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THE PUTNAM COUNTY



Home of Revolutionary War hero Sybil Ludington

Hate is on the Record in Mahopac

January 26, 2026

Dear Mahopac Board of Ed, Putnam County Executive Kevin Byrne, Legislator Crowley, and Local Press:

A few weeks ago, I witnessed an ERO Agent abducting a man in Brewster without a warrant. I watched as the man tried not to cry when we asked for his name and information so we could find his family and help them to locate him, because the agents were directing him not to speak to us and he was terrified. He was a man who had worked here for months and was walking to get breakfast when he was plucked off the street by your Board member, Christopher Harrigan, and his co-workers. It is imperative that we continue to publicize and speak out against these unlawful kidnappings by barely-trained thugs empowered by an increasingly authoritarian regime.

When I found out Harrigan is a Board of Ed member, I was unsurprised. When the Board, the Mahopac community and the Putnam County Executive came out to back him on January 22, I was even less surprised. This is, after all, a place where a confederate flag has flown in the center of the town at the marina for years without complaint. But despite the Board's decision to support Harrigan, we succeeded last night. The broader world now knows that an ICE Agent serves on your Board of Ed. That will matter eventually. And that County Legislator Erin Crowley also supports such blatant conflicts of interest, despite her repeated attempts to pander to Democrats and progressives over the course of her tenure and play both sides when it suits her. Kevin Byrne's support was also entirely expected.

Think about how Black and Brown families must feel sending their kids to your school in the context of the world we live in right now, where even U.S. Citizens have been abducted and terrorized time and time again, especially in Minneapolis but also in NY and elsewhere, because they are now allowed to be targeted by the color of their skin. Yes, it was entirely unsurprising that Mahopac sees no problem with this, but millions of people around this country are fighting back against ICE’s reign of terror and will see a problem with it. Ten years from now, when you will be embarrassed and perhaps even liable for your actions and blind support of this organization, we will have it all on video, and you won’t be able to deny it. So, I’m disgusted as usual, but also satisfied. Thank you for putting your hate on record.

Eileen McDermott

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