

Dems should take DeFranco run seriously
by Michael Cook
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To the editor: It's little wonder people are fed up with politics. The midterm elections are fourteen months away, yet pols of both parties are already on the campaign trail.

Still, I was glad to see Marissa DeFranco has announced her intention to challenge John Tierney in the Democratic primary next year.

I met Ms. DeFranco at the Gloucester Democratic City Committee's annual Sunday brunch in 2012, and to say that I was impressed is an understatement.

The morning of the brunch, the New York Times had published a story about the Obama administration's increasingly militaristic policies in Latin America. The focus of the story was on military operations in Honduras, but a subtheme of the story was about the growing frustration, mistrust, and anger those policies are generating among the region's politicians and ordinary citizens alike.

Of particular concern to many Central Americans was the agreement President Obama had just signed with his right wing counterpart in Colombia. That agreement called for joint military operations between the U.S. and Colombia, not inside Colombia's borders but inside several Central American countries. All of it, of course, in the name of the "War on Drugs".

News of the agreement sparked widespread concerns about the increasing militarization of an already volatile region.

I arrived at the brunch eager to ask the various Democratic candidates in attendance what they thought of the Obama administration's Latin policies, but I never got the chance. It quickly became clear most of the candidates, especially the top-tier candidates, had little interest in answering questions, especially pesky questions that took away from the pep rally atmosphere, from someone in the party's rank and file.

So, I sought out several of their aides. But it became clear my questions actually annoyed those aides because they were interpreted as being critical of President Obama. Those questions made me about as popular as a drag queen would be at the Pigeon Cove Chapel.

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