

AN OPEN LETTER TO REP. PAUL HOLVEY BY UFCW 555 PRESIDENT DAN CLAY

Paul Holvey's lies led to violence last week

Representative Holvey: Several days ago, a young staffer from the Recall Paul Holvey campaign was in the midst of collecting a signature when they were physically attacked by one of your supporters, who was yelling to nearby neighbors not to sign the petition.

I cannot fathom the sense of fear and alienation that a young, trans person of color must have felt at that point, to be physically struck by an imposing white man for being in the wrong neighborhood, but I have enough lived experience to understand that the attack was borne from a place of extreme privilege and fed by a sense that it is righteous to defend institutional norms with whatever means necessary.

How dare you pave the way to this incident with your insinuations, misrepresentations, and lies about the recall process, all designed to frighten and galvanize well meaning progressive voters? How dare you set the example by approaching circulators only to scream and shout profanities in their faces simply because they are engaging in a lawful democratic process that you happen to disagree with?

Since our recall petition was filed we have been tenacious and pointed at holding you to your record. We expect and invite you to be just as dogged at defending your public service career. We expect and invite a robust — even impolite — back and forth through which the public can come to fact-based conclusions about your performance. But it seems that your focus has been diverted from defending your record and instead landed on vilifying and spreading untruths about the individuals associated with this effort, whose physical

safety has now become imperiled by that strategy.

You have falsely suggested that this effort is not union-supported, and instead run by a shadowy lobbyist for a special interest group. You have falsely suggested that our member-led Executive Board is somehow being tricked into supporting this effort, which underscores either your ignorance or an intent to deceive voters.

You have stated — despite knowing that it is a bald-faced lie — that this effort is designed to financially enrich certain officers and employees of our union, which is a very serious and insulting accusation.

“How dare you set the example by approaching circulators only to scream and shout profanities in their faces”

You have alarmed decent progressives by implying that a replacement representative would be appointed by a conservative County Commission and thereby could be a Republican, despite knowing full well that the very same process that appointed you in 2004 would necessitate the Democratic Party assemble a list of possible replacements.

You have provided conflicting accounts to the press, you have misrepresented the legislative record, you have filed baseless complaints designed only to waste our time, and you have done all this while your surrogates illegally conveyed offers to pass House Bill 3183 if we were to withdraw the

recall (which we did not entertain out of principle and out of respect for the law).

In short: You have done everything in your power to avoid placing yourself in front of voters — a strange position for someone who claims to be so broadly supported. Worse, you have done so in a way that emulates how someone like Donald Trump attempts to retain his own influence: Assure your base of support that despite evidence to the contrary, there is a conspiracy afoot to disenfranchise and pervert their democratic rights and that anyone working to further those ends is no longer their neighbor, but someone alien to them who must be defended against.

While we obviously take significant exception to your record as a legislator and your fitness for continuing in your role, we had erroneously assumed that you would be courageous enough to at least acknowledge the policy-based foundation of our mutual disagreement. Instead, you have painted a picture of yourself as the victim of an undemocratic and sinister conspiracy. And now that fantasy and its implications have finally been distilled into an assault upon a young person who, ironically, likely shares many political views with their attacker.

The staffer is physically fine but has been taking some paid time off. But they and many of our other staff, our members, and your constituents are watching to see whether you begin to focus on issues or double-down on your strategy of vilification. Regardless, I hope to see every single one of your listed supporters disavow the dangerous rhetoric at play here.

Dan Clay is President of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555, Oregon's largest private sector union.

SOURCES OF CLAIMS MADE IN THE ABOVE LETTER:

Physical attack on campaign staff: August 10 at approximately 6:20pm on West 4th Avenue.

Rep. Paul Holvey shouting profanities at circulators: August 12 at approximately 3:45pm on East 8th Avenue.

Implying that the effort is run by a non-union special interest group: “This recall effort was launched by one special interest group and their lobbyist,” (www.paulholvey.com current as of August 10.)

Implying that UFCW 555 Executive Board has been tricked: “[UFCW 555’s] lobbyist appears to be in control of the information the union receives and seems to be making the decisions for them as well.” (www.paulholvey.com as of July 3.)

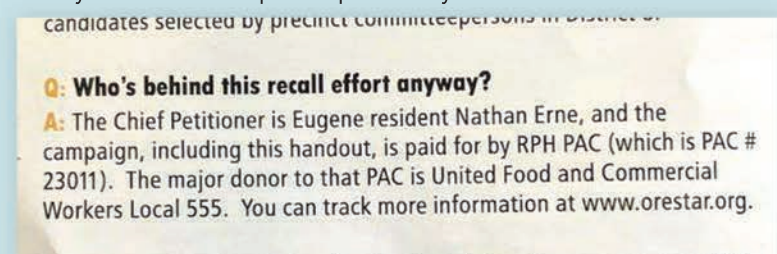
Stating that the recall effort will personally enrich UFCW 555 staff or officers: ““Seems like self-dealing to me,” Holvey says.” (Willamette Week, July 12.)

Implying that a replacement Representative would be selected solely by the County Commission: “if the effort to recall Paul is successful, then the conservative Lane County Commission (Dems hold only 2 of 5 seats right now) will appoint his replacement.” (Rep. Julie Fahey’s Facebook page, June 28)

Providing conflicting accounts to the press: Holvey is reported as having sent a key bill to the Rules Committee while both “waiting for a legal opinion,” and simultaneously “with the LC opinion.” (“The Unusual Push to Remove Rep. Paul Holvey,” Eugene Weekly, July 27)

Misrepresenting the Legislative Record: “Our Legislative Counsel confirmed twice that the proposed legislation was in fact preempted by federal law and would not be legal.” (www.paulholvey.com as of July 29) but Legislative Counsel stated: “absent judicial guidance on this issue, we cannot predict with certainty how the NLRB or a court would ultimately decide,” (LC memo, May 15, 2023) and later “the opinions [in the HB 3183 memos] were not definitive to the actual result if the issue were to be litigated.” (LC email, July 13)

Filing baseless complaints: Secretary of State investigation request filed by House Democrats staff, June 5, 2023: “The [Recall] walk piece does not have who paid for the walk piece listed in it.” The staffer making the complaint attached an image (cropped below), which clearly includes the required “paid for by” information:



Surrogates conveying quid pro quo offers to pass HB 3183 if the recall is stopped: Contact made through staff at UFCW International and passed to Local 555, June 22. Possible violation of ORS 260.665.

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