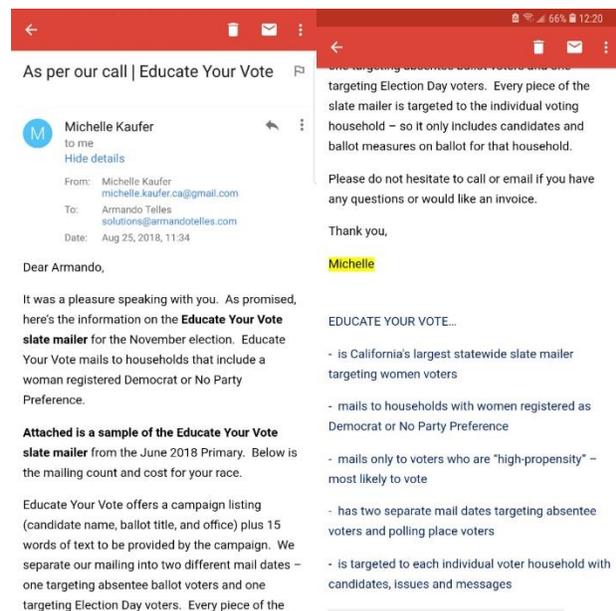


First time candidates: When transparency fails, do the research. Know who claim to represent us- September 12, 2018

Underscored by the 2018 presidential elections, U.S. citizens have expressed growing concerns about the Electoral College's historical precedence over popular vote as being reflective of the majority general public. Another narrative about representation has developed that calls into question the genuine representative nature of our democracy, as 'nonprofit organizations' engage the general public- 'voters'- with embellished statistics using fear mongering and stigmatizing rhetoric about people of color in the name of [choose the excuse]. As a consequence to this ongoing extremity, we have left populations under-represented, especially when regarding health and education. This prompts the question, 'What about our local representation?' Is it possible for local organizations to misrepresent us as well? When inquiring, be cautious of the Coalition for Literacy and 'EDUCATE YOUR VOTE' campaign, for they **do not** represent us.

This November, I am seeking to be elected as a representative on the Fallbrook Regional Health District (FRHD) board, a 'health board' which oversees the allocation funding to sustain the 'health and wellness services' rendered by local organizations and agencies in San Diego County, in a region largely of Hispanic and Caucasian residents. If elected, I will serve as the first person of color to serve on this 'health' board since its inception as a 'health district' and since 1998 when FRHD became a 'special district'. In my attempts to reach voters during this time, I was open to organizational support and became disappointed when approached by a so-called 'nonprofit organization' whose ultimate intention was to spread a 'hateful' agenda. As a message to first time candidates: When transparency fails, do the research. Know who claim to represent us.

Back in August, with a pending filing deadline approaching, I filed for candidacy for the November elections without a candidate's statement due to the associated cost. Limited by time and resources before November, each opportunity to reach voters matters to me just as much as the alignment of values I seek with my peers. I received a call from 'Michelle Kaufer', a person who identified herself as being 'representative' of an organization soliciting candidates for their EDUCATE YOUR VOTE slate mailer and was invited to be included on a slate which would be sent to targeted voters in my region. While this sounded like a strategic opportunity to reach my constituents, strategic maneuvers like this slate mailer proposal is a deceptive offer, a tactic being used to intentionally mislead my understanding into believing we share common interests and values, deliberately attempting to sabotage my candidacy. Unsolicited proposals like EDUCATE YOUR VOTE, especially for candidates seeking public office, can be the detriment to any campaign seeking to be representative of a constituency, and



would associate them to unethical and ‘wrongful’ practices which are most detrimental to communities culturally diverse.

After researching the identity of ‘Michelle Kaufer’ and the Coalition For Literacy as an organization sponsoring the ‘Educate Your Vote’ slate mailer, I discovered that Kaufer was a voiceover ‘actress’ and that CFL was a ‘nonprofit’ using statistics accumulated by public vote tally to validate its use of propaganda to promote discriminatory propaganda, like *“according to the National Center for Education Statistics, about 22% of American adults have minimal literacy. Some are functionally illiterate [not knowing enough literacy] to understand simple forms or instructions. Nearly two-thirds of this group did not complete their education through high-school. Many are immigrants, others have visual difficulties, while others have physical, mental or psychological conditions. Adults with low literacy levels are more likely to be homeless, unemployed, or hold very low paying jobs.”* (www.coalitionforliteracy.org)

CFL is applying predatory practices that target groups of people most often criminalized and misrepresented. I do not condone the discriminatory suggestions posted on the CFL website and the suggestive language and false characterization identifying ‘English-learners’ and immigrants as being ‘poor’, and ‘illiterate’, whereas, these same demographics of people are the most exploited. As a first-generation Mexican-American, my family and I are educated, and literate. I am bilingual and have benefited from both private and public school. I am a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, a father, a professional, and am representative of my Mexican family.

I support the equity and equality of education and health care for all, without bias of gender, religion, sexual preference, or ethnicity. I support people who seek to be representative of the community to which they reside in; with accountability and the responsibility of representing everyone, without prejudice, and I support policies that are not discriminatory to any group of people.

I possess the life skills and life experiences to stand with my community as a candidate seeking to be a representative on the Fallbrook Regional Health District board, to provide the deserved representation of my community and to contribute to the decision-making processes that lead to how health and wellness services are sustained for the constituents of FRHD. I stand for our right to be civically engaged and the right to organize. As a heads up for first-time candidates: When transparency fails, do the research. Know who claim to ‘represent us’. Sometimes, we may be the only one who seeks to represent ‘all the people’ in the communities we live in.

In solidarity with underrepresented communities, visit www.armandotelles.com

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