



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on October 13, 2020

Police Chief Forced to Resign Over Wife's Pro-Trump Comments?

Cancel culture has forced a Lancaster, Pennsylvania, police chief into early retirement after his wife was “caught” posting pro-Trump, anti-BLM social media posts, [sources say](#).

Lancaster City Mayor Danene Sorace announced on October 2 that Police Chief Jarrad Berkihiser will be stepping down from his position on October 31. It was initially unclear what provoked the unexpected announcement, but clarification came from the Fraternal Order of Police Pennsylvania State Lodge. The FOP told WGAL the mayor asked the chief to resign after comments made by his wife on social media had surfaced.



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According to Lancaster Online, Chief Berkihiser's wife, Kristy Berkihiser, had responded to a since-deleted September 27 Facebook post by a friend who had volunteered at a Trump rally at the Harrisburg International Airport. When the friend remarked on President Trump's high praise for law enforcement, Berkihiser's wife responded this was “why I'm voting for him again. Same reason as last time. You don't see him meeting with Jacob's Blake's family or speaking to him on the phone.”

John Fiorill, immediate past president of Lancaster County Red Rose Lodge 16 Fraternal Order of Police, states the comments did not come from the chief, who is aware that he is not meant to engage in public politicking, but only from Berkihiser's wife.

“The irony of this whole thing is, he didn't make that statement,” Fiorill said. “He knows better than to get involved in politics. It was his wife. Where does the mayor have the audacity to request his resignation based on what his wife said? He had nothing to do with it.”

Fiorill adds the mayor's actions violate Kristy's free speech rights.

“My position is this is a clear violation of her first amendment right to speak as she chooses,” said Fiorill. “This is truly an egregious offense that took place because it resulted in Chief Berkihiser's forced retirement.”

Kristy Berkihiser has since issued a statement voicing her opposition to the mayor's actions.

“To punish him and judge him after an exemplary 26-year career because of me is absolutely wrong. To sacrifice his career to save face for my remark taken out of context and my political affiliation is terrible. He deserves better. I have heard so many people say he is the right chief for the right time. It is because he is. He is genuine, fair, and truthful in all he does and never for his own gain.”

She also took the opportunity to defend her support for President Trump.



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"I do support the candidate I do because of his support of our police and military," she said.

Mayor Sorace has yet to confirm or deny the purported reasoning behind the chief's departure. In a statement issued on October 10 and posted on the city government's Facebook page, she claimed she was restricted from speaking on the issue:

There is an agreement that legally binds Chief Berkiher and me to not comment on the nature of the discussions we had, nor on the factors that led to his decision to retire. It is my obligation to abide by the letter of the law in not breaching that document. I also feel morally and ethically bound to the spirit of the agreement. It is my duty as mayor to honor this agreement and I will do so.

The response to that post, which has garnered more than 500 comments, has been largely negative.

"I am a registered Democrat," one user posted. "You have failed us, Mayor Sorace. You have failed in your responsibilities to protect our city, to promote civility, and to speak the truth. Lancaster's woke officials must be removed and I look forward to the next election."

Another user opined, "Impeach this mayor!! She does nothing but divide our community. This chief was the best the city ever had. You did this because he is a Republican and doesn't have your political views."

Even users who do not appear to be Trump supporters and who did not support the comments made by the chief's wife have come to the defense of Chief Berkiher.

One user, whose profile picture features a "Biden/Harris" frame, wrote, "This isn't good enough, Mayor. Did you or did you not force his retirement for a stupid, false post that his wife made — NOT a stupid, false post that HE made? Come on. Your constituents deserve better and I think so does Chief Berkiher, who is — by almost any account I've heard — a kind and decent police officer."

Mayor Sorace's retirement announcement was filled with Chief Berkiher's accomplishments, many of which have been the goals of social justice groups, including implementing body cameras, hiring the department's first social worker, and improving the department's use of force policy, Fox 43 reports.

Fiorill told WGAL that they have provided Berkiher with a solicitor for legal advice. It is unknown whether Berkiher intends to pursue legal action.

Meanwhile, an online petition calling for Berkiher to be reinstated has received more than 7,000 signatures. The petition's creator, Katie Fisher, told Fox 43's Grace Griffaton she intends to take the petition and the people's comments to the virtual Lancaster City Council meeting on October 13.

"I want to hear from the Mayor a response. She has these signatures and these coming to her," said Fisher.



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