

# POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

## Hennessey promoted the big lie

Two years ago, on Dec. 29, 2020, I wrote a column castigating state Rep. Tim Hennessey, who currently represents about half of Pottstown, for perpetuating the big lie that Joe Biden was not legitimately elected president.

Little did any of us know that the following week, on Jan. 6, 2021, then-President Donald Trump would exhort multitudes of his followers in Washington to march on the Capitol and physically disrupt Congress from counting the electoral vote.



Commentary by  
Thomas Hylton

More than 2,000 rioters did just that, assaulting Capitol Police and breaking into the Capitol building. There was vandalism, looting and an attempt to actually capture the legislators.

We are still dealing with the fallout from that insurrection. A significant percentage of Republicans still think the presidential election was stolen, despite no evidence whatsoever of fraud.

Previously, on Dec. 4, 2020, together with more than 60 other state Republican legislators, Hennessey signed a letter to Pennsylvania's congressional delegation asking the delegation "to object, and vote to sustain such objection, to the Electoral College votes received from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania during the Joint Session of Congress on Jan. 6, 2021."

Under the 1887 Electoral Count Act, if one senator and one representative from any given state challenges that state's electoral votes, the House and Senate will then decide whether to accept those votes.

Both of Pennsylvania's senators, Republican Pat Toomey and Democrat Robert Casey Jr., publicly accepted Joe Biden as the legally elected president.

The letter that Hennessey signed, therefore, was little more than a publicity stunt.

But it was dangerous and destructive.

As Loyola Law School professor Justin Levitt noted at the time, "It's a sideshow, but it's a harmful sideshow. The continuing baseless, evidence-free claims of alternative facts are actually having an effect on a substantial number of Americans. They are creating the conditions for elections not to work in the future."

The letter Tim Hennessey signed perpetuated that blatant falsehood.

Joe Biden won 80,000 more votes for president than Donald Trump in Pennsylvania.

The same election that Biden won saw two Republicans win statewide office, treasurer and auditor general. It would have taken an unbelievably sophisticated fraud to flip 80,000 votes for Biden and, on the same ballot, keep Republican majorities for treasurer and auditor general.

And, of course, that same election saw Rep. Hennessey win a thirteenth term in the General Assembly.

In November 2020, former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, acting as Trump's lawyer, asked a federal judge to throw out 6.8 million votes cast in Pennsylvania on nebulous accusations of irregularities.

The judge, Matthew Braun, a Republican and conservative Federalist Society member, wrote that Trump's campaign presented "strained legal arguments without merit and speculative accusations." He dismissed the case.

When Hennessey promoted the "big lie" two years ago, there was nothing voters could do about it.

But now there is. They can vote Hennessey out of office next week.

Because of redistricting, Hennessey will no longer represent Pottstown next year.

Once heavily Republican, his new district is in transition. But regardless of party, Hennessey is no friend of democracy. He needs to go.



**REP. TIM HENNESSEY** signed a letter to Pennsylvania's congressional delegation in December 2020 asking it to challenge and discard Pennsylvania's electoral votes. The following month, rioters assaulted the U.S. Capitol.