

The Delray Democrat

Why I Could Never Vote for Tracy Caruso¹

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My mother, Mariane Kulick, started this club around 20 years ago. The idea was to be a city club as opposed to an HOA-based club, although she also wanted to stay clear of local politics. The club was always progressive, standing for economic and social justice, and trying to make the world a better place for everyone, not just the wealthy.

City politics can be rough; there's a lot of money to be made by politically connected people. Getting your street paved or getting a city job can mean more than saving the planet. Having good stores in your neighborhood can outweigh saving endangered species. Does it matter that global warming means our streets will be under water in fifty years if trash isn't picked up now? Does it matter if your candidate supported a President who called climate change and COVID a hoax? It does to me.

Making decisions can be tough. I'm on my HOA board, and while there's no money to be made, it's certainly true that any decision you make is going to upset someone, even if it's made for what you consider the best reasons. Someone with a record, someone who has had to make tough choices, is going to be attacked on that record. Someone with no record can say anything they want and promise .

Something changed in our country four years ago. Something very ugly happened. Donald Trump was elected President. The four years since have proven just how awful that was, for minorities, for social and economic justice, and for our world. If it weren't for how incompetent he was, Trump could have pulled off a coup. And, frankly, even some Republicans have had enough. When John Bolton and Brian Kemp are heroes, something is extraordinarily rotten, but I guess some people have no sense of smell.

But it wasn't Trump alone who separated kids from their parents, mocked a disabled reporter, gutted environmental laws, lied and lied and lied, and created an environment where the news is "fake" and "alternate facts" are real. Republicans at all levels participated in the lies, including the big lie that Biden didn't win the election. And when Trump tried to have the votes of urban America discarded, his sycophants cheered and went along with it.

Tracy Caruso was a Trumpette until the bitter end. She says she didn't know how bad Trump was. Really? Didn't know about the "Central Park Five"? Didn't know that Trump called for the execution of these black teens even after it was proved that they were innocent? Didn't know Trump was the prime force behind the lie that Barack Obama wasn't born in America? Didn't know that the Trump Organization's discriminatory rental practices were so vicious and blatant that even Richard Nixon's justice department felt compelled to prosecute Trump and his father?

¹ *The Delray Democrat*, February 2021, p.3.

I'll be kind and say that she wasn't very discerning.

Let's talk about dark money. That's the unregulated cash that the wealthy pour into elections so they can get their way. Do you know who's running for the commission in St. Petersburg? Do they even have a city commission? I don't, I have no stake in an election there, but someone in St. Petersburg cares very much about Delray's election.

I've received glossy flyer after glossy flyer attacking Shelly Petrolia. You have also. They're all from "Progress for Delray Beach", located at 5157 Beach Drive SE Apt A, St. Petersburg Florida 33705. It's a 582 square foot condo, apparently owned by a former real estate broker turned alarm installer. At least, that's what the records show.

Let's understand something; the money funding the robocalls, push polls, emails, glossy flyers, and whatever else you see, is coming from someone who likely expects something in return. In a quote from the Palm Beach Post, Caruso said that a number of her contributors have created their own PACs to avoid being identified so "their names don't have to out there." Let's understand what that means. If we donate to a candidate, our names are listed as donors. But people donating through PACs are hidden, and there is a reason for that. Maybe, as Caruso says, it's to avoid retaliation. Or maybe they just don't want us to know who they are and if they expect anything in return.

After four years of Trump, I am very wary of anyone who supported him. Either they didn't know that he was a racist, or they didn't care. I feel that we have no choice in this election; I could never vote for a Trumpette no matter what they say or promise.