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Letter: Don't leave DeFranco out of campaign mix

Gloucester Daily Times

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I would like to respond to Michael Cook's letter of last week ("Cantor defeat speaks volumes of GOP direction," the Times, Saturday, June 14).

Mr. Cook makes several good points about the implications of Eric Cantor's primary defeat by a relatively unknown and poorly-funded, David Brat. Although Mr. Brat conducted a rather unsavory smear campaign against Mr. Cantor, he was able to topple the prominent and vocal House Majority Leader.

Mr. Cook goes on to say that this defeat has important implications for the Democratic Party and so it does.

The specter of the ultra conservatives or Tea Party candidates — for whom Mr. Cantor was not right-wing enough — being elected to office in greater numbers is indeed frightening. Mr. Cook admonishes us to be sure our 6th District congressional seat remains in Democratic hands. So far, so good.

What disturbs me here and has disturbed me for some time, is that there is no mention of the other candidate on the Democratic primary ballot this September: Marisa DeFranco.

Why is it that we are not hearing about Ms. DeFranco and her candidacy? She has garnered the requisite signatures to be on the ballot. Is it that she is running a grassroots campaign?

Ms. DeFranco has pledged to run a clean and fully transparent campaign by eschewing donations from PACs, and other entities that might have undue influence on her agenda. Her contributors know that each dollar is going to support her run for office. She is not relying on out of state supporters but on everyday folks who believe that one can win an election without corporate underwriting.

The defeat of Eric Cantor tells us something else: big money and entrenched politicians don't always win. Grassroots efforts can bring down an incumbent. We don't need a smear campaign against Tierney or Moulton; all we need is fair and equal coverage by the media of an independent, honest, intelligent, and completely viable candidate: DeFranco.

We have an interesting Democratic Primary coming up. Let it be a fair and open playing field for all legitimate candidates. Let people have the information they need to make an intelligent decision.

We shouldn't act out of fear of the Tea Party, but out of our belief that we do truly have a democratic election process in our country, our state, and in the 6th District and that voters can and will vote for a candidate, not against the right wing.

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