



**Good morning**

**This is now the third time I have called you all together. First, at my announcement to run for Mayor at Eastland Mall. Second, when I filed for office at the Board of Elections and now today, here at the Government Center.**

**Over the past 9 months, my opponent and I have had over 40 debates and forums, in churches and synagogues, schools and universities, before students and civic clubs. We have been applauded for the refreshingly clean campaign that has been waged, the discourse focused on issues and our ability to avoid negative campaigning.**

**The tone, the rhetoric and the content has suddenly changed. Yesterday, a piece of mail was delivered to tens of thousands of Charlotte voters, people I have represented for 11 years on the Board of Education and for the past 6 years on city council that contains the same grainy images, the same emotional innuendo, the same caustic implications that have infected political campaigns in other states, other cities but never Charlotte.**

**This piece of mail, paid for by the North Carolina Democratic Party, is the third that they have paid for and sent to voters in Charlotte, all told to date their expenditure to influence our mayor's race totals nearly \$50,000. The first 2, my opponent gladly allowed his name to be prominently displayed and the issues that he cares about discussed in detail. This piece of mail has no mention of my opponent and states that no candidate or candidate's committee approved the content. Maybe.**

**The content matches the charges leveled by my opponent in his television ads and in his question to me at our last televised debate. The content matches the opposition research that his campaign paid nearly \$30,000 to conduct this past spring.**



**During this campaign, I have focused on the issues and my vision for leading this city. Despite encouragement, I have avoided talking about the employment status of my opponent or his family. I have avoided personal attacks and told anyone remotely connected to our campaign that we will not run a negative campaign or stray from the pressing issues facing this community.**

**I am reaffirming that vow today and I am asking my opponent to do the same. I am asking him to take two affirmative steps.**

- 1. Immediately contact the North Carolina Democratic Party leadership and request that they remove themselves from this race in our city and cease any additional mailing, television or radio plans to spread negative content today.**
- 2. That he reaffirm his commitment to a civil, issue based campaign devoid of negative content and cease any additional mailing, television or radio plans that include negative content, personal attacks or an uncivil tone.**

**We have appeared jointly with former Mayors Harvey Gantt and Richard Vinroot, honest hardworking men that have found time to serve this city, both of whose reputations were attacked in statewide campaigns that lost their way. Lets step up to their standard of service and campaigning and not slip into the darkness that has infected too many political races and worked to reduce the confidence our citizens have in our leaders.**

**I am not going to sacrifice my reputation for political gain. The citizens of this great city will have the same honest voice of reason they have seen in my public service for nearly 20 years.**