

# FACT CHECK ✓

(how much truth is worth sacrificing?)

This information presented here is a partial record of falsehoods, misleading statements, and other partisan practices to promote the campaign of Marsha Porter Norton.

Also included is a partial list of advantages the major political parties have given themselves in the election process.

Documenting these circumstances and posting them online is to provide an easy resource to anyone fact-checking references that may be made in candidate presentations, debates, online posts, social media, letters to the editor, etc.

This document will be updated as needed.

If any information here is inaccurate, please let me know so I can correct this document. In addition, I will contact the person / organization unfairly referenced and make a formal apology.

# Marsha Porter Norton invents a Republican opponent.

Hyper-partisan politics is the playbook she and party insiders know best.

From [“Meet Marsha & Matt” Town Hall – August 13, 2020](#)

**Moderator:** *“Do you feel that your unaffiliated opponents are nonpartisan enough to represent the full constituents of La Plata County?”*

**Marsha Porter Norton (D) reply:**

*“I believe that my opponent is... just based on donors, based on yard signs, is predominately the Republican nominee de facto.*

*Um, and I don't say that to put this hyper-partisan statement out there, uh, I think that like Matt said, let's just look at the facts when we're running we can, we all have to stand on who are... you know, who we are getting support from and what that looks like.*

*Um... so I believe that it is... uh... you know unaffiliated does not mean that you don't lean toward a certain way. And so, I think that we are running... I, I am running against someone that, again, is predominantly backed by Republicans and that brings a certain value set with it just like being a Democrat does.*

*I am a proud Democrat and for the reasons that Julie mentioned, I believe that it's the party of the people and I believe we, uh work very hard to get things done for everyone, and I really encourage voters not to bring any frustration or anger about national polarization into this county commissioner race and I believe that is what my opponent is largely running on is that, “Do you hate the parties? Well I do too.”*

*Well a commissioner job is nonpartisan the way it's carried out. And, I, I just believe that we're going to do much better by sticking to the issues and not bringing that national poison polarization into our races.”*

## Jack Turner's Response:

Marsha Porter Norton's claim that I'm the de facto nomination of any political party is an insult to me AND voters. I was nominated by more than a thousand people from across La Plata County who signed my nomination petition. I am not a member or representative of any political party.

I did not consult with any political party or insiders about entering the race. I don't have a party platform to follow. I owe no debts or obligations to a political party or special interest group.

I've asked everyone to think for themselves. Marsha Porter Norton infers that voters are incapable of doing so.

Marsha Porter Norton's statements are purely hyper-partisan and demonstrate that **she believes a candidate owes a political debt to their financial contributors.**

Using her logic, voters that don't contribute to Marsha Porter Norton or the Democrat party aren't owed anything if she gets elected.

My only debt to donors is gratitude, a willingness to listen to everyone, be fair to all, and act in the interest of La Plata County.

The irony is that Marsha Porter Norton raised \$40,000+ to my \$26,000 as of July 25, 2020. She received \$3,000 directly from the Democrat party and she can get another \$19,500 in party funding.

So, using Marsha's logic, she owes \$40,000 in political paybacks.

The statement that Jack Turner is "*predominantly backed by Republicans*" is false. Of the 108 contributions received to date, 39% are from Republicans.<sup>1</sup> The rest are Democrats, Independents, family, and friends.

If the Republican Party, didn't nominate a candidate, does that mean their party members shouldn't support another person in the race? I'm happy and proud to meet with and listen to La Plata County Republicans or any other group of citizens, including Democrats.

Frustration with political parties is felt locally as well as nationally. Asking the voters (or me) to ignore this frustration because it's an inconvenient truth to the political parties takes a lot of chutzpah. It's not negative campaigning to point out the practices of political party nominees.

I don't hate the political parties; I am just willing to listen to everyone.

Marsha says commissioner's work is nonpartisan, but standard party practices to get her elected are hyper-partisan. I believe local voters want change.

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<sup>1</sup> We had no idea of the political mix of donors to Elect Jack Turner campaign. It never occurred to me to even ask. We didn't look up donor affiliation until after Marsha's accusations.

**THIS IS A LIE** posted by Karen Pontius, [At-Large Member of the Democrat Party Executive Committee](#) and reposted by Mary Ann Jones.

A search of La Plata County voter registrations (available to the Democrats) give a complete history of my affiliation for decades. **I've never once been registered as a member of the Republican Party.**

I was once registered as a Democrat so I could vote in primaries. I've never attended a Democrat party function

When Colorado changed its laws so that Independents could vote in primaries, I switched my registration to Unaffiliated.

I welcome the opportunity to speak to any group of Democrats the same way as I do for other citizen groups.

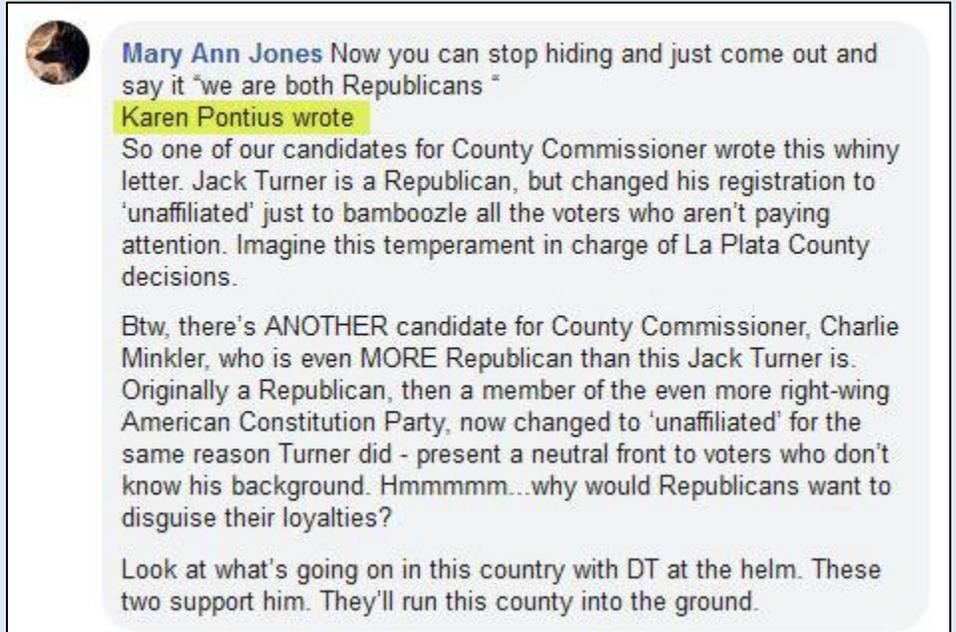
**Democrats do NOT want to run against an Independent. Our campaign is disrupting status quo and a lock on La Plata County elections by a minority of voters (only 31% of registered local voters are Democrats).**

**DISTORTING THE TRUTH...** It's a letter to the editor from Kathleen Adams, a Marsha Porter Norton supporter.<sup>2</sup> It appeared in the [August 20 edition of the Durango Telegraph](#). She made the identical quote on an article in the August 22 edition of the Durango Herald.

Ms. Adams fails to mention that I was referencing how the public perceives commissioners. Some folks believe that the current commissioners are predictably *"against"* Republicans. And some think Democrats will automatically be favored.

My comment about being *"unpredictable"* was immediately explained to mean that voters should not have preconceptions about the commissioners favoring one group over another. The only predictability should be to expect fair treatment.

I'm sure the unpredictable nature of facing off against a viable Independent is not relished by those who count on the predictability of political party status quo and predictable election results.



<sup>2</sup> Ms. Adams was listed as an officer of the League of Women Voters when these statements were published. She's since been removed from the League's website as an officer.

**MAKE UP A STORY...** While Marsha Porter Norton and Karen Pontius seek to define me as Republican, former DEM County Commissioner and MPN endorser, Wally White declares that I'm a failed Democrat.

 **Wally White**  
Nancy Brockman Jack could have been in a primary with Marsha but knew he would lose so he switched.

 **Jack Turner**  
**Wally White** In 2016, I switched from being a registered Democrat to Unaffiliated after the citizen initiative Proposition 108 passed, allowing every registered voter (including independents) to participate in the primaries. A great move for democracy. I made this change long before I considered running for County Commissioner. I didn't have to seek any party's permission to get on this 2020 ballot. I worked hard and earned it with much help from citizen volunteers. More than one thousand voters in La Plata County signed my petitions to have a spot on the ballot next to your candidate. I have said a great deal about what I'd do as County Commissioner and how I would conduct myself when in the position. Unfortunately, I also have to answer to your party's statements — delivered by your candidate herself — that I am a de facto Republican candidate, and further untruths from Karen Pontious that I am a life-long Republican. Fact checking should not solely be reserved for your opposition. We all need to fact check ourselves. I look forward to continuing to listen to ALL of the people of La Plata County (including you) as we, together, make decisions that are best for this amazing place we call home.

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# A TILTED PLAYING FIELD

## How the political parties help themselves in Colorado

As a first-time, Independent candidate, here are just a few points I've learned about the advantages that major political parties have over Independents and minor parties.

### The Nomination Process

The political parties can automatically place candidates on the ballot. In the 2020 La Plata County race, the Democrat nominees were chosen by the sitting county commissioners and party insiders almost two years before the election. There were no alternatives, no opposition, and only one choice on the primary ballot.

Independent candidates are required to collect voter signatures face-to-face to be listed on the ballot, even during a pandemic. While the Governor issued executive orders to allow statewide candidates to collect signatures online or by mail, local candidates were never considered for such opportunity.

It cost thousands of dollars to develop a petition signing program compliant with COVID-19 safety protocols – costs that major party candidates don't incur and never will.

### Campaign Contributions

As an Independent candidate, donors may contribute up to \$2,500 per person to my campaign.

Marsha Porter Norton may collect the same amount from individuals, but she is also allowed to receive up to \$22,500 from the Democrat Party. To date she's already received \$3,000 from the Democrat Party.

### Campaign Support

Political parties tap into a network of party insiders, political consultants, and other resources that provide direct and indirect support to their campaign.

Independents are on their own. In my case, everyone on campaign team is a volunteer and most have never worked on a campaign before.

### The Ballot

A random drawing is held to determine who is listed first on the ballot, but only between the Republican and Democrat nominees.

Marsha Porter Norton is automatically listed first on the ballot since there will be no Republican nominee. I will be listed last under any circumstance.

## Counting the Vote

The first procedure in counting a vote is to compare the signature on the ballot envelope to the signature on the voter's record. If they match, the envelope is opened, and the ballot is then counted. If the signatures are determined by the witnesses not to match, the ballot is discarded.

**Only registered Democrats and Republicans are allowed to witness if ballots are to be saved or discarded.** Independent candidates are not allowed to have a representative to witness this process.

# Check back for updates!