



April 13, 2018

Dear President Souders and the Ocean View School District Board of Trustees,

We are writing to call on you to investigate, and then take all appropriate action, concerning Gracey Larrea-Van Der Mark’s appointed position on the Ocean View School District’s Citizens Oversight Committee for Measure R. There is ample evidence that she has made bigoted and hateful comments and that she has participated in activities organized and led by white supremacists. These words and actions call into question her ability to serve as an appointed leader in the Huntington Beach community. Given what we have learned and what we have read, we believe that Gracey Larrea-Van Der Mark should be removed from this committee.

ADL is a national civil rights organization dedicated to fighting anti-Semitism and bigotry of all kinds. Although we are aware of recent news reports on Larrea-Van Der Mark’s conduct, ADL’s own reporting from its Center on Extremism has uncovered what we believe to be additional, troubling examples of her conduct. Specifically, we believe that:

- The Commissioner participated in a July 2017 protest organized by The Red Elephants at the Santa Monica Committee for Racial Justice’s meeting alongside known white supremacists James Vincent Foxx, [Augustus Invictus](#), and Johnny Benitez and others. The Red Elephants, a California-based “news” organization that promotes white nationalism, is a virtual space for frequently racist and anti-Semitic content. A publicly accessible YouTube video of the event captures the protestors making the following comments:
  - The group yells “Anti-white, Anti-white,” then “Jews, Jews.”
  - A few minutes later the same group chants, “All lives matter” and “There are black supremacists inside this building.”
- While Larrea-Van Der Mark has deleted much of her alleged anti-Semitic and racist online history, a screenshot of her former YouTube page shows that she promoted a 37-minute-long clip of anti-Semite [Steven Anderson](#), titled “The Holocaust Hoax Exposed.”
- The Commissioner has also made Islamophobic comments on Facebook, claiming that the U.S. Department of Education is funding a Sharia indoctrination program. [According to ADL](#), the threat of the infiltration of Sharia, or Islamic law, into the American court system is one of the more pernicious conspiracy theories to gain traction in our country in recent years.
- Larrea-Van Der Mark is a member of the III% Nation Facebook group. [The Three Percenters](#) movement is an anti-government extremist subset of the militia movement. They promote the idea that the federal government is plotting to take away the rights of American citizens and must be resisted.
- In an April 2016 Facebook post to the group “Mexicans against Donald Trump,” Larrea-Van Der Mark posted an offensive meme entitled, “Mexican Words of the Day”:
  - “BISHOP & LYSOL. Would you please shut this BISHOP she LYSOL the time!”

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- The meme had a picture of Hillary Clinton’s face, an image of a Lysol spray can, and a stereotypically-dressed Mexican man in the middle of those two depictions. The meme is a play on words with BISHOP referring to “bitch up” and LYSOL referring to “lies all.”

Additionally, the [OC Weekly](#) and [Los Angeles Times](#) quote the Commissioner in a now deleted tweet as allegedly saying, “This meeting was being ran [sic] by the elderly Jewish people who were in there. The colored people were there doing what the elderly Jewish people instructed them to do.” If true, this comment is troubling: not only is she referring to minorities in a deeply offensive way, but also echoes the classic anti-Semitic trope of Jews manipulating African-Americans, to create racial strife, so that Jews can benefit.

The information we are reporting, together with the material provided by the press outlets, is deeply disturbing and deserve your full attention, investigation and, if appropriate, action.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

  
Peter S. Levi