy, I will take this opportunity to address a number of things before continuing on to describe the actions the party is prepared to take.

1. The Maine Republican Party has worked diligently to operate within the Rules and By-Laws of the Party.

While doing so, and doing so with complete and absolute respect for those embroiled in this controversy, the Maine Republican Party has been publicly accused of fraud, derogatory comments have been made about the Party and Party Leadership, the motives of Party Leadership have been questioned and threats of continued strife within the party have been made. During all this, out of respect for those involved in this controversy, the party remained silent, avoiding the inappropriate rhetorical combat and divisive attacks so many have participated in.

The Party did this, not due to a lack of ability to defend itself or its actions, but out of respect for the reputation of the party, and as an act of good faith to those involved in this controversy and the many hundreds of people who have spent years investing their time, energy, and money into this party.

2. The Maine Republican Party is not afraid of the truth. However, we must arrive at it in accordance with the rules and by-laws that govern our party.

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It is discouraging to receive appeals that the party cannot act upon because they are filed by prospective appellants who lack standing; arrive past the time frame for appeals to be properly acted upon; misunderstand our rules and by-laws, or make interpretations of our rules and by-laws based on narrow readings of only one rule or one section while ignoring the Rules and By-laws that specifically provide guidance on the particular controversy in question.

Further, and perhaps the most discouraging aspect of this practice, is that prospective appellants who file such appeals, which the Party cannot properly act upon, stand by as the Maine Republican Party is publicly eviscerated without seeming to even once go back and reconsider that their interpretation of the Rules and By-laws could be incorrect.

Instead, the Party and Party Leadership are tried and convicted in the court of public opinion while we do the right and proper thing and remain silent.

Our party can do better than this. We must do better than this.

3. The Maine Republican Party must not allow political intrigue, rather than integrity, honesty and transparency, to set the tone and determine the future of our party.

The Penobscot County election controversy has strained relationships and called into question, without any proof, the integrity of individuals who have made valuable contributions to our party and state.

For all the rhetoric about inclusiveness, fairness and integrity, this controversy has put the Maine Republican Party on the edge of appearing as a party where tribal factions wage wars of attrition against one another – and where the victor is the one that drives off all others, leaving them the spoils of a Party structure that is just a fraction of the strength that it could be.

Are we all not better than to treat this party, the party that carries the weight of our children's futures, with a 'destroy the village in order to save it' approach?

In future battles, in the 2014 election and beyond, would our children and grandchildren be better served by a party full of diverse, but cooperative and well-intentioned individuals working together to combat the creeping statism that surrounds us, or will they be better served if our party is a small, fractured group fighting over possession of the carcass of a party that once stood for limited, Constitutional government, individual liberty, free enterprise and personal responsibility?

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I for one refuse to allow this party to descend into that chaos. Our great state, our children and our grandchildren deserve better.

Tribes lose battles but armies win wars. This is why it is so critical for our party, especially in times of controversy or disagreement, to maintain a level of civility and respect for one another.

As State Party Chairman, I understand that the majority of our members come to our party with the best of intentions. It is not my job to take punitive measures against these members. It is not my job to publicly criticize them. If anything, it is my job, in partnership with our team, to show them a better way. To show them the good in others, and to guide them to resolutions that avoid the controversy and strife that so often captures us.

But, there are also those who would intentionally use any such controversy to divide this party for their own sundry motives. To those with ill-intent and those who stir controversy for the sake of controversy, make no mistake – we will meet your aggression head on. The Maine Republican Party is not a place for soap opera-style intrigue, for malicious attacks on the character of good people or for wars of attrition against honest volunteers who serve in thankless positions for endless hours trying to make our party a better servant of the people, and our state a better place to live and raise a family.

4. **As Chairman of the Maine Republican Party, I believe in inclusiveness, and I will stand by my belief in inclusiveness through any and all challenges.**

Do not forget, I have taken strong, principled stands to ensure the voices of various segments of our party will be heard. I will do the same for as long as I am in a position to do so.

But, regarding the Penobscot County election controversy, I have felt a troubling shift in the winds. Our battles up until now have centered around ensuring that *as many Republicans as possible were allowed to participate*, but the spirit of the controversy in Penobscot County seems to be just the opposite. The controversy in Penobscot County is entirely centered upon the *ability of some to prevent others from participating*.

While I would like to believe that all Republicans would take action to ensure all who could, were allowed to participate, one side has now seemingly taken up the banner of exclusion, disenfranchisement and pay-to-vote principles – and the supporters of this argument fire accusatory arrows of fraud and corruption at those who disagree. Certainly, we should expect our fellow Republicans to be civil as this matter is sorted out, and not sink to the lowest of

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accusations almost immediately.

While I cannot speak to the very technical question of who is in the right, or wrong, on the particulars of this issue without further investigation, I will say that, in spirit, I am troubled to believe that members of our party could stand by and allow exclusion, disenfranchisement, and pay-to-vote rhetorically to take a moral high ground to the point where those who acted in good faith to do differently can be accused of such heinous acts as fraud and corruption.

I do not believe this spirit and path is the proper one for our party. I will not stand for the spirit of our party being such that some Republicans are forced to stand by in fear of defamatory accusations of fraud and corruption while those who have seized the false moral high ground of exclusion and disenfranchisement drive away and alienate our members for purposes I cannot even begin to comprehend.

I thank you for taking the time to read and consider my thoughts on this matter, and now it is time to move on to describe to you what actions the Maine Republican Party will be taking.

First, I will describe to you what the Party sees as necessary to bring this controversy to a resolution adequate to reasonable people.

- A thorough and complete investigation into the January 17, 2013 Penobscot County Republican Committee election of officers, which may include, but is not limited to: any and all points raised by the several parties that have communicated either directly to the party or publicly across various media on the matter; questions surrounding the controversy that may be raised by the Maine Republican Party Chair; questions surrounding the controversy that may be raised by the recently departed Penobscot County Republican Chair; questions surrounding the controversy that may be raised by the current Penobscot County Republican Chair; questions surrounding the controversy that may be raised by the unsuccessful candidate for Penobscot County Chair on the election of January 17, 2013.
- An opportunity for all interested parties to make their case to the investigatory panel. These interested parties may include members of the Penobscot County Republican Committee, recently departed Penobscot County Republican Committee Leadership and members of the Maine Republican Party State Committee and Maine Republican Party Executive Committee. At a time in the near future, the Chairman will issue instructions to all interested parties as to the proper manner in which they can submit their testimony.

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- A thorough and complete report of the findings of the investigation to be presented to the state committee in executive session no later than 60 days after the investigation is concluded.
- A thorough and complete review of the Penobscot County Rules and By-laws to be followed by recommendations and reforms to protect from the possibility of future controversies of a similar nature and to provide guidance to the current Chairperson as to the proper administration of Penobscot County Republican Committee business. The Chair will instruct the Maine Republican Party Rules and By-laws committee to assist the Penobscot County Republican Committee in whatever manner necessary to assist the County Committee in achieving this goal.

The Chairman will instruct a panel, appointed to serve at his pleasure, to conduct this investigation.

The panel may include members of the Maine Republican Party Executive Committee and Maine Republican Party State Committee who have not demonstrated a strong inclination to support either side of this controversy; who do not hail from the affected county; and who have not participated in any manner, either real or perceived, as agents of either of the prospective appellants to this controversy.

This panel will conduct a thorough, complete investigation into this controversy and will issue a non-binding report of its findings. These findings will be final, and the Maine Republican Party will take no further action regarding additional investigation, administrative actions or any other action other than those prescribed by the aforementioned directive to review and suggest reforms to the Penobscot County Republican Committee Rules and By-laws.

Additionally, with this notice, the Maine Republican Party will not entertain or answer any further appeals regarding the January 17, 2013 Penobscot County Republican Committee election of officers.