New Jersey General Assembly
Democratic Caucus

June 29, 2000

Hon. Joe Andrew
National Chair
Democratic National Committee
430 South Capitol Street, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

Dear Chairman Andrew:

We would like to bring to your attention a matter of grave importance to many elected Democratic officials in New Jersey.

As the Leaders of the New Jersey Assembly's Democratic Caucus, we were shocked and disappointed to learn of Assemblyman Joseph Roberts' recent selection as a Democratic National Committee Member from New Jersey. This appointment conflicts with the widely held belief that only Democrats who have shown a true loyalty to our party and its cherished principles should have the opportunity to serve on the national party's governing board.

Please consider the following history of events:

Assemblyman Roberts and a group of six other Democratic elected members of the General Assembly have not served as loyal Democrats for more than seven months. Their disloyal activities began immediately after Mr. Roberts made an unsuccessful challenge to lead the Assembly Democratic Caucus in November 1999. He and his six colleagues have refused to reenter the Democratic Caucus, and have since boycotted all meetings and events.

While the unprecedented boycotting of caucus meetings has long been a source of disappointment for us and other faithful Assembly Democrats, the recent voting conduct of Mr. Roberts and his six colleagues raises serious questions about their credentials as Democratic Party members. Earlier this month, the seven members shunned the rest of the Democratic Caucus by joining with the Republican majority to pass school construction financing legislation that runs counter to best interests of traditional Democratic constituencies. In fact, Mr. Roberts and his colleagues ignored a party position of the Democratic Caucus, as well as the wishes of members of the Legislative Black and Latino Caucus. The measure would not have been approved if the boycotting members had not violated the party position rule and voted with the GOP.

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Before you seat Mr. Roberts as a member of the Democratic National Committee, you should investigate his record and speak to other Democrats in the New Jersey General Assembly. Once you conduct your own review, we are sure you will understand why Mr. Roberts ***should not be seated*** on August 18, 2000 in Los Angeles as a member of the Democratic National Committee.

In closing, we want to cite Article I, Section 6 of the Charter of the Democratic Party. This section of the charter says that the Democratic Party's purpose is to: "Work with Democratic public officials at all levels to achieve the objectives of the Democratic Party." Mr. Roberts' action over the last several months is contradictory with the purpose and focus of Article I, Section 6.

You are in a position to halt an action which may adversely affect the members of the Democratic Party not only in New Jersey, but nationally. We know you believe in the fundamental tenets of our Party. We hope you will agree that Mr. Roberts' behavior makes him unworthy for National Committee membership.

Sincerely,

Joseph V. Doria, Jr.
Assembly Democratic Leader

Loretta Weinberg
Deputy Democratic Leader

Neil Cohen
Deputy Democratic Leader

Joseph J. Charles, Jr.
Democratic Leader Pro-Tempore

Anthony Impreveduto
Democratic Conference Chairman

c.
President Bill Clinton
Vice President Al Gore
Hon. Edward Rendell
Chairman Thomas Giblin, NJDSC
United States Senator Frank Lautenberg
United States Senator Robert Torricelli
Congressman Frank Pallone
Congressman Donald Payne
Congressman Robert Andrews
Hudson County Executive Robert Janiszewski
Mayor James McGreevey
State Senator John Lynch
State Senator Ray Lesniak
George Norcross
All DNC Members
All Democratic State Chairs
All NJ DSC Members
All NJ Democratic County Chairs

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July 10, 2000

Hon. Joe Andrew
National Chair
Democratic National Committee
430 South Capitol Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003

Hon. Edward G. Rendell
General Chair
Democratic National Committee
430 South Capitol Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Sirs:

On behalf of my colleagues, led by the Minority Leader of the New Jersey General Assembly, Joseph Doria, please accept my sincerest apologies for being drawn into a longstanding internal struggle within our state legislative caucus. The recent correspondence you may have received contesting my election as a member of the Democratic National Committee is without merit and was clearly malicious in intent.

Please note that at the last meeting of the New Jersey Democratic State Committee on Saturday, June 17, I was elected **unanimously** and **without comment or opposition** to become a member of the Democratic National Committee. Mr. Doria and three of his allies who signed the letter referenced above -- Mrs. Weinberg, Mr. Charles and Mr. Impreveduto -- were also present at that meeting and **did not contest my appointment**. For the record, please feel free to confirm this fact with our State Democratic Chairman Tom Giblin.

It is truly unfortunate that Mr. Doria's bitterness toward me had to be exposed in the national political arena, but be it as it may, please allow me to explain why Mr. Doria has failed our Party time and again.

In 1997, after many years of frustration over the failure of the Minority Leader to move us into majority status – and at the urging of many of my colleagues – I challenged Mr. Doria's leadership and lost by only 3 swing votes. Subsequently, I was removed from my position as Democratic Budget Officer on the Assembly Appropriations Committee. I acknowledge that my removal was the price that one pays after a leadership challenge, but Mr. Doria's vindictiveness toward others in the Caucus created a division that has severely affected our ability to work together.

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This pattern of saying one thing and doing another continued when Mr. Doria decided to become a candidate for Mayor of Bayonne after having told the Democratic Caucus he had no intention of doing so. Frankly, this distraction from his responsibilities as Minority Leader is troubling as is the degree to which campaign funds earmarked for Democratic legislative candidates have been used to promote his mayoral candidacy in Bayonne.

Last year Mr. Doria once again **failed to keep his word**. In an effort by many Party leaders in our State, an agreement was reached whereby Mr. Doria would relinquish his Minority Leader post and support my serving in that capacity by the 2001 legislative election cycle. Mr. Doria **abandoned** this and other agreements, though attested to by the other parties present when these arrangements were made.

In politics your word is supposed to be your bond. **Mr. Doria simply does not honor his commitments**.

While other Assembly Democrats from the southern portion of our state were being discriminated against, politically and governmentally, due to their friendship with me I decided not to follow the lead of our perennial Minority Leader. My southern colleagues joined me in forming our own caucus to address regional and state issues.

While I am still hopeful that cooler heads will prevail in Trenton, I am excited by the opportunity to serve with you as a member of the Democratic National Committee and I appreciate the good will extended by Vice President Gore's leading representative in New Jersey, Mr. Harold Hodes. Together we will send a message to the radical Republican right in the Congress on down to the county courthouses by electing Al Gore as our next President and taking control of the Senate and House. I look forward to working with you to achieve these goals.

Again, please accept my sincerest apologies for the inappropriate behavior of Mr. Doria and his allies and thank you for allowing me the opportunity to address these important issues.

Democratically yours,

Joe Roberts

JOSEPH J. ROBERTS, JR.
Member, Democratic National Committee
Member, New Jersey General Assembly (5LD)
Chairman, Southern New Jersey Assembly Democratic Caucus

Cc: Hon. Bill Clinton
Hon. Robert G. Torricelli
Hon. Frank A. Pallone, Jr.
Hon. Donald Payne
Hon. William J. Pascrell, Jr.
Hon. Rush Holt
Mr. Jon S. Corzine
Mr. Thomas P. Giblin
NJ Delegation to the DNC
All NJDSC Members
All NJ Democratic County Chairs
Hon. Al Gore
Hon. Frank R. Lautenberg
Hon. Robert E. Andrews
Hon. Robert Menendez
Hon. Steven Rothman
Hon. Robert Janiszewski
Mr. Harold Hodes
Mr. George E. Norcross, III
All NJ Democratic State Assemblypersons
All NJ Democratic State Senators

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