

Dear Fellow Citizens,

I hope this letter finds you in good spirits. As I continue my journey toward representing our community as a State Representative, I want to address recent claims and provide you with a clear understanding of my background, values, and commitment to public service.

I was indeed involved with Merryweather Security, a company entrusted with safeguarding government infrastructure and ensuring the security of our vital institutions. My involvement was rooted in a deep sense of responsibility and a recognition of the significance of protecting our government's operations.

Claims have emerged regarding contract bids and their associated financial aspects. I want to clarify that I did not determine these contract amounts or the terms agreed upon in the contracts. Such decisions were the outcome of legislative processes that aimed to address our government entities' specific security needs. When I began lobbying with the government and originally proposed the idea of a private security bid over 2 years ago, the original contract amount I suggested was for \$25,000 - this amount was then increased to an original amount of \$75,000 and then doubled to \$150,000. Again, all decisions on pricing and the contract requirements were set by the Legislature. The unopposed bids only served to underscore the credibility of Merryweather Security and its dedicated workforce.

Regarding concerns raised about providing security for Becks Lawson's business, it is important to clarify that any professional security service considers legitimate requests based on the safety and security of individuals and property. Such decisions are always guided by adherence to established laws, protocols and ethical considerations. Ms. Lawson has confessed to her crimes, and served her time for them. Should we as a society blacklist her or her business? Does her past somehow make her any less deserving of the same rights to safety and security at her business as the rest of us? Mr. Starr certainly had no qualms with going to her vineyard as a patron and buying wine, yet I am to be accused of being a criminal for simply providing a service?

During the holiday season, you may have noticed a temporary personnel absence. Our respect for the holiday spirit and the importance of family time drove this decision. I have always believed in prioritizing the well-being of our employees and acknowledging their commitment to their work and their families. Due to the holiday season and with our staff's well-being in mind, we consciously chose not to submit an invoice for that month. Although this might seem unusual, our bank records validate this explanation. Mr. Starr was correct, we were not available that much in the month of December 2022, but we also were not paid for it. Had Mr. Starr paid more attention to the job of Governing this State, he might have noticed the discrepancy in the States ledger.

In the face of unfounded claims, let's redirect our focus toward the work that needs our attention: ensuring the safety and security of our government infrastructure. My determination to

contribute to the well-being of our community is resolute, and I remain committed to the promise of representing you with integrity, honesty, and dedication.

It is worth noting that the principles of responsible journalism emphasize fairness and thoroughness in reporting. Regrettably, The Daily Globe news agency failed to uphold these principles when publishing a one-sided piece without seeking my perspective. This oversight raises concerns about their commitment to unbiased reporting and diminishes their credibility as a reliable news source.

Thank you for your trust, and I eagerly anticipate the opportunity to work together for a prosperous future.

Sincerely,

Jacob Wheeler
Candidate for State Representative