



Representative Roae's Glass 'House'

Danielle Gibson

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Bradley Roae, who represents District 6 in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, was up for re-election on Nov. 8. My critical judgment of Roae as a candidate comes not from his party, but from his tendency to mislead.

Roae has recently been the subject of controversy over his Facebook activity. His posts tend to boldly argue positions in paragraphs followed by a rhetorical question and often include doubtful statements on topics ranging from climate change to gender in sports. To me, this method is too divisive; he is better off making his arguments through careful consideration of evidence on these issues.

Recently on Oct. 18, Roae compared the uptick in deaths caused by fentanyl from Donald Trump's last year in office to Joe Biden's first and placed the blame solely on what he implied was Biden's passivity on illegal migrants from Mexico. The Cato Institute says 86.3% of fentanyl trafficking incidents involve U.S. citizens, and 90% of seizures occur at legal checkpoints. Roae said this without considering data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that show the already increasing overdose trend rose by 30% from 2019 to 2020, spurred by the effects of the pandemic.

Roae was misguided on this issue, but Biden has not proved able to lessen the problem of fentanyl overdoses. I don't appreciate his jumping to "illegal immigrants," which could be used to satisfy racists, but I do not believe that particularly dangerous drugs should be decriminalized.

In August, Roae prematurely claimed that the administrators at a Florida high school painted over a student's parking space design simply because it said "Back the Blue" and used this assertion to argue for school choice. The student's design was not the one she was approved to do, so the school removed it. At no point did the school oppose the police or restrict the student's right to undisruptive free expression on school grounds. The school was right in their policy, as it protects against indecency, and the student had a right to paint what she did. However, it is not alright as a leader to make hasty assumptions. Politicians should not join in the "industry of outrage."

A post on Sept. 22 displayed a graph with levels of degree attainment and median yearly earnings of younger full-time workers. Roae asked: "if a person with a Bachelor's degree makes \$23,000 a year more than a high school graduate, couldn't they use that extra \$23,000 a year to pay their

student

loan?"

I have to say that I was both confused and frustrated with this statement. He did not take into account the several factors impacting college graduates' difficulties in their repayment of debt, such as interest rates, skyrocketing housing prices, inflation, and job outlooks after graduation. Ignoring inflation in all areas while campaigning with a platform that criticizes opponents for their role in it does not make someone look good. I understand that some majors might not have good prospects, but for professional, vital careers and those in need of much aid, exorbitant costs should not be a burden.

Roae mentioned that a Pennsylvania Democratic representative "sent out a memo looking for support on a piece of legislation that would allow convicted felons who are currently in jail to vote." This was not misinformation, and I agree that you lose civic rights — not civil, but civic — while imprisoned. The problem occurs after an incarcerated person completes their sentence. Hundreds of thousands of people face voting and employment challenges after imprisonment for small, non-violent drug offenses.

I also expressed concern over his mentioning Governor Tom Wolf's veto of Markie's Law. We need to protect our communities from violent crime, but we must not forget to do so constructively and justly. If you go after crime arbitrarily and do not consider the potential for personal development, you forget the humanity of your fellows, and the jailing system results in failure. This is what happened to create the shameful incarceration crisis we have now. Roae gives some inaccurate statements, and although I agree with him on some things — not all, but some — I do not believe that a person who willfully misguides the public that they are supposed to lead should be re-elected. Unfortunately, the re-election of such individuals has been a prominent trend in our nation. I do not judge Roae as a person, but a politician — and I ask that readers do the same. We cannot condone misinformation under any circumstances.