



Candidates for District Attorney must campaign publicly. They must say what they mean, and identify what they stand for. They must put their name behind their statements, and their reputations behind their deeds.

I have done just that throughout my campaign, and indeed, during my career. I stood for election for judge in 2000, and as President of the Government Attorneys Association annually from 1994 to 1999. I have never made statements anonymously or by proxy, and I do not intend to start now.

But others apparently have sought to help my campaign for District Attorney, as well as those of the other candidates, by circulating anonymous fliers attacking Karyn Sinunu. I do not know their identity. I have had nothing to do with their actions.

I respect freedom of speech. I also respect the right of people to speak anonymously, even if their insistence on donning a cloak of anonymity necessarily casts a shadow on the import and credibility of their message.

However, while freedom of speech must be respected, the discourse of a political campaign must be subject to certain norms central to our political process. The latest anonymous communication violated those norms in important respects.

That communication was in the form of a letter sent only to Karyn Sinunu's campaign contributors under the aegis of a group, the "Prosecutors for Criminal Justice". First, I do not belong to that group, or have any association with it. To my knowledge, the same is true for my campaign staff, contributors, and volunteers.

I do not know who belongs to that group. The group is not registered with federal or state campaign regulators. In other words, it is not an organization, but an alias. Although such "front groups" are not a rarity in politics, particularly in initiative campaigns, they have no place in a campaign for District Attorney. I repudiate the use of a name which appears to be something it is not - an established group entitled to recognition as such by the electorate.

Second, targeting a candidate's campaign contributors anonymously crosses a line I choose not to cross. This tactic may be legal, but I consider it to be inappropriate. Under the circumstances, where the solicitation is made by a pseudo-interest group, I believe that it clearly crosses the line of propriety, and repudiate it.

Finally, I have pledged to follow the ethical guidelines adopted by the Santa Clara County Bar Association. Those rules can be read as imputing the tactics and messages of anonymous individuals to the candidates themselves.

I ask those individuals to either step forward and identify themselves or step back out of this race. It is one thing to raise issues of public importance, but quite another to take an active role and pose as just another interest group. To the extent that you have sought to blow a whistle, we have all heard the sound. Now it is time to don a uniform or retire to the stands and watch the contest.

Thank you.

Judge Dolores Carr