

## Why All Santa Cruz Residents Must Speak Out To Give Our Political Minorities Back Their Voices

I am not a politician ... and never wanted to be. I tie my shoes just as you do.

And like most of you, I am a member of a group known as "the rest of us."

We take, with outstretched arms, whatever the power elites decide to throw our way. And, while we each have our particular causes for which we fight, whether it's climate change, green energy, indigenous people, inclusion, and others, my particular causes are in the fields of human rights and human dignity. I have a very sensitive antenna that tells me when powerful people or



entities are using their positions of authority or influence to oppress the weak. Oppression begins by denying the weak their natural right to speak out. Without voices, no one can hear their cries. So in 2020, I founded a nonprofit (501(c)(3)) and nonpartisan organization called the [First Amendment Rights Preservation Society, Inc. \(FARPS\)](#), in Santa Cruz, to aid in the fight to give the weak back their voices.

Being rather new to all of this, I thought I would begin right here in Santa Cruz by running a simple test case ([FARPS Santa Cruz Free Speech Audit](#)) through our city council to emulate whether the City of Santa Cruz respected the free speech rights of its small political minority. What was expected to last no more than a week or two turned into a marathon lasting from September 14, 2020 to September 30, 2021, and involved multiple layers of city government and third-parties: Mayor, City Council, City Manager, Public Works, Chief of Police, Santa Cruz Police Department, Independent Police Auditor, Office of the District Attorney, Santa Cruz Sentinel, the ACLU (San Francisco), and about 40 Santa Cruz County residents, including many from the City of Santa Cruz. It was through this eye-opening experience that I realized the City of Santa Cruz has a big problem ... and it isn't simply at the top. It is a systemic condition of political intolerance and abuse of authority that permeates throughout city government. It became clear that power is being misused by our representative government in its denial of free speech and equal protections to every resident, regardless of their political orientation. These individuals simply become [persona non grata's](#) within the community and the system ignores and / or attempts to erase their existence (the FARPS evidence demonstrates how). As a result, the political minority in Santa Cruz no longer has a voice in its community, stands little chance of rediscovering it, and lacks any genuine power to effect socioeconomic changes on its behalf in the quest for, and legal right to, [self-determination](#). Through this rather eventful experience that included my (illegal) arrest by the Santa Cruz Police

Department and a driver intent on running me down, I discovered that our local system of representative government was seriously damaged and hijacked, and that many residents had lost their voices.

*An oppressive regime that wallows in its insolence, self-deception and self-righteousness shall ultimately petrify in its own paralysis. Santa Cruz politics (and tribalism) has systematized and sanctioned the oppression and persecution of its political minorities. It is unable to compete on ideas, so must stifle its challengers. The people of Santa Cruz deserve so much better than this and must speak out against it.*

The ultimate tragedy is not that these individuals can no longer participate equally in the society in which they chose to live, but that those who silence them are protected from punishment by a legal system (police department, District Attorney, independent police auditor) complicit in their deeds. So, the silenced among us have no one to turn to and no recourse--forced to accept the poor hand that they have been dealt by their overlords.

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