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Sent: Thursday, May 25, 2023 12:06 PM

To: David Wildstein <david@njglobe.com>

Subject: DeCroce Campaign: We will Not Be Part of Desperate Campaign Ploy By Brian Bergen & His Supporters

DeCroce Campaign: We will Not Be Part of Desperate Campaign Ploy By Brian Bergen & His Supporters

Thom Ammirato

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May 25, 2023 - After consideration of the last-minute invitation to a debate that was proposed to the DeCroce For Assembly campaign we have come to the conclusion that **no candidate would agree to a debate as presented.**

The offer is unfair to the LD-26.

The debate parameters were made without our campaign's knowledge and with zero input from the DeCroce For Assembly team. It is apparent that the operators of two websites that are friendly toward **Bergen** and his running mates - conspired with **Mr. Bergen**, his running mates and advisors to create a debate format and present it to us only a few days before Memorial Day.

Never in the history of politics has one side worked secretly with debate forum operators to devise a debate without the knowledge or input from his or her rival. We will not be the first to do that.

Any objective review of the proposed candidate "debate" and its presentation to us via a candidate press release would conclude that the forum has been **rigged to favor Brian Bergen**, who is desperately trying to hang on to his seat in the Assembly. *Curiously, Mr. Bergen sent out a press release about the debate offer BEFORE the DeCroce campaign was notified there was an offer.*

At previous forums during the Primary campaign before Republicans in Morris and Passaic counties, **Mr. Bergen** has proved to be uncontrollable, insulting and unwilling to abide by the rules of the forum. At one such forum, **Mr. Bergen** admitted to the Republican leader that **"I am a narcissist"** as an excuse for his uncontrolled desire to monopolize the forum and ignore its rules.

The objectivity of the two moderators of the debate is questionable. One has written just two articles in 5 months about the Assembly contest and both were negative attacks on BettyLou DeCroce. One was published on Wednesday, May 24. It parroted **Bergen's** spin that BettyLou DeCroce was somehow supporting the opponent of her running mate **Tom Mastrangelo for State Senate**. That's a ridiculous lie – but it plays into the hands of the **Bergen** campaign. Incidentally, Mrs. DeCroce was never consulted by the SaveJersey blogger to get her side of the story.

The SaveJersey blogger who wrote Wednesday's piece for Bergen is known as an obsequious sycophant of Bergen's running mate Assemblyman Jay Webber - who no doubt played a part in this political charade.

The other so-called moderator of the forum -- David Wildstein -- has also written just two articles that we know of on the Assembly race, although they were more balanced than the SaveJersey smears.

After many decades in politics, Mr. Wildstein should know better than to put his integrity on the line by participating in such an obvious campaign stunt on behalf of one troubled candidate.

For these reasons BettyLou DeCroce will not participate in a so-called debate that will do nothing to enlighten voters and will only end up to be a spectacle.