



January 13, 2014

To the Bayard Rustin LGBT Political Club:

I appreciated the opportunity to sit down for a productive meeting with Stephen Hallett to discuss the recent endorsement process for the city council election, and how we can move forward to best serve and represent the community of Vallejo.

It is a privilege to represent the citizens of Vallejo, and I have enjoyed embarking on the process of getting to know the community this past year.

As an educator, I would teach my students to learn from their experiences. This endorsement process has presented a teachable moment for me on the intricate and unique political realities in Vallejo, and I am taking full advantage of learning how to best fulfill the roles of facilitating and encouraging positive outcomes for the entire Vallejo community.

I was dismayed that one of my endorsements in the city council race offended the LGBT community of Vallejo. I was also concerned by the accusations against Mr. Summers, and sought the counsel of various members of the community, including some members of the gay community who had worked with Mr. Summers previously. I spoke with Democratic leaders, including the president of the Vallejo LGBT Democratic club, a former city council member who is gay, and other community leaders.

I also contacted Mr. Summers directly and was personally assured that he was committed, as a leader, to rejecting and advocating against all discriminatory behavior directed at the LGBT community as well as all communities within Vallejo that suffer discrimination. He also affirmed his support of marriage equality and a woman's right to choose.

As I reflect on this, my teachable moment, I have come to the conclusion that I could have done this type of vetting prior any endorsement and not



simply relied on the vetting that other leaders, organizations, and clubs did in their own endorsement processes.

Was Mr. Summers the right candidate for the Vallejo City Council? I believe the voters have spoken on this issue, and I respect and appreciate the very constructive feedback. Rather than spend time debating what should or should not have been done this last time, I would like to learn from the experience to strengthen the process going forward.

I also want to assure you that I believe in a California where all of its citizens enjoy equal rights, including the LGBT community. Discrimination has no place in governance.

I hope through open communication we can move forward to ensure that the concerns and issues raised during the election can be addressed and result in a stronger Vallejo. Changes are already underway, and I want to be supportive of facilitating productive and proactive communication.

I look forward to a continued dialogue where we can bring the community of Vallejo together in increased understanding and unity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Bonilla".

Susan Bonilla
Assemblywoman, 14th District