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# Statement to the LNC Regarding Changes in the Delaware Affiliate

We are the rightful State Board of the regularly organized and constituted Libertarian Party of Delaware. By now you have heard that this claim is disputed by the former Chair, Bill Hinds, who was elected at our most recent convention on June 5th and who was then removed. We can only hope that the emails informing you of this dispute have been polite and we do apologize that you have been dragged into this conflict at all. The fact is, we are not looking to the LNC for arbitration. Under the Bylaws of the Libertarian Party under Article 5.5 we do not recognize that you have any authority to interfere with our autonomy unless you choose to disaffiliate us for an alleged violation of the Statement of Principles or another provision of the Bylaws.

No such violations have taken place.

While the Bylaws of the Libertarian Party permit no remedy but disaffiliation, you do still have some power over us. We do not wish to be disaffiliated. Nor do we wish for our relationship with the National Party to deteriorate to the point that we are constructively disaffiliated. We rely on the link to our affiliate and the promotion of our conventions on the National website to refer prospective members to our party. We rely on the National Party for our email service and utilize the CRM application both to confirm membership eligibility in our affiliate and to aid in outreach to those who may be interested in becoming more involved. We would also like our voice to be recognized, however small it may be, within our Region and at the upcoming National Convention in Reno. To an extent this constructive disaffiliation has already begun with the illegitimate election of Otto Dassing as the alternate representative for our region after Susan Hogarth prompted the other Chairs of the region to pass an invalid motion disqualifying our vote at a Regional Meeting on October 11th.

Mr. Hinds has relied on the four out of nine members of the Board, as it was previously constituted, who refuse to accept the outcome of the removal process to animate his claim to continue in the Chair position. These numbers are insufficient to establish a quorum to conduct any business or even to issue a call for our annual convention. In order for Mr. Hinds' putative Board to exist as more than a defunct relic, he has made the claim that those of us who effected his removal have "constructively resigned" from the Party. This would conveniently give his cadre of four hailing from only one of our three counties full control of a hypothetical organization holding no assets but the sympathy of internet trolls.

This “constructive resignation” concept was raised as recently as June during the conflict in the LPNH, and was resoundingly rejected from all corners of the LP, including the LNC itself and the investigatory committee it formed to examine the LPNH situation. Mr. Hinds does not have to acknowledge his removal and may pretend to be the State Chair for as long as he likes, but he does not have the unilateral authority to deem duly elected members of his Board to have “constructively resigned” with no basis in our governing documents or anywhere else except for actions taken in line with those documents to remove him. The convoluted logic of this concept is what motivated the LNC to constructively disaffiliate the splinter organization and affirm its recognition of the LPNH. It should not be turned on its head to recognize Mr. Hinds.

Make no mistake though, we will persist in spite of disaffiliation, whether it is implied and gradual or explicit and immediate. We have complied with our own governing documents and the applicable laws of our State. A copy of our governing documents from prior to the 10/1 changes, along with a transcript of the 10/1 meeting, and a link to the 8/31 notification underpinning that meeting demonstrates this compliance.

Complaints have been raised about the validity of the initial notification and the process followed to adopt that amendment. These complaints are not based on the requirements enumerated in our governing documents or the established precedents universally accepted prior to these events. Nevertheless there is a pending notification for a further amendment that would also allow for the removal of these subversive Board members. Our regular quarterly meeting has been scheduled and notified in the usual manner for 11/20 where adopting this amendment and ratifying all prior actions begins the proposed agenda. A link to video of the 11/20 meeting will be made available after its conclusion, and the 10/21 notification addressed at the beginning of that video will further show our good faith attempts and ability to affect these changes in our Party in compliance with our governing documents and applicable parliamentary procedures.

As Mr. Hall may remember, 3-4 years ago we dealt with another attempt to usurp our Party and compromise our ballot access. In light of those events, we made modifications to our governing documents explicitly allowing us to discipline and remove members of our affiliate who were violating our state and county rules in order to restore peace in our Party. Even as we made these adjustments, we were aware of another avenue through which those meaning us harm could usurp and take over our party by nominally legitimate means. This is a loophole we did not close to our detriment.

Opinions will vary, but it is our determination that such a takeover was partially successful at our June convention this year. Members of an organization engaged in an explicit and publicly declared operation to take over the Libertarian Party took control of several elected positions within our state affiliate after a determinative number of new members with no prior connection to the party flooded our convention. Historically speaking, when these take over efforts succeed in other state affiliates, the priority is to immediately assume control of the affiliate’s social media assets and begin a program of messaging designed to alienate any moderate elements within the Party and drive away prospective converts to our philosophy. Our experience was no different.

Only 40% of our 10 Board seats fell to this effort, but the pattern held in that their first priority was to secure control of our social media assets and to do so in such a way that assuming unilateral control of them and no longer holding themselves accountable to the Board or the Party as a whole would be a trivial effort, one costly or impossible to undo. The mechanisms for pursuing this goal ranged from invalid orders issued by a State Chair without the authority to make such demands to equally invalid last minute calls for “emergency” meetings where opposing members of the Board would be unable to resist a temporary majority aiming to modify our existing and long standing policies.

After four months of these efforts and a deteriorating climate in the other aspects of the Party’s operations, a decision was made by the five Board members committed to resisting these takeover efforts. We would find a way, within our governing documents, to take our party back.

We formulated a plan and we executed it. We will not claim it was an ideal solution. We will not claim it was nice, polite, or would have been our first choice under better circumstances, but we determined that it was necessary and that the greater evil would be to allow the efforts of the volunteers who came before us in establishing and building the Libertarian Party of Delaware to succumb to this takeover, and our methods were no worse than those employed by the other side. Ours were just more effective and more successful.

In doing so, and in doing so consistent with the governing documents of our organization, we remain the same continuous organization that was affiliated with the National Party before October 1st. We also remain the regularly organized and constituted statewide governing authority of our Party according to the State of Delaware, charged by State Law with nominating candidates for ballot access in partisan elections.

We do not wish to be disaffiliated from the National Party, but if you should choose to do so anyway you will not “restore” the Libertarian Party of Delaware to its expelled leadership. You will surrender your ballot qualified affiliate and charge yourselves with chartering and building a new one from scratch.

This would not be a trivial exercise. Ballot access in Delaware costs the LP nothing under the stewardship of the Libertarian Party of Delaware. Reestablishing it, however, would not be so easy, especially with an existing Libertarian party severed from any obligations to the National organization dogging your heels.

We are not your enemies. Please do not make us one.

*Note: The above statement was adopted unanimously by the State Board of the LPD, as it is currently composed, with 8 people following the replacement of the two NCC representatives and the replacement of Jimmy Brittingham as Sussex representative, as he is now the Vice Chair. The Secretary position is still vacant following the resignation of Dayl Thomas on September 27th and the Chair, Will McVay, is still a Kent representative pending his replacement at the upcoming Kent meeting on November 15th.* ***Please note the explicit denial that the LNC has any authority to adjudicate this matter. The Libertarian Party of Delaware is an independent organization with no legally binding relationship to the LNC save for a mutually consensual affiliation agreement. We reserve the right to disaffiliate ourselves if unwelcome interference violating the National Bylaws should occur.*** *All information provided herein is for the purposes of telling the truth about what happened from a first person perspective to correct misinformation being spread by those who are either ignorant or dishonest. What follows is a refutation of the issues raised and presented as "evidence" by Bill Hinds who, lacking a quorum for his rump "Board" can only speak for himself and his allies rather than the LPD as a whole. The undisputed Kent and Sussex representatives, as well as the LPD Treasurer, do not recognize his "Board", and absent a secretary comprise a majority of the Board members. These responses, however, are from the State Chair, Will McVay, alone and were not included in the above motion.*

Beginning at the top of Mr. Hinds' "evidence packet", as necessary:

- The LNC does not have the authority to "recognize" the State Chair of an affiliate Party. State affiliates are autonomous within the bounds of the national party's bylaws and the Statement of Principles, and as such are obligated to accept the Chairs of those affiliates as reported to them by the affiliate organizations.
- One county chair suggested that he intended to modify the membership requirements of his county to either prohibit members of the Mises Caucus from becoming members or to at least require a "caucus affiliation disclosure" prior to recognizing membership. No one was "warned" against attending, and under the recently amended state rules for county affiliates these county membership criteria would be invalid.
- It is true that a recent amendment codified a requirement for county affiliates to respect the membership requirements of the state party. This was done in an effort to ensure consistent membership criteria across the state and ensure that counties were not manipulating their membership criteria in order to disenfranchise state party members or inflate their numbers to suppress state party members.
- The Commissioner of Elections is obligated to accept nominations from the "regularly organized and constituted [statewide/county] governing authority of a political party" for determining ballot access, which is secured by counting the total number of voters affiliated with the party statewide. Likewise contributions to any part of a political party (county affiliates, subcommittees, etc) are totaled with other contributions to the party statewide. The Commissioner of Elections office recognizes that county affiliates, in particular when they are chartered by state parties, rely on the state party for their status as the "regularly organized and constituted county governing authority".
- It is bluster to claim that law enforcement has any role to play with respect to the LPD's bank accounts. Even under the most charitable interpretation of Mr. Hinds' claims, the funds remain under the control of the LPD's elected Treasurer, who continues to serve in that role and operates in accordance with the established policies of the State Board.
- The web and social media presence of the LPD remains under the control of the IT Director, who is the same individual previously contracted to the State Board as the "webmaster", who was likewise directed by the State Board to manage those assets.
- Any change to State Board policy regarding these assets, under its duties prescribed by the LPD's AoA in Article VI, would have required a vote of the State Board. Even if Mr.

Hinds was correct that he and his allies have not been correctly removed, he has no ability to reach a quorum to make any such decisions, or to unilaterally delegate responsibilities for those resources differently than was accepted policy prior to 10/1.

- The LPD is not a “separate group” in any way. We are the same organization that remains associated with the Libertarian Party as its Delaware affiliate. If anything, Mr. Hinds is attempting to establish a separate group following his removal from leadership of the existing group.
- Again, LPD assets remain under the control of the LPD, in line with established LPD policies as they existed both before and after 10/1. Claiming they have been “stolen” is hyperbole intended to obfuscate the fact that Mr. Hinds and his allies have been correctly removed from their positions of authority in the LPD.
- The list of Board members supporting this action is accurate, but neglects the numerous other party members who were both aware of and in support of the action. The purpose was not to consolidate power into “the hands of a few”, but rather to secure the LPD against a publicly announced and readily observable ongoing effort to “take over” the party by a distinct and separate organization, and to halt the offenses in service of that goal among our local party leadership..
- Will McVay has not and does not have “unfettered control” over party communications. As the IT Director, it falls within his purview to manage the administrative access to these assets as a single point of accountability for their security, but those responsibilities were assigned to him by the State Board in furtherance of their duties under Article VI of the LPD AoA to secure party assets and manage web and social media pages and he remains accountable, or “fettered” to the State Board in that capacity.
- Nothing was hidden. All of the actions taken were taken in publicly accessible forums as required by the LPD’s governing documents for anyone to see. That the Board members removed for their obstructive and tyrannical behavior would have opposed their own removal should be obvious, but had they been sufficiently diligent in looking they would have been well aware of the intentions of the other Board members and still would have been powerless to stand against the coming changes.
- The former Chair and Vice Chair were refused administrative access to financial and social media accounts because providing such access would have been in violation of established State Board policy. The State Board as a whole is assigned the duty to secure these resources. The Chair and Vice Chair under the structure of the LPD are deliberately created as extremely weak offices with the primary responsibility of serving as the Chair of meetings, not as chief executives of the Party. The former Chair and Vice Chair’s inability to understand their limitations despite repeated attempts to explain them is among the reasons their removal was effected by the other Board members whose rights they sought to usurp.
- The spurious claims about Will McVay’s other political parties show yet another example of Mr. Hinds’ possibly deliberate ignorance and inexperience. As has been frequently explained, Delaware’s campaign finance laws are a joke and the formation of empty “political parties” serves as an extremely easy means of legally circumventing the limits imposed on political contributions. Mr. McVay has created numerous political parties since 2012 to illustrate this fact in an accessible way to Delaware voters. Some of these

parties were also created for other purposes, such as to stake a claim to the regularly organized and constituted statewide governing authority of a “Patriot Party” and thus subvert efforts by Trump supporters disillusioned with the Republican Party to do so, or to educate the public about how easy it is to leave the two old parties behind and strike out on their own. This was the original intent of the Mandalorians Party. Admittedly, as the situation in the LPD deteriorated prior to the June convention, the Mandalorians Party was considered as an avenue for Libertarians unhappy with the direction of the LPD under Mises Caucus influence to continue Libertarian activism, but these efforts were haphazard at best and have now been completely abandoned due to commitments to the LPD. In any case, Mary Pat McVay, the LPD Treasurer, has had no involvement with the Mandalorians Party and Mr. Hinds is throwing spaghetti at the wall here.

- Again, the duty to secure the LPD’s assets belongs to the entire State Board, who chose to delegate that responsibility to Will McVay in his capacity as “webmaster” (now IT Director). It does not fall within the Chair or the Vice Chair’s authority to unilaterally demand administrative access and would in fact be a clear violation of the webmaster contract to provide it. Administrative access to social media accounts, as well as the Google account that controls the other web assets, once secured is extremely easy to lock down and prevent others from accessing. As was seen in LPNH, the Chair had administrative access to these accounts and was able to lock out the other members of her executive committee without authorization. Not only was the webmaster under contract to the State Board to secure these assets and to be responsible for court costs and legal fees should it become necessary to recover them, but the webmaster had a 10 year track record of managing these assets in compliance with LPD policies. While the State Board could have directed a change in those policies, it was not and is not for the Chair or the Vice Chair to do so unilaterally.
- The webmaster (now IT Director) has stated that it could be argued these assets are his private property. In the heat of arguments, which have been shared out of context, he has flippantly declared them to be his. It was his sincere hope and the hope of the majority of the LPD Board that the situation would not deteriorate to the point where a clear determination of ownership was required. In any case, these assets were created as many as 10 years ago unprompted by the State Board and provided to the party for their use in compliance with policies set by the Board. Whoever might ultimately be determined to “own” them in the event of a conflict that escalated to that point, this never became relevant as the established policy to vest administrative authority with the webmaster was never changed.
- Nevertheless, the Executive Committee (a subset of the Board including the four statewide elected officers) was provided with access to the social media accounts in a way that protected them on behalf of the party as a whole. Mr. Hinds even utilized his access to post a statement plagiarized from the LPVA regarding the private vaccine mandates announced by President Biden, even if other members of the Executive Committee were less active in posting content. To say they did not have access is false.
- It is absolutely true that the membership of the LPD deserves better than it has gotten. This is among the reasons remaining Board members chose to remove Mr. Hinds and his allies from the Board. Following that removal, the membership is getting better than

they got. Progress is being made on building out the infrastructure of the party and improving our processes for conducting the Party's business. State Board discussions do not deteriorate into endless flame wars and pissing contests while nothing is accomplished. Members new to the Party are welcomed and integrated instead of being attacked and slandered. These improvements are the direct result of removing Mr. Hinds, Dr. LePore, and Mr. Casey.

- No one was deceived. The details of the process to remove Mr. Hinds et al were not publicized, steps were taken to distract attention from them, but no one was deceived except for the LPD members themselves when Mr. Hinds claimed during his run for State Chair that he would seek to integrate the talents of all LPD members. In fact, his exclusive focus since being elected has been to drive out members of the Party whose talents are necessary to ensure its continued efficient functioning.
- The evidence to support the removal of Mr. Hinds et al is pervasive throughout our Discord chats and social media groups. These are all publicly accessible and in their accumulation were sufficient to convince the necessary majority of the State Board that removal was justified and in fact the only possible remedy. Others are entitled to their own opinions on that evidence and are under no obligation to seek it out for themselves, but others were not charged with the responsibility for making these determinations and the ones who were remain firm in their conviction that they made the right choice.
- The procedure followed complied with the requirements in our governing documents. Diligent and attentive Board members could have, would have, and should have been aware of the procedural milestones. The shortcomings of Mr. Hinds in that respect are his responsibility alone and again stand among the reasons his removal was deemed necessary.
- No assets, financial or otherwise, have been stolen. This hyperbole is not helpful.
- We have been forthright and responsive to inquiries in the wake of these changes, we have not spun irrelevant side issues into a nefarious conspiracy to subvert the LPD to the Mandalorians or any other political party. The fact is that Mr. Hinds and his allies got beat and through the large support network available to them among the Mises Caucus they are raising a lot of smoke to suggest that they were somehow cheated instead of just outsmarted by adversaries they underestimated out of arrogance and contempt. There is no fire here and no role for the LNC to play.
- We are, as we have always been, available to anyone and willing to answer questions.
- RONR does not apply when superseded by our governing documents. A post to our designated Facebook group is explicitly defined as adequate notice and no form or format is prescribed to validate that notice. As far as meetings are concerned, ad hoc meetings are explicitly convened through a process outlined in our AoA that was followed. For these types of meetings, notice is not required beyond the post to the designated group chat.
- In fact, our bylaws allow for votes on such motions to remain open for 48 hours, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to participate. Sufficient votes were recorded to determine the outcome prior to that time, but the vote was kept open anyway.
- The acting Chair at this meeting ruled against starting the vote, as any other possible acting Chair would have done. His ruling was overturned on appeal.

- The absent Board members were notified at the same time as everyone else. Their lack of responsiveness is their responsibility and would not have changed the outcome anyway.
- Mr. Hinds is making up irrelevant terms referring to an “official notification”. A post in the group is explicitly accepted as adequate notification. Mr. Hinds and his allies admit that they weren’t even aware of the notification until after it was adopted, so quibbling over its format is clearly an ex post facto attempt to rationalize rejecting the outcome of a vote they don’t like.
- Quorum was reached. They had the same opportunity to participate in the meeting as everyone else. Their excuses for not attending are irrelevant, as their opposition would have been if they had attended.
- The previous notice requirements and the meeting notice requirements were followed in accordance with our governing documents. These override RONR.
- The purpose of allowing members to post notifications in the group is to explicitly avoid the concept of an “official notification”. Posting to the group is an adequate notification.
- Comments on the notification post are not a requirement.
- Attentive Board members were aware of the notification in spite of the “meme dump”. There are no requirements regarding notifications that they must be seen. Such subjective and unverifiable requirements would allow members unhappy with the outcome of a vote to fabricate objections, not to accuse anyone here of doing that…
- Tagging group posts as notifications is not a requirement.
- The majority of Board members it would have taken to appeal a ruling that the post did not constitute a notification clearly believed it did constitute a notification. This pedantic fabrication of notification requirements has no basis in our governing documents.
- We truly did not believe adjourning the Sept. 27 meeting would be successful. We hadn’t counted on Dayl abstaining from the vote. Joe had a hangover and didn’t feel like dealing with Bill and asked prior to the meeting if anything on the agenda was urgent prior to deciding to move to adjourn. We were as surprised as the no votes.
- The “official” bylaw amendment was not ripe for action on Sept. 27, so no discussion of it was necessary. The secretary’s awareness of a notification is also not a requirement, as it again creates a subjective and unverifiable means to halt a valid notification if one person opposes it. Mr. Hinds is fabricating requirements because he lost.
- More than five people were aware of the notification. Facebook does not show historical insights for group posts, but for several days after the notification was posted, the reach shown was 48. There’s no way to know who those 48 people were.
- Most often, those discussions are of amendments that are actually ripe for action. Several members of the Board thought it a waste of time to discuss notifications prior to the end of the 30 day notification period when no action could even be taken on them.
- It was a letter stating my reasons for removing these members and my interpretation of the motives of others. It does not require “evidence” and nor is it defamatory if it reflects opinions motivating action. Whether the allegations are true or not, they were believed to be true by those supporting removal and formed the basis of their decision to do so.
- Again, Mr. Brittingham was expressing his support for a change to his county affiliate’s membership policies based on his observations of the disruptions that had occurred in

other counties. Interpreting this as a “threat” against all party members requires a particularly active imagination and a persecution complex.

- The proposed amendments primarily provide an enforcement mechanism for the previously existing language requiring that county affiliates could not contradict state policies and prevent the exclusion of state party members residing in the county. It also, in lieu of dues or other membership criteria found in other state affiliates, allowed the Board to make a subjective assessment of a prospective member’s intentions prior to accepting membership. This policy is likely to be reformed as time goes by to establish more objective criteria, but considering the active threat of a takeover, has been determined by the State Board to serve as adequate protection where prior defenses were insufficient. To be clear, this requirement only applies to voting privileges and does not affect anyone’s ability to participate or contribute to the Party prior to approval.
- I don’t know how that comment qualifies as “weaponizing” anything or making threats. The profile picture has since been changed but is irrelevant to anything anyway.
- The comment about “trying” for the LPD is from late April, when my frustrations dealing with the Mises Caucus drama had me reevaluating my commitment to the LP. Since that time, I have posted that my work on the Mandalorians Party is being suspended to dedicate my efforts to the LPD. As mentioned above, Mr. Hinds et al clearly don’t understand the purpose behind the creation of multiple shell political parties under Delaware law, but that’s not relevant to this matter.
- The Libertarian Party of Delaware Facebook group allows any member to approve join requests, and several pages have been approved to join. There are no “posting privileges” except for joining the group. Only group members subject to disciplinary action for violating group rules require post approval.
- Mary Pat McVay has nothing to do with the Mandalorians.
- Given the threats of legal action leveled by Mr. Hinds and his allies, it was determined that all funds in the party account should be sequestered so the Treasurer would not be personally liable for funds spent, even when in alignment with established procedures, on the chance that a court found our actions incorrect. Our Treasurer has served for over 10 years, filing financial reports as required accurately and on time, has never faced an audit, and has never even been accused of mismanagement or embezzlement. Neither Mr. Hinds, Dr. LePore, or Mr. Goward ever asked to see financial statements, but they have been verified and the insinuation that the financial reports are inaccurate due to some malfeasance on behalf of the Treasurer is truly defamatory. We are looking at creating an audit/financial oversight committee to address such concerns in the future.
- The motion allows for the receipt of loans to pay our operating expenses without accessing the sequestered funds. This is really more of a campaign finance issue given that it is possible we will raise enough money to pay back these loans, but are otherwise not allowed to make ex post facto reimbursement payments to individuals. Accepting these donations as loans allows for the possibility that after legal issues are resolved or fundraising ramps up, the loans can be repaid, but does not require it such that they can be converted to donations after the fact.
- To be clear, we believe any legal case will be as groundless as the evidence presented here, but in order to protect a loyal and long serving Treasurer from any risk of liability,

we decided to hold all funds received prior to 10/1 and find alternative short and long term solutions for funding our operations.

- We also have a Discord server, a Blogger account, a Google account, and TicketLeap. With the exception of TicketLeap, I created all of these accounts on my own initiative without being directed to do so by anyone else in the LPD. I have retained admin access to these accounts for years, even during brief interludes when I held no position in the LPD. Nevertheless the LPD has agreed to utilize these accounts to conduct their activities and established policies for how that should be done, which I have implemented. If push ever came to shove, a court of competent jurisdiction would have to determine who "owns" these accounts, but just as there is no documented "licensing agreement" there is also no "gift receipt" or motions asking me to establish these accounts to in any way suggest they were created by an agent of the LPD rather than myself as an individual or having been created by me were transferred to the LPD. This is all a distraction anyway since no motion was ever passed to change who should be responsible for these accounts in spite of repeated underhanded attempts.
- The contract was created years after most of these accounts were created, but the intention when it was approved was to clarify that I should be responsible for managing these and other assets on behalf of the LPD. That contract was recently terminated by mutual consent to align with the more common practice in other affiliates of appointing an IT Director. That appointment explicitly delegated responsibility for all IT assets to me, as I'm an experienced software developer able to manage these assets in ways no one else in the LPD is able to do.
- Sean's resignation letter was clearly aimed at me, but in light of the allegations he made a hearing was held at the next quarterly State Board meeting to determine if there was any truth to them and if terminating my contract for misconduct was appropriate in response. The overwhelming response was that Sean was mistaken in his understanding of events and that Board policies had been followed precisely.
- That amendments often were discussed does not suggest that they must be.
- It is worth noting though that with the exception of the August meeting, none of these listed meetings are technically in compliance with our governing documents. Quarterly meetings are called for, but any ad hoc meetings in between are designated to be single motion meetings taking place on a group chat or email thread with votes remaining open for 48 hours. Amendment notifications had ripened to address this issue in order to allow the Chair to call real-time live meetings with sufficient notice, but these ripened notifications were never discussed under the agenda's prepared and released by Mr. Hinds. Our meeting to adopt the amended removal language was more in order under our governing documents than most of the meetings for which minutes are provided by Mr. Hinds. In any case, discussion of pending or even ripened notifications is not a requirement under our governing documents.
- **Reiterating again because it's important, the LPD does not acknowledge the LNC's or the National LP's authority to interfere with our autonomy. This information is being provided as a courtesy and in the interests of transparency.**