



Dear County Committee Members,

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a stressful and scary time for our community. There are over 1,200 COVID19-related deaths in New Jersey, including four in Atlantic County. At least 30,000 people in Atlantic County lost their jobs due to the casinos closing, and more companies are laying people off.

Given the health crisis, our dire economic situation, and to protect the health of county committee members and elections officials, the New Jersey Democratic State Committee urged us to postpone county committee elections for one year. They advised us specifically to have a vote of our Executive Board, rather than the full county committee, which we did on March 19.

After we passed our resolution, we heard no complaints from any county committee member or municipal chair. Frankly, many were relieved that elections were postponed. Why? Because now you're focused on what really matters: your health, your family's health, and making sure you have enough money to weather this storm.

Despite this health and economic crisis, one Democrat out of 58,000 registered Democrats in Atlantic County felt it was necessary to stress out our members even more, jeopardize their health, and take us to court on this matter. That individual, Helen Duda of Buena Vista Township, has never been a member of county committee. Her lawsuit is supposedly about protecting voters' rights, but it was nothing more than a cheap political stunt to disparage our elected officials, municipal chairs, and rank-and-file members.

Yesterday, a judge ruled that we were within our rights to postpone county committee elections, but that the Democratic State Committee gave us bad legal advice. The judge directed us to either have elections this year or to have our full county committee vote to postpone the election until next year.

Last night, I talked to many municipal chairs and county committee members to see what they wanted to do. The overwhelming consensus among these individuals was to postpone the election. They were adamant that they would have difficulties collecting signatures, since they cannot do this in person and were not risking their health for an election which can most certainly wait until next year.

Pursuant to Article XII, Section C of our bylaws, a proposed amendment to our bylaws to postpone the upcoming county committee election for one year and to extend county committee terms for one year was submitted to me yesterday, Tuesday, April 7. I

appointed myself and Vice Chairwoman Audrey Miles to a Constitution and Bylaws Committee, and we recommend that you approve the proposed bylaws change.

We will be holding a virtual county committee meeting on Thursday, May 7, 30 days after the proposed amendments were submitted to me, where you will vote to approve this bylaws change. You will be mailed written notice of this virtual meeting as well as how to cast your vote. The petition filing period will be reopened by the judge, and any prospective county committee candidate still has the right to submit a petition to be on the ballot, but we are urging you to vote to approve this bylaws change on May 7.

Finally, I must bring to your attention the hateful rhetoric coming from Ms. Duda and members of her organization after the court hearing. One individual tweeted that you, our county committee members, are nothing more than “a secret society of flunkies.” Another individual said you were a member of a “frat house.”

These comments are incredibly insulting, and I will not sit by and let individuals who don't live in our county or are not involved in our party disparage you. You're hard-working Democrats who care about your community and don't want to risk your health or your family's health. We are the party that holds fair and open conventions, the party that first called out Jeff Van Drew, and the party advocating for the expansion of mail-in voting. Our members are more progressive than these so-called “activists” ever will be.

Thank you for your support of the Democratic Party.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Suleiman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chairman Michael Suleiman