

**From:** [Denise Williams](#)  
**To:** [Luzerne County Council Meeting Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]: Public Comment for June 28, 2022 Voting Session  
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### **Public Comment for the June 28, 2022 County Council Voting Session**

County Council's recent party-line vote (9R-1D)—on a resolution proposed by Councilman Thornton in favor of eliminating mail-in ballots is very disturbing.

Councilman Thornton was quoted as saying, "The mail-in ballot system is full of fraud."

What concrete evidence of fraud did Mr. Thornton present to the other council members and the citizens of Luzerne County to substantiate this claim? Was there any evidence shared with the other eight Republican council members, and to show the public, in support of voting for this resolution to eliminate mail-in ballots? What did they all base their decision on? Heresay? Conspiracy Theories? False Narratives? Misinformation?

Unfortunately, and disturbingly, It appears that way.

Was there a discussion held, based on facts presented, to support voting for eliminating mail-in ballots?

Did anyone express concerns for approximately a third of the voters who voted by mail-in ballot for the May Primary Election. Was there any discussion held or any concerns expressed by any of these council members about disenfranchising these voters who prefer to vote by mail-in and do so because it is their lawful right?

In the vote to support the resolution to eliminate Act 77 (enacted Oct. 2019), did anyone discuss that when Act 77 was passed by the Majority GOP Legislators in Harrisburg, only two Republican legislators, in either chamber, voted against it. Was it shared that all of our local Republican Senators and House Representatives voted for its passage? (Senator Lisa Baker, Rep. Aaron Kaufer, Rep. Karen Boback, Rep. Tarah Toohil, Senator John Gordner). The Republican Majority in Harrisburg was thrilled with the passage of this legislation. Why? It put an end to straight ticket voting in exchange for the enactment of no-excuse mail-in voting. It was a "Compromise Bill" with Governor Wolf.

When Donald Trump lost, his scapegoat was blaming mail-in ballots. He put out numerous false, misleading and unsupported claims about mail-in ballots. It is unfortunate that the county council has chosen to continue to stoke this unsubstantiated and false narrative. It is a disservice to the citizens of Luzerne County. We, the citizens of the county, deserve informed decisions by county council members based on legitimate facts not conspiracy theories.

Mail-in ballots are not "ripe with fraud". I have seen absolutely no proof of that in the four elections I have overseen as an Election Board member. Mail-in ballots do not undermine

public trust in our elections, this continued false narrative is what is undermining the public trust. This stoking of fear and doubt without concrete evidence by county council members who represent all Luzerne County citizens needs to end.

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