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for CONGRESS

It is with great disappointment that I am announcing that, as of today, I am resigning from my campaign for the Fourth Congressional District of New Jersey. Unfortunately, due to the actions and inactions of some in the Monmouth County Democratic party, I do not feel it is in my best interest to continue my run.

One of the core issues of my campaign has been fighting to protect women and children from domestic and sexual violence. Like many women and men in this country, I have personal experience with sexual assault and remain committed to reducing its impact on others. I thought that as a dedicated advocate, now was the best time to assert myself as a Congressional candidate so that I add my voice as a leader of important policy legislation and act as a delegate of the countless women I've had conversations with in CD-4. My mistake was trusting the Monmouth County Party leadership.

Let me be very clear: Chairman Dave Brown and Senator Vin Gopal failed to let me know about Bill Robinson's past, despite admitting knowing since February about several articles detailing indictments for stalking and receiving complaints from other women candidates about his recent behavior. A member of the Executive Board and participant in meetings to discuss my candidacy with the Executive Director and Senator Gopal, Mr. Robinson offered to help me with my campaign. While we became friends, his behavior had become increasingly disturbing, calling excessively, sending multiple text messages, contacting others about my whereabouts, and becoming irate at me for talking to others without him. His behavior became so concerning that several members of the party reached out to me to check on my well-being.

At that time, I began reaching out to advisors about how to best distance myself as his behavior became unhealthy. Shortly after, I received several articles about Mr. Robinson's past from a source unknown to me. This further validated my concerns about his behavior and his involvement with the party. I reached out immediately to Chairman Brown to request a meeting with him and Senator Gopal to discuss my concerns. They admitted to having known about the articles but stated that they had not heard concerns from other women. Still, they agreed to remove him from certain activities within the party and ensured me that there would be no political backlash for removing Mr. Robinson from my campaign. I trusted that they would do what was right, removed Mr. Robinson from my team, and continued with my campaign.

At this time, it has become apparent to me that I am not the only woman in the party that has expressed concerns to Chairman Brown and Senator Gopal. Further, rather than take the steps necessary to create a safe environment for women candidates, Chairman Brown has begun to sow doubt among members of the party about my character and mental health. This includes attempts to blame my past experience with sexual assault and mental health for my concern about Mr. Robinson, his behavior, and his history. This has served as a further distraction to my own campaign, as well as what should be the focus of the party – flipping the last Republican Congressional seat in New Jersey and getting more Democrats elected up and down the ticket.

I am a survivor. I am a mental health advocate. I am not embarrassed of this. I am embarrassed for this party; rather than be committed to "believing women," they have resorted to "believing women when it is convenient for them" and when it isn't, they smear a woman's character simply because they can and will to make a problem go away. Gentleman: I implore you to do better.

I want to thank those who have supported me over the past few months. I applaud those women who have the courage to put their name on a ballot in Monmouth County. I hope that by highlighting this issue we can do better as a party and create a safe, supportive environment for all candidates.