

**Janice O'Connell**

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**From:** LILLI Green [redacted]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 24, 2013 8:39 PM  
**To:** Janice O'Connell  
**Subject:** Barnstable County Charter Review Committee comments  
**Attachments:** 8-7-13-Letters from Wellfleet BoS and Dennis BoS.pdf

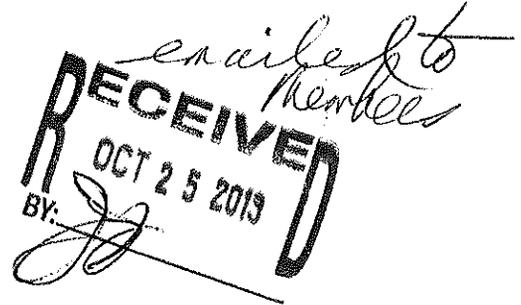
Dear Janice,

Please find my comments below regarding the Charter Review Committee. Please share my comments with all members of the Assembly of Delegates (AoD).

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lilli-Ann Green



10-24-13

Barnstable County Charter Review Committee (BCCRC) and all members of the Assembly of Delegates (AoD)

Barnstable County

Superior Courthouse

3195 Main Street

PO Box 427

Barnstable, MA 02630

Dear Barnstable County Charter Review Committee (BCCRC) and all members of the Assembly of Delegates:

As a Barnstable County citizen, home owner, registered voter and electric rate payer I am voicing my opinion to keep County Government as is the current existing structure. This is Option #1 as per the document: Options-Pros-and-Cons-for-Public-Comment-Sessions.

I agree with the letter sent to the BCCRC by the Wellfleet AoD member Ned Hitchcock with the endorsement of the Wellfleet Board of Selectmen (BoS) on 7/16/13. I will quote just a few powerful lines.

"The move to increasingly centralize government may reduce the likelihood of active citizen participation in governance. There is good evidence of this from a number of sources... The AoD is a small but vital link to the practice of direct democracy in our towns and the Commonwealth. It should not be scuttled in the service of some presumed efficiency to make it easier for county officials and agencies to increase their regulatory authority."

I also agree with the 7/16/13 letter to the BCCRC by the Wellfleet Board of Selectmen. They express as I do "grave concern that the recommendations [of the Special Commission on Governance] reflect an agenda which effectively eliminates the municipal voice of Wellfleet and other similarly situated towns. The Commission ... recommends elimination of executive and legislative functions ... no compelling argument has been advanced by the Commission to warrant this change except a vague allusion that centralized control will increase government efficiency. What is certain – loss of our current representative system would eliminate Wellfleet's fundamental right to actively participate and voice our vote at the county level."

I also agree with the 7/22/13 letter written by the Dennis Board of Selectmen.

Another reason why I feel strongly about keeping the status quo is because the Assembly of Delegates is the one county agency that has actually listened to the public and has taken action steps based upon its research following public comment. If the structure of county government is changed, I believe we will lose more of our democratic rights as citizens to be heard and taken seriously.

For over a year, the public attended meetings of the Barnstable County Commissioners. Members of the public were cut off in mid sentence, the pleas were ignored, no item agenda to address our concerns were added to meetings and people who were elected to serve the citizens of Barnstable County treated members of the public rudely.

Barnstable County citizens tried to meet with senior County employees in order to present facts and ask for information and action steps. The people who are paid to serve citizens of our county treated Barnstable County citizens rudely, refused to meet with citizens and would not provide information upon request.

The members of the public are volunteers. They are intelligent, thoughtful and have spent a great deal of time working on behalf of Barnstable County citizens. Many are extremely accomplished in their careers and even have national reputations as leaders in their field of expertise.

When members of the public asked the Barnstable County Commissioners to talk with senior county employees, so that the public could get some cooperation, the Commissioners would not help the citizens. They furthermore refused to direct the county employees to apologize to Barnstable County citizens for their inappropriate actions.

We can not accept option #3. Option #3 eliminates the AoD. There must be some county body that listens to the public. If option #3 is adopted, it will be a huge loss to the citizens of Barnstable County. Citizens will not be listened to or treated with dignity and respect by our county agencies and officials. That I am convinced of.

My recently deceased husband Preston Ribnick often said, in the United States we have the best form of democracy in the world. One of the reasons why is because minorities have rights. The public and the small towns on Cape Cod need to have our minority rights preserved. When there is a minority voice, it must be embraced. Preston also often talked about how in our democracy it is the

responsibility of each member of the public to be involved in our government and to take an active role. He also said often that it is the responsibility of the public when one see something that is wrong, one must try to right those wrongs. He followed that path. If the AoD is eliminated, instead of trying to empower the public to become actively engaged in county government, the clear message to the public will be, your voice will not be heard. There are checks and balances built into our democracy for a reason. The legislative branch of government is important and must be preserved.

As Preston would have said, this is a *Profiles in Courage* moment. Please have the courage to keep Barnstable County government as it is.

Sincerely,

Lilli-Ann Green  
45 Tim Way Rd.  
Wellfleet, MA 02667