OPINION

Letter to the Editor
A reader's written opinion submitted in response to an article in The Inquirer or another issue.

For more on how we work
The Editorial Board includes the managing editor for opinion, columnists, and opinion writers and editors. The board routinely discusses issues of the day to decide what to editorialize about and, during election campaigns, which candidates or ballot measures to endorse. News reporters and editors do not participate in these discussions. The board's opinions are not a consideration in news coverage.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Elizabeth H. Hughes
Publisher and CEO

Gabriel Escobar
Senior VP and Editor

Charlotte Sutton
Managing Editor

Patrick Kerkstra
Managing Editor, Content Strategy

Richard G. Jones
Managing Editor, Opinion

Michael Huang
Managing Editor, Sports

Kate Dailey
Managing Editor, Features

Danese Kenon
Managing Editor, Visuals

Suzette Moyer
Creative Director, Newsroom

Brian Leighton
Deputy Managing Editor, Editing & Standards

James Neff
DME, Investigations

Ross Maghielse
DME, Innovation & Development

Molly Eichel
DME, Breaking News & Live Coverage

Ariella Cohen
DME, News

EDITORIAL CARTOON

Clay Bennett



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send letters to letters@inquirer.com. Limit length to 200 words and include home address and day and evening phone number. Letters are published in The Inquirer six days a week on the editorial pages and online at www.inquirer.com/opinion/letters/

Sore loser

Isn't it amazing that Donald Trump won the election, despite all the cheating and rigging he claimed was happening in the lead-up? "A lot of talk about massive CHEATING in Philadelphia. Law Enforcement coming!!!" Trump posted on Truth Social at 4:39 p.m. on Election Day. If all the immigrants in the country illegally who voted for Kamala Harris, and all the dead people rising from their graves to vote against him, didn't go on as he claimed, then Trump would have won by even bigger margins. Yeah, right.

Remember 2016: "If not for the millions of illegal immigrants who voted for Hillary Clinton, I would have won the popular vote, too." Remember 2020: "This election was stolen, it was a rigged election." Followed by the violent insurrection of Jan. 6, 2021. Where's the clamor about rigging and cheating now? Thank God Trump won, because we know what a sore loser he was when he lost four years ago. Four more years of Trump as president cannot possibly be worse than the endless whining, the chaos, and the violence he would have wrought if he lost again. Harris and Joe Biden will engage in a dignified transfer of power, something Trump was incapable of when he lost.
Tony O'Malley, *Emmaus*

Better things

I can certainly understand voters' frustrations when the party they support doesn't win. There are some who have taken their frustration to the extreme, probably not good for their overall health. It is best to just accept the results, particularly when Donald Trump secured the popular vote. A majority of voters believe what Trump has to offer in policy is what America needs. Frustrated voters should remember Trump was president for four years and none of the hyped-up media claims about the damage he would do to the country came true. When Trump takes office, the country will see a vast improvement in the economy, including lower taxes, border security, and relations with officials in foreign countries. I do not like many things Trump says, but his policies overcome those issues. Many of the criminal charges against him are going away since several had no merit in the first place.
Richard Wozniak, *St. Augustine, Fla.*

Independent options

It is both amusing and disheartening to watch the fallout from the election. The Democrats are turning on each other, and their supporters are in shock. There is blame to spread around, and we are all culpable of tolerating a duopoly that stifles progress and pits us against each other. The American Anti-Corruption Act is not supported by either party, nor are open primaries or ranked choice voting. Independent candidates are not welcome to debate and can't get on ballots due to impossible constraints. This is not a democracy, and we are all paying the price. Most Americans want the same basic things. We are not extremists. We need to fight for electoral reforms that can open debate, challenge the status quo, and welcome independent ideas. Neither Democrats nor Republicans will save us. Vulnerable people know this all too well. We have to save ourselves from the two-party system.
Barbara Patrizzi, *Cherry Hill*

Stand by

Donald Trump appears to be off to a roaring start in an attempt to top the 30,000 lies he told during his first reign of error. He claims he recently pointedly told his puppet master Vladimir Putin to de-escalate Russia's war in Ukraine, which Trump said he could magically end before he even takes office in January. Russia's state-run media, however, denies that any such conversation ever took place between Putin and Trump. And if mobilizing 50,000 soldiers, including troops courtesy of North Korean despot Kim Jong Un, is a prelude to peace, then Putin's useful American idiot may have some newfound credibility after all. And just to reiterate who is dominant in their bogus bromance, the day after the election, Russian TV focused on nude photos of Trump's wife (the current one) from her modeling days. Buyer's remorse and liar's remorse? Stand by for both.
Vin Morabito, *Scranton*

EDITORIAL

Restore positive proposals

Mayor Parker and City Council seem more focused on political expediency than striking an arena deal that is best for Philadelphia.

Now that legislation for the proposed Sixers arena on East Market Street is fast-tracking its way through City Council, the elected officials decided to hold public hearings.

Talk about an afterthought.

Unfortunately, Mayor Cherelle L. Parker and Council seem more focused on political expediency than striking an arena deal that is best for Philadelphia.

Indeed, two of the strongest arguments for the proposed Center City sports venue — an apartment tower atop the arena and a $50 million community benefit agreement — have been, respectively, eliminated and diluted.

Initially, the Sixers proposed a $250 million high-rise apartment building above the arena. The 395 units included 20% designated as affordable housing.

One of the main critiques for an arena is that it sits dark and empty many nights of the year, resulting in lifeless surrounding streets. The proposed apartments would inject activity into the neighborhood all year round.

Adding hundreds of residents would also create a demand for services along East Market Street. Perhaps the Giant Heirloom Market at Eighth and Market Streets would have remained open instead of closing next month. If not, another market would likely fill the void once more residents were living in the area.



A rendering of the 76ers proposed arena for Center City. An apartment tower could be a bigger game changer for the neighborhood than the arena, writes the Editorial Board, yet that part of the plan was scrapped after opposition from neighboring Chinatown residents. Gensler

Look no further than the transformation of Market Street between 11th and 12th Streets. The residential and office tower that opened there attracted a Wawa, an Iron Hill Brewery and Restaurant, and other shops.

The apartment tower above the Sixers arena would bring residents to support the Fashion District and the restaurants in Chinatown. The apartment tower would provide needed affordable housing in Center City and spur additional development along East Market Street.

As such, the apartment tower could be a bigger game changer for the neighborhood than the arena.

But City Councilmember Mark Squilla, whose district includes the arena site, requested the Sixers drop the apartment tower because of opposition from neighboring Chinatown residents.

This is a shortsighted move that undermines the long-term benefits of the project.

The same goes for the Sixers' offer to contribute $50 million toward a community benefit agreement. The money should go to support the Chinatown community since it will be most impacted by the arena.

But instead, only about $6 million is going to Chinatown, including $3 million for a small-business lending program, $1.6 million for grants to businesses impacted by the arena construction, and $1.25 million for sidewalk cleaning and a job-training program.

Just $500,000 is going to address traffic, parking, and quality-of-life issues. This makes no sense. The bulk of the money should go to mitigate these issues since they are the biggest drawbacks to the arena.

The rest of the money is getting whacked up to support projects of the mayor and Council. The largest allocation of $7 million is earmarked for Parker's year-round school initiative. Another $4.5 million is going to another untested Parker initiative: a plan to train city residents for city jobs.

Once the $50 million gets carved up and watered down, the impact will be negligible.

The $1.55 billion arena proposal began with a promise to transform the beleaguered stretch of East Market Street that has struggled for decades. But the arena is not a perfect solution and faces stiff opposition from many residents, especially those in Chinatown.

That is all the more reason to make sure the arena is done right and brings the maximum benefit to the city.

If the arena plan is going to go forward, the residential tower should be restored, and the $50 million community benefits agreement should be targeted to support the surrounding community and not officials' pet projects.