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Pima County Board of Supervisors

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Supervisor Matt Heinz Calls for Censure and Investigation of Sheriff Chris Nanos for Election Interference

Pima County District 2 Supervisor Matt Heinz has introduced a motion to censure Sheriff Chris Nanos for putting his political opponent, Lieutenant Heather Lappin, on administrative leave in the middle of the 2024 election cycle.

“Sheriff Nanos’ reckless and vindictive action against his political rival is nothing but an attempt to smear and silence his opponent,” said Supervisor Matt Heinz. “This is clear election interference and Nanos must not be allowed to use his office to manipulate the free and fair voting process in Pima County. The Board of Supervisors has a responsibility to hold Nanos accountable – we owe it to our constituents to censure him at our next meeting.”

The motion also calls for the censure of Nanos for violating the First Amendment rights of Sargeant Aaron Cross president of the Pima County Deputies Organization union, which has taken a vote of no confidence in Sheriff Nanos.

Heinz is asking members of the board request that the Arizona Attorney General’s Office and the United States Attorney for the District of Arizona investigate if Sheriff Nanos violated any state or federal laws in using his official capacity as sheriff to attempt to silence his political opposition during an election.

Just days after the start of early voting, Sheriff Nanos put Lieutenant Lappin on administrative leave, prohibited her from speaking to the public about the alleged reasons for the leave, and mandated that she stay home during regular business hours, impeding her ability to campaign.

“This sort of corruption doesn’t have a place in our political process – Not only should Nanos be censured and investigated, he should also call off his campaign for reelection,” said Heinz. “Chris Nanos has shown he doesn’t have the character to serve the residents of Pima County.”

The motion for censure will be discussed at the next meeting of the Pima County Board of Supervisors, on Tuesday, November 12.

Supervisor Heinz is available for comment.