

Dear Congressman Frelinghuysen,

I write you today not as a member of the New Jersey General Assembly but as your constituent and an American.

I am sure you are aware of our President's latest foray into uncharted territory while honoring a group of Native Americans. The World War Two code-talkers, Marines from the Navajo Nation, have long been celebrated for their courageous acts. Our President, without any remorse, uttered a racial slur used against the group with the sole purpose of admonishing a political foe. To say this is unacceptable would be the understatement of the year.

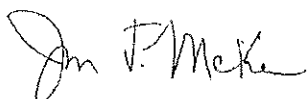
Regardless of one's politics, simple human decency should still remain. Our President started his modern political career by helping to create and spread the outright falsehood that our first African-American President was born in Africa. He began his campaign by attacking Mexicans and immigrants. He moved on to doubling down on attacking Gold Star Families who disagreed with him. He came into office and immediately tried to bar individuals from coming into America based on whether they came from a Muslim-majority nation. He tweeted away rights for LGBTQ Americans serving in the Armed Forces. He has equivocated in denouncing a murderous hate group and challenged a grieving military widow. When is enough, enough?

These actions and words are not that of a leader but rather they are at best of a person who does not begin to reflect the core values of what it means to be an American. As Senator Ted Cruz said, the President is a "pathological liar" who is a danger to our republic. We can literally watch the President's press secretary lie from podium in his name on a daily basis. A White House press secretary, who cloaked with the honor of that title, falsely maligned a respected person (Greg Schiano) as harboring a pedophile. This while simultaneously attacking our uncensored press which, until a year ago, was revered as a beacon of what it means to be free.

We can disagree on philosophy but when basic facts and unequivocal truths are denied by the President of the United States and his staff, it directly threatens our democracy. How can you, Congressman, or anyone vested with the sacred responsibility you have sworn to uphold be complicit by remaining silent.

Congressman, I have long respected your service to our nation, both as a veteran and a long-term public servant. Your family has long been a cornerstone of American democracy. That is partly why it is so important that you speak out against this President right now. I need not remind you that it was your father, Congressman Peter Frelinghuysen, Jr., who said during the height of McCarthyism in 1954 that, "By remaining silent we permit the public to believe that most Republicans condone the Senator's tactics." He went even further in saying that "By remaining silent we lend credence to the view that we prefer to risk losing our freedom than to offend a questionable 'asset' to our party." Those words ring as true as ever today. By remaining silent, you are condoning our President's words and his actions. That profile in a lack of courage is indefensible. I appeal to your moral compass to speak out as the voice of your constituents before our democracy is irreconcilably harmed.

Sincerely,



John F. McKeon  
Assemblyman - 27th Legislative District