You Reap What You Sow

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

WRITTEN BY
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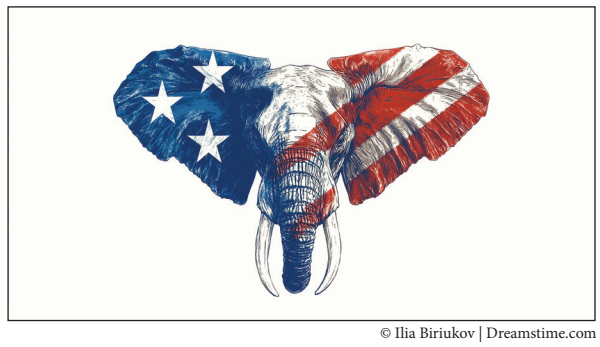
Every organization needs its leadership and the Montana Republican Party is certainly no exception to that rule. Very soon the Republican Party will pick a new chair and vice chairperson to lead Montana into the future.

As a long-time Republican here in Montana I find myself very frustrated with our current leadership and like many other organizations across our great country problems usually occur over money.

Who controls the Republican Party has a great amount of control of where the money gets spent, which campaigns get it and which campaigns don't. The abuse can extend past money. An example is leadership can decide who runs for office and those that shouldn't bother to even file for office. This is mostly done either by withholding money or access to constituents (denying a candidate the opportunity to speak at an event, or have signage placed at an event; deny a candidate access to Campaign Sidekick, or the ability to have field representatives door-knock or handout candidate literature…).

Matt Rosendale was expected to run for U.S. Senate. Instead, KY Senator and Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, our Montana State Governor Greg Gianforte, along with our U.S. Senator Steve Daines, decided the chosen Senate Candidate would be Tim Sheehy; who's never served in office before, over Rosendale someone who had a very conservative voting record and years of Montana service?

Montanans weren't even allowed an opportunity to vote for either Rosendale or Sheehy in a primary election. What were the elites afraid of? Aren't the Montana voters supposed to decide who wins a primary by voting for the candidate they deem best?
Well folks, this has been going on a long time. This is exactly why I supported Ken Miller to be our Republican Party chair so many years



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ago. The problem existed back then, and it certainly exists today. You would think if you're a republican running for office you'd automatically get money to make sure you win in the general election but if you're not in the group of the chosen, you might not get a dime for running.

In our last republican primary a complaint was brought to my attention that in Billings, Montana money was being spent by the Billings Republican Party to support Tim Sheehy over Brad Johnson for U.S. Senate. When the evidence was given to me I immediately got Brad Johnson on the phone and let him know. The problem is the bad players in this situation suffered no consequences for their actions. This needs to change. Even in the primary for Governor, Don K demanded several central committees endorse Gov. Gianforte over Tanner Smith. These tactic need to end. They never should have happened in the first place and jeopardize the honor of our organization and cause good members to withdraw their support and question whether they should be involved in an organization that acts more like the mafia than the party of Lincoln.

The stance of the Republican Party has always been that no group or the party itself, would endorse or support either primary candidate, so the voters could make their decisions without influence. However, in 2024, the MTGOP not only broke the rules, they refused to enforce the rules. Many Republicans said the only thing we can do now, is to allow every central committee to support whichever candidate they wish in the primary.

The MTGOP has rules and a platform so that voters can understand what their republican candidates stand for. However, if the MTGOP isn't even following the rules, and the elected republicans aren't following the republican platform, and those politicians even vote with the democrats, despite the MTGOP funding their campaigns, what's a party to do about it? I agree with Senator Bob Phalen out of Glendive, MT and say we expel those politicians from our party. I have served our great state a few years now and I can't think of a time the Republican Party ever gave me any money or support or even a direct mailing on any race I have ever run. Several individuals have made it clear to me that my campaigns have not been supported because I have run primary races-against rhinos (I have run for office six times now).

Getting rid of rhinos should be a top priority for the MTGOP and those candidates running against rinos should get funding from the MTGOP. Shouldn't the MTGOP be very vocal in supporting conservatives over rinos who vote with the democrats? What does rhinos mean, -republican in name only. if rhinos stand against the party platform and vote with the Democrats there needs to be consequences to those actions.

For this next election for our state party chair, I'm supporting Tanner Smith. Tanner sees the conflict, the deception and lack of transparency and wants to change that for the benefit of the party and the authenticity of our platform for each and every voter in Montana.
Tanner promises to clean up this mess. I would like to ensure that every true conservative person running as a Republican see financial support and otherwise from the MTGOP. If a candidate has a proven record of voting with the democrats, I'd like to see changes to our party platform to see you get no support at all from the MTGOP and maybe even rules that don't allow you to run as a republican.

Tanner Smith is the leader the party needs, for a time such as this.

Public Service Commissioner Randall Pinocci
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