

# Democrats choosing men over women candidates in party's own 'war on women'

BY ASHE SCHOW | MAY 6, 2014 | 12:00 AM

Democrats may claim that the GOP is waging a “war on women,” but in a handful of races across the country, the Democratic Party has gone to great lengths to push women and minority candidates out of races.

In some of those instances, the candidates have even claimed sexism and filed complaints. Here are some examples:

## **Marisa DeFranco**

In Massachusetts, immigration lawyer Marisa DeFranco is claiming sexism after the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee released a poll of primary voters that did not include her challenge to incumbent Democratic Rep. John Tierney.

“Our campaign is not asking for special treatment, only equal access,” DeFranco said. “We need to show the Democratic Party machine, the DCCC and everyone else that they cannot ignore, dismiss and erase out of the picture women who dare to challenge the status quo.”

That “status quo” DeFranco is referring to may have to do with her stance on Obamacare (she's against it and prefers a public option), which Democratic National Committee Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz believes is a winning issue for Democrats in 2014, despite all signs to the contrary.

## **Lynette Bryant**

In the race for Arkansas governor, candidate Lynette Bryant -- who holds several degrees, including a medical doctorate -- filed a complaint with the NAACP and the Democratic National Committee, alleging unfair treatment by Democrats in her state.

Bryant said she was repeatedly denied a request to speak at the Saline County Jefferson Jackson Dinner. She also said that Democratic Party of Arkansas Chairman Vince Insalaco introduced Bryant's opponent, former Rep. Mike Ross, as “the next governor of Arkansas” at an event both candidates were attending.

In a statement, DPA Executive Director Candace Martin said the DPA has “not endorsed any candidate in the gubernatorial primary.”

### **Nan Rich**

In the Florida governor's race, former State Sen. Nan Rich was denied permission to debate her opponent, former Republican governor-turned-Independent senate candidate-turned-Democratic gubernatorial candidate Charlie Crist.

The Broward Democratic Executive Committee rejected a motion to encourage a statewide debate between Rich and Crist. The rejection was seen as a blow to Rich, a former Democratic leader in the state Senate, as the rejection appears to be a sign she does not have the support of activists in her hometown.

“The philosophy was folks believed they should not be taking a position for one candidate or another in primary and in effect this is doing that,” executive committee Chairman Mitch Ceasar said. “As much as everybody in the room has respect for Nan — tremendous respect for Nan — many interpret this as being an indirect endorsement for one candidate.”

How allowing a debate was viewed as an endorsement is beyond this reporter.

Wasserman Schultz -- whose House district is centered on Broward County -- refused to step in on the debate matter, saying, “I'm the chair of the Democratic National Committee. It is not for me to weigh in on what happens in a Democratic primary.”

Wait, what?

### **Shaughnessy Naughton**

In Pennsylvania, the DCCC has been supporting veteran Kevin Strouse over well-qualified small business owner Shaughnessy Naughton.

Naughton is a former chemist who left her lucrative career to help her family's struggling publishing business. She eventually saved and expanded the company.

Naughton and Strouse are both running against incumbent Republican Rep. Michael Fitzpatrick.

### **Eloise Gomez Reyes**

Jumping across the country to California, the DCCC is “not-so-quietly” endorsing Redlands Mayor Pete Aguilar over three other Democrats, including attorney Eloise Gomez Reyes, according to Roll Call.

Gomez Reyes has the support of former Labor Secretary Hilda Solis and the pro-abortion group EMILY's List.

The plight of these candidates shows a disturbing trend of Democrats kneecapping women and minority candidates.

One could argue that Republicans don't have an exemplary record when it comes to running women candidates, considering there are more Democratic women serving in congress than Republican women. And while there are more Republican women running for the Senate, there are more Democratic women running for the House.

But remember which party 80 percent of women governors belong to, and also consider what the headlines would read if the above examples occurred in the Republican Party.

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