

# BUCKS BULLETIN

## BUCKS DEMOCRATS LOOK TO PHILADELPHIA FOR HELP AND GUIDANCE THIS ELECTION SEASON

In what appears to be a coordinated strategy, the Bucks County Democrats are reaching out for support beyond the county borders this election, into Philadelphia.



Jamie Walker clarifies in public comment that Republicans Van Blunk & DiGirolamo were endorsed by the Bucks FOP, not Democrats Harvie & Marseglia

Recently, Democrat Bucks County Commissioners Bob Harvie and Diane Marseglia sought an endorsement from the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police (FOP). At last week's commissioners' meeting, PAC Treasurer Jamie Walker remarked, "The Bucks County FOP endorsed Pam (Van Blunk) and Gene (DiGirolamo). Philadelphia endorsed you." Philadelphia has the highest violent crime rate of the top ten American cities with a population greater than one million residents, as well as the highest poverty rate among these cities, according to Wikipedia. As previously reported, Bucks County Sheriff Fred Harran has raised alarms about the growing crime rates here in Bucks and the challenges faced by bordering Philadelphia.

Democrat school board candidates seem to be following the Commissioners' lead.

Last week, Malcolm Kenyatta, a Democrat state representative from Philadelphia's 181st district, made an appearance at a campaign event for Central Bucks Democrats. During his speech, Kenyatta emphasized his support for the local Democratic candidates.

Also this week, a Facebook post from Penridge Watch shed light on the Penridge Democrat candidates' hiring of a Philadelphia consultant, Zachary Parker, to manage their school board campaign. An image from Parker's LinkedIn profile revealed his previous roles as a Field Organizer for the Pennsylvania Democrat Party and his work for former Philadelphia mayoral candidate Rebecca Rhynhart, who lost in the 2023 primary. Republicans, the post noted, are managing their own efforts.

According to the Inquirer last fall, out of 26 districts in a nationwide assessment of big-city school districts, Philadelphia ranked fourth from the bottom in fourth-grade math and reading, sixth-worst in eighth-grade math and seventh-worst in eighth-grade reading. It's no secret that Philadelphia schools are struggling.

But the strategy to look beyond our county is not new for Bucks County Democrats. In other recent local elections, they've sought support from outside the county as well, with varied results. In 2020, Joe Biden appeared at Bucks County Community College to campaign, praising Commissioners Marseglia and Harvie for their work in "turning Bucks County blue."

In 2021, the Central Bucks Democrats were joined by Brian Sims, a then-Democrat Representative from Philadelphia's 182nd district for a school board campaign outing. Sims was best known for his many angry outbursts while in office, an issue that has plagued local Democrats as well recently. His presence didn't seem to help much, as Republicans enjoyed historic wins in the 2021 local election, and swept the county row offices.

These recent moves suggest a broader shift in local Democratic strategy, as they seek external support and connections to bolster their campaigns in key races. The Democrats' choice to look to Philadelphia for help and guidance, given its myriad of uncontrolled issues like violent crime, poverty, and failing schools, should alarm all of us here in Bucks.



Rep. Kenyatta addresses attendees at a campaign event for the CBSD Democrats