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September 19, 2019

Via Certified Mail and Email

City of Trenton
319 East State Street
Trenton, NJ 08608-1866

Attn: Dwayne M. Harris, Municipal Clerk

**RE: Letter of Resignation as Redevelopment Attorney
Our File No. 19-0179**

Dear Mr. Harris:

Please consider this as my unconditional letter of resignation as Redevelopment Attorney for the City of Trenton. I was appointed by Mayor Gusciora and unanimously confirmed by the entire Council by Resolution 19-265, adopted on June 20, 2019.

I am an American and I am a Jew. I am resigning because of the disgraceful and shameful anti-Semitic remarks that were in fact made by the Council President of the City of Trenton, Kathy McBride. The vitriolic and hateful anti-Semitic comments were exacerbated by Councilwoman Robin Vaughn, who defended McBride by saying that the word "Jew" is a verb and then claiming not to know this is an anti-Semitic slur. Tripling down on this high-level of ignorance and stupidity, were statements made by Councilman George Muschal, who in a cowardly defense of McBride, said these are just statements of speech and have been the

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accepted level of communication in his family. As an American and a Jew, I cannot and will not represent anti-Semites. As an American and a Jew, I will not devote my time, energy, efforts and talents as a redevelopment attorney to a majority of City Council. I will not accept their money nor their hollow and disingenuous apologies.

In addition to being a practicing attorney in the State of New Jersey for approximately 30 years, I have spent my life fighting anti-Semitism in all of its ugly forms. I was appointed by Governor Corzine to the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education, have served on a number of Boards and Committees in Camden County which promote tolerance and diversity and have recently joined the Board of the South Jersey Branch of the Anti-Defamation League. There are many lessons of the Holocaust which obviously still need to be learned, two of which I will point out in this letter of resignation. First, anti-Semitic words lead to anti-Semitic actions. Second, the Jewish people and others of good will acted too late. Unfortunately, they did not have the lessons of the Holocaust as we do today. The purpose of this letter of resignation is to educate these people and others that these very important lessons of the Holocaust must still be learned. The words of these elected officials if left unchecked most certainly do lead to anti-Semitic actions. We know this to be a fact because hate speech was a prelude to the massacre of Jews at the Pittsburgh Synagogue last year. The attacks on Jews are escalating. To have elected officials in 2019 foster anti-Semitism with their ignorant and ridiculous statements is unacceptable and I will not be a part of it.

This act of resignation by me while perhaps a small matter to the rest of the world, is action in the face of anti-Semitism nonetheless. Jews and other people of good will need to send a message that anti-Semitism is not acceptable and those who foster this creed of cowardice, lies

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and ignorance will be held accountable. I have stated many times that anti-Semitism has become the low-hanging fruit of racism and the only form of racism which seems to be tolerated in this Country. If they get nothing else out of this letter, they need to understand there are Jews and many people of good will who will take action, who will fight back and who will give no quarter to anti-Semites or their supporters.

In August of 1790, George Washington wrote a letter to the Jewish congregation of Newport, Rhode Island reassuring Jews for the first time in history that they were openly welcome in a country of their choosing. President Washington wrote in part,

“It is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it were the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights, for, happily, the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens in giving it on all occasions their effectual support... May the children of the stock of Abraham who dwell in this land continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants-while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree and there shall be none to make him afraid.”

This pronouncement by our first President was severely tested when 11 innocent Jews peacefully praying at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania were murdered in cold blood by an anti-Semitic madman on October 27, 2018. His anti-Semitic Facebook posts were a prelude to this massacre. These elected officials from Trenton should not only learn the lessons of the Holocaust, but they should take a little bit of a lesson in American History as well.

Because of my recent appointment which I now reject, I will not know these people, nor do I want to know them. I truly hope I do not have to see or hear from them on the battlefield of the war against anti-Semitism anymore.

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I am an American and I am a Jew. By this letter I will not and can never be an attorney for the City of Trenton as long as these three people are in office. Even when they were called out for their hateful speech, they showed no remorse and instead hid behind the cowardice of their anti-Semitic creed. I do want to thank Mayor Gusciora for appointing me and for condemning McBride, Vaughn and Muschal for their hateful and ignorant statements. I wish the Mayor and the other members of Trenton City Council good luck in their public service to make Trenton a better place. I hope someday soon, they will be able to rid themselves of these hateful officials so the residents of Trenton will not continue to suffer at their ignorance.

Very truly yours,


STUART A. PLATT
For the Firm

SP/kfj

cc: Mayor W. Reed Gusciora (via e-mail)
Council President Kathy McBride (via e-mail)
Council Vice President Marge Caldwell-Wilson (via e-mail)
Councilman Jerell Blakeley (via e-mail)
Councilman Joseph Harrison (via e-mail)
Councilman George Muschal (via e-mail)
Councilman Santiago Rodriguez (via e-mail)
Councilwoman Robin Vaughan (via e-mail)
John Morelli, Esquire, City Solicitor (via e-mail)