

Your Views

Monroe needs to clean house

The Independent candidates in Monroe — myself, running for mayor, as well as Chirag Bhagat and Stan Edelman running for Council — have been kept out of candidate forums in Renaissance and Greenbriar at Whittingham. We were purposefully blocked from attending so that our message would not reach the residents of those communities. Why did this happen? My best guess is that our message upsets the two party monopolies.

We are not looking to cut services but to enhance them. We want to cut wasteful spending and bring the professional services in house, which will save millions of dollars. We are going to eliminate political patronage jobs. We have made a pledge to not accept campaign contributions from developers and professional services.

Our opponents have not made this pledge. In fact our opponents are accepting tens of thousands of dollars from political action committees and party donations that are filled with donations from developers and professional services that do business in Monroe. Do you wonder why the development never stops and why taxes keep going up? It is because developers run Monroe Township.

Monroe is being fleeced by politicians, developers and professional services. Both parties own the responsibility for our predicament. The politicians in Monroe wear multiple hats and all have a pretty stipend attached.

The mayor is also the police commissioner and gets an additional \$15,000 for that job. He gets his taxpayer-funded health benefits from the Middlesex County Improvement Authority and then opts out of healthcare in Monroe and gets an additional \$7,000 for opting out. He also gets a \$3,000 per year stipend for incidentals. The Council President, also running for mayor, gets a \$7,000 healthcare opt out check too, and a \$3,000 stipend on top of his pay for being a councilman. Councilwoman Koppel also gets the same deal. The Republican on

FEATURED LETTER

N.J. Democrats' initiatives just more costly pie in sky

So Sen. Steve Sweeney and his Democratic partners in crime have a vision of a six-point "stimulus plan." Among their brainstorm ideas are investing in early childhood education, college affordability and neighborhoods. Typical socialist banter.

How to pay for all these pie-in-the-sky plans? Hold on, the Democrats have come up with a novel idea. Raise taxes. Sound familiar? It should because every plan they come up with has to be paid with increased taxes.

Don't dare reel in the wasteful spending, just raise taxes.

Walter Goldeski
EAST BRUNSWICK

the council also gets a \$7,000 opt-out check and a \$3,000 stipend. Plus, they all get pensions. These are part-time elected officials. They should not be fleecing us like this. Two parties working together for their own benefit.

We have to end these practices and restore the trust of the people and the integrity of those offices. To these ends, if elected, we will not accept pensions; opt-out checks or payments of any kind. This will save the taxpayers approximately \$300,000 over four years starting on day one.

I am not wealthy by any stretch of the imagination, but we need to restore the public trust and we need to stop the machine that puts the special interests of developers, elected officials and professional services above the needs of the taxpayers.

Our plan is to take Monroe out of the political game of Monopoly. Our elections should be independent and non-partisan. We are not a Monopoly card, we are people trying to feed our families and survive. My family has been in Monroe for 100 years and my father was recently forced to move in order to retire because taxes are too high. I am hearing that same

story repeated all over Monroe Township. This is just not right.

The reasons that I noted above are why we have been excluded from forums. They don't want you to hear our message because our message is the truth.

We should not be rewarding our town and our tax dollars to politicians and developers. We should force the state and local politicians of both parties to come to Monroe and ask for our support by showing us that they support us by passing legislation that will give us more state aid for our schools. Schools are 60 percent of the property tax burden but we receive only \$2,755,488 in state aid on a budget that is over \$100 million. Surrounding communities receive millions of dollars more in aid than we do because the funding formula is broken.

We have an opportunity to make a change on Nov. 3 and send a message that we need relief, honesty in government, politicians with integrity and we need to Move Monroe Forward with good ideas that come from the people of Monroe regardless of their party affiliation.

Ken Chiarella
MONROE

ones that will be underwater

at? Well, we could limit construction in flood areas, ban rebuild-erite tool of politicians behavior is to tax

from global warming by the end of the century. Just to be safe, I think we should aim to reduce the number of people living in the

high gas taxes or utility bills or closed coal mines that disproportionately affect