

# City Manager Surprises Commission with Resignation

At the end of a long and spirited City Commission meeting, during the City Manager's report, Michael Bornstein, City Manager of Lake Worth Beach calmly informed the City Commission he had submitted his resignation and started the 60 day clock per his contract.

The commissioners all sat shocked as if they had just seen a ghost.

Mayor Betty Resch said, "I didn't see this coming!", another asked "What if we don't accept it?"

Bornstein was hired in March 2012 when acting City Manager Steve Carr retired.

Prior to coming to Lake Worth, Bornstein was the Town Manager in Lantana for several years.

During his tenure in Lake Worth/Lake Worth Beach, progress has been steamrolling. Prior to his taking the job in Lake Worth, there had been no investment in the city for several years. Since his arrival, the City has been busy fixing infrastructure to bring the city up to the standards the residents deserve after many years of neglect.

LWB resident Mary Lindsey summed it up. "When Lake Worth was desperate for stability and predictability, Mike Bornstein sailed in to the rescue. He brought incredibly relevant local experience along with depths of knowledge and appreciation for the history and culture of our land. Most of all, he came with sparkling personality and good humor. I wish him all the best and I'll miss our Capt. Rumpirate very much. Argh."



Bornstein

# The Lie of Georgia Voter Suppression

President Joe Biden is so committed to bipartisan cooperation and fact-based governance that he's launched an ignorant and incendiary attack on the new Georgia voting law.

Biden says the new law is "Jim Crow in the 21st century" and "an un-American law to deny people the right to vote."

It's now practically mandatory for Democrats to launch such unhinged broadsides. Elizabeth Warren, accusing Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp of having stolen his 2018 election victory over Democratic activist Stacey Abrams (a poisonous myth), tweeted, "The Republican who is sitting in Stacey Abrams' chair just signed a despicable voter suppression bill into law to take Georgia back to Jim Crow."

Anyone making this charge in good faith either doesn't understand the hideousness of Jim Crow or the provisions of the Georgia law.

The old Jim Crow was billy clubs and fire hoses; the alleged new Jim Crow is asking people to write a driver's license number on their absentee ballot envelopes.

The old Jim Crow was poll taxes; the new Jim Crow is expanding weekend voting.

The old Jim Crow was disenfranchising voters en masse based on their race; the new Jim Crow is limiting ballot drop boxes to places they can't be tampered with.

It's hard to believe that one real voter is going to be kept from voting by the new rules.

To better ensure the security, the law requires that voters provide a driver's license or state ID number to apply for a ballot and one of those numbers (or the last four digits of a Social Security number) when returning the ballot.

The law narrows the window for requesting absentee ballots, although still allows plenty of time. A voter can request a ballot as early as 11 weeks prior to an election or as late as 11 days prior (any later risks the completed ballot not getting delivered in time).

Ballot drop boxes were a pandemic-era innovation in Georgia. The law keeps them, while limiting their location to early voting sites.

After getting backlash over proposed limits on weekend early voting when Black churches run their "Souls to the Polls" events, Georgia lawmakers expanded the potential for weekend voting.

The law gives the State Election Board more authority to take over local election operations, but there's no doubt that election officials in Fulton County, where metro Atlanta is located and long lines at the polls are common, have been incompetent.

Perhaps most controversially, it bans people from distributing food or drink to voters standing in line, an effort to keep partisans from trying to sway voters near polling places. But poll workers can provide food and drink for general use.

The deeper point is that in the contemporary United States, with such wide and ready access to the ballot, changes around the edges don't disenfranchise people.

Georgia considered limiting no-excuse absentee voting to voters 65 and over. Even this wouldn't have dissuaded anyone from voting. A study published by the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research found that turnout increased in 2020 just as much in states without no-excuse absentee voting as in states with it.

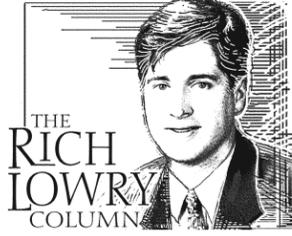
Strict voter ID laws have long been denounced as voter suppression. It's not true. According to a 2019 working paper for the National Bureau of Economic Research, "strict ID laws have no significant negative effect on registration or turnout, overall or for any subgroup."

And Democrats issued dire warnings about the effects of the Supreme Court in 2013 ending so-called preclearance that required federal approval of changes in the rules in certain jurisdictions.

This, too, was wrong. A paper by a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Oregon concludes, "The removal of preclearance requirements did not significantly reduce the relative turnout of eligible Black voters."

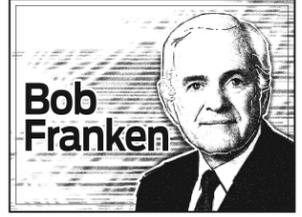
None of the facts, though, can possibly overcome the attachment that Biden and other Democrats have to their emotionally resonant and politically powerful Jim Crow smear.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. (c) 2021 by King Features Synd., Inc.



# The Other J-C

Jim Crow is not a real person. He's a fictional character invented by a white guy for demeaning performances in minstrel shows. But for generations of Black Americans, Jim Crow is very real and ever present in their lives.



It evolved into the name given to whites' grudging end to slavery, or almost end to slavery. That is, if you consider an end to slavery separate accommodations -- drinking fountains, restrooms, lunch counters, hotels ... as if you're dirty or less than human -- separate and substandard schools, racially segregated housing and a lack of equal employment opportunity and the means to really escape economically from bondage. Check that, the real lack of a means to escape was the blockade put up to voting.

All of those denied rights were supposed to end with the abolition of slavery, but really didn't.

Jim Crow represents the establishment of a network of laws that enforced an American system that called itself "separate but equal." But it was shabbily unequal, put in place by political entities "elected" by only a portion of the population, the white people. If necessary, these laws were enforced by vigilantes like the hooded Ku Klux Klan, who terrorized the Black community with marauding violence, including lynching. They were followed by their more polite fellow riders along the bigoted trails, who hid their prejudice with legalese.

The advent of television news showed the restrictive South to citizens sheltered in the north, who had no idea. There were enough people of goodwill to generate political pressure that ultimately led to strong laws that were supposed to guarantee basic rights. They were coordinated by landmark rulings from a temporarily conscientious Supreme Court. The justices gave teeth to efforts to get rid of a few of the laws that allowed blatant racial discrimination.

Gradually, reluctant racists had to give way, for a while, to integrated schools, integrated housing and integrated opportunity of all sorts. Suddenly they had to swallow hard and accept the right to mixed-race marriages and next-door neighbors of color.

Except they didn't give way. The politicians, mainly Republicans, came up with a so-called Southern strategy of appealing to white voters by promoting their continued advantage. That strategy was a creation of Richard Nixon with the enthusiastic backing of the GOP. It won over Southern voters and restored restrictive laws spreading all over the United States.

Their model is Dixie, where the former slaveholders never got over the fact that they had lost their "just cause," the Civil War, and with it the right to treat people of color as boorish animals.

They were encouraged by politicians who used slick language to camouflage their appeals to the racists -- the Richard Nixons, Newt Gingriches, the Donald Trumps, all the other demagogues who fan prejudice with their rhetoric.

Proving that old forms of hatred don't flame out in this country, the formerly conscientious Supreme Court issued a series of rulings that have gutted the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and support various campaign finance decisions that make a mockery of ballot equality. Now the Republicans have been emboldened to reinstate Jim Crow as the supervisor of elections. In 43 states, the GOP has introduced ballot box initiatives that are aimed at suppressing the votes of minorities and other Democratic-dominated constituencies that are in various stages of legislative consideration.

The Georgia conservatives -- who survived the Trump years after officials stood against Trump and accepted an overwhelming victory by Democrats -- have now closed the loopholes, making their voter suppression hard to avoid next time around. It infamously even prohibits anyone from offering food and water to those forced to stand in hours-long lines as a result of other restrictions in the measure. It even expands a voter ID requirement that harkens back to the days when Blacks did not routinely carry driver's licenses because they were too poor to afford a car.

These and other relics of the days of yore are the days longed for by so many wearing red baseball caps emblazoned with "Make America Great Again." These yearnings are embraced by millions of MAGA supporters who would return us to the years when the country was an apartheid nation, a confederation of the Jim Crow States of America.

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