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The Public Ought to Know: Unrepentant Extremist Robert Friedrich

Statement by Corey Bearak

Apparently Robert Friedrich and the Republicans feel bitter following their overwhelming rejection by the voters.¹ That may explain their complaints concern a mailing to inform voters about Friedrich's opposition to stronger criminal penalties for hate crimes. **So let me pose this question: Is a neo-Nazi who paints a swastika on a synagogue, a school, the car or home of a Jewish family the same as a kid who tags a subway car?**

Friedrich, who as the Republican-Conservative candidate recently lost the Assembly Special Election in the 24th District, does think these two distinct crimes are the same.

Crimes that attack because of a person's religion, race, gender, national origin or identity are intended to inflict fear on the entire community. Based on Friedrich's own statements to the Republican Party, consultants in the Special Election produced a mailing using the most provocative symbolism to inform voters of his position – and, what many consider, his tone-deaf insensitivity.

It is important that voters know what are a candidate's positions, such as Friedrich's opposition to stronger criminal penalties for hate crimes. The campaign mailing criticized by Friedrich was an honest attempt to educate and inform the voters about his positions.

All too often that hateful symbol has been found on cars and homes² and schools³ in the very community he sought to represent. The mailing that educated voters about Friedrich's position on hate crimes, also informed voters that Friedrich would restrict a woman's right to choose and opposes gun control.

Friedrich, who has lost election after election, is now cynically attacking those who informed voters about very positions that he holds.

Recently he appeared during public speaking time set aside for people with government service and neighborhood concerns at Community Board 13 – to attack me for defending efforts to inform voters about his wrong position on hate crimes. In attacking me about a campaign mailing in the Special Election, Friedrich ignored the text in the mailing that provided the context for the use of such a provocative symbol: The side with symbol stated: “Conservative Bob Friedrich doesn't believe Hate Crimes Deserve Special Punishment...”⁴

1 See various news stories and letters in Queens Community newspapers following his 61.9 to 38.1 thrashing in the February 9 special election.

2 http://northeastqueensjewish.org/Statements/Releases/2003-04-27_condemn_vandalism.htm.

3 http://northeastqueensjewish.org/Statements/Releases/1992-12-02_condemn_slur.htm

4 The mailer side stated: “Extremist Bob Friedrich not Right for our community. Republican/ Conservative

Perhaps Friedrich is ignorant of the use of the swastika in hate crimes that occurred in the district.⁵

The other side of the flyer contained a crime scene photograph that is like [incidents](#)⁶ that occurred throughout northeast Queens that I [condemned](#)⁷ including one painted outside The Glen Oaks School while my son attended it and several painted on cars and a garage in [Hillcrest](#)⁸ when Jews observed the Passover.

The Public Ought to Know⁹ why Friedrich is opposed to stronger penalties. Friedrich must apologize for his recent behavior including his outrageous personal attacks on me and the State Assemblyman from the 24th District.

— *Corey Bearak*

candidate Bob Friedrich doesn't believe that hate crimes driven by anti-Semitism Party's support, he told them "all crimes are hate crimes." That's outrageous. Friedrich is an extremist Republican who opposes gun control and would restrict a women's right to choose. He is out of touch with our community's values. We need to stop Friedrich and his extremist agenda. How? By voting against Friedrich in the Special Election for State Assembly on Tuesday, February 9th. Only if we vote can we stop Friedrich's extremist agenda. Polls are open from 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM. Extremist Friedrich: Bad for Queens. Bad for our Families. Vote NO on Bob Friedrich in the Special Election Tuesday, February 9th." or bigotry warrant extra tough criminal penalties.

5 See http://northeastqueensjewish.org/Statements/Releases/2003-04-27_condemn_vandalism.htm and http://northeastqueensjewish.org/Statements/Releases/1992-12-02_condemn_slur.htm

6 See http://northeastqueensjewish.org/Statements/Releases/2003-04-27_condemn_vandalism.htm. Just outside the district, but clearly part of the community, a synagogue was desecrated with that hate symbol; see http://northeastqueensjewish.org/Statements/Releases/1996-01-29_praise_NYPD_response.htm

7 See http://northeastqueensjewish.org/Statements/Releases/1992-12-02_condemn_slur.htm

8 See http://northeastqueensjewish.org/Statements/Releases/2003-04-27_condemn_vandalism.htm

9 Read The Public Ought to Know: Unrepentant Extremist Robert Friedrich. Republican-Conservative candidate plays by the Newt-Lott-Cheney-Tea Party book. See http://coreybearak.com/columns/2010-02-25_EXTREME.pdf