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**MONMOUTH COUNTY REPUBLICAN CHAIRMAN ELECTION
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST BETWEEN CHAIRMAN AND ELECTED
OFFICIAL**

Greetings to you from your past Chairman. Let me again thank you for your service to the party and for being a leader in our organization.

WHY I AM WRITING THIS LETTER TO YOU

I know from firsthand experience how difficult it is to be a Chairman of a political party, especially a party consisting of fifty three (53) municipalities with diverse interests and personalities.

You may recall that I was elected following nearly twenty (20) years of my predecessor's (Bill Dowd) tenure. It was thanks to you and the County Committee that our party's governance was structurally changed. You may also recall (or have heard) that soon afterwards many county and local officials were arrested and indicted. Added to our stress was the Asbury Park Press and it's declared "war" on Monmouth County Republicans. The agenda of the Press was to change Monmouth County from a strong Republican County to a two party County. The Press failed miserably but it was an extremely difficult period. Notwithstanding all that we faced, we survived and won all of our county wide races and all but one of our Legislative campaigns which we captured two (2) years later.

I offer this recent history of our party as a guide to a central issue in the pending election between Chairman Bennett and Sheriff Golden. Let me be clear, both Chairman Bennett and Sheriff Golden are good and honorable men. Each is a superb leader. But as I have often said, being a Chairman requires making unpopular decisions, especially when it comes to local politics, party issues and elected officials. As Chairman, I had many uncomfortable discussions with County and local elected officials about many topics including their ability to survive re-election. It required straight talk and a willingness to "take tough action", if logic would not triumph personal egos and agendas. Some elected officials expressed an interest in serving as a Party Chairman in various capacities. My position was simple. You are either an elected official or a party leader. You can't be both. To be both is an inherent conflict of interest. Why do I say this? As an elected official, you interact with other elected officials daily, weekly and monthly. You develop close personal relationships. How can you have that "heart to heart" talk

about why "you can or can't run", or "why you are no longer electable". How can you effectively serve the greater good of the party over the private interests of your elected co-officials? The answer is you can't. You cannot be both a party leader and elected official. You are one or the other.

Compounding the relationship issues are "public image" and "electability" issues. Elected officials must often avoid controversy and "bad press" in favor of having the Chairman deal with those unpleasant public issue(s) and policies. The Press feeds on rumors, gossip and confidential sources. By being both the Chairman and an elected official, you are inherently compromised. By being Chairman, you risk alienation and the loss of your elected position in the next general election because of your status as Chairman and an elected official. By losing your elected position, you do a disservice to the party. Thus, being a Chairman and an elected official is an undesirable combination.


I feel so strongly about this issue that I volunteered to write this letter and mail it at my personal expense. In the interest of full disclosure, I am a big supporter of Chairman Bennett and have been so for thirty (30) years. During our difficult years, John was a guiding voice and a moderating influence. He was a person I would often go to for advice and counsel. He was and remains today a tremendous asset to our party.

Likewise, I respect our Sheriff for the great job he does as the County Sheriff. However, he should openly discuss with you why he believes my position is wrong or incomplete. Unlike others who have not served as Chairman, I know from experience "that from which I speak"; a Chairman's job is tough, thankless and controversial.

I am, of course, available to further discuss my opinions with you. I welcome your response. Feel free to call me personally or contact me by email.

Regardless of Tuesday's outcome, I wish for John and Shaun continued professional and political success and personal good health.

Respectfully,


FREDRICK P. NIEMANN
Former Monmouth County
Republican Chairman

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