

Schiliro: Palumbo's misinformation hurts New York women ^[1]

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I read incumbent Assemblyman Anthony Palumbo's recent letter to the editor in Riverhead LOCAL with disbelief. Palumbo insists that we need to "stop playing politics with women's rights," but unfortunately he's the one playing politics when it comes to denying women their rights.

Palumbo starts off his letter by saying "words have meaning," and he's right. Words matter. Words like Palumbo's ridiculous claims that passing the Women's Equality Act (WEA) would allow dentists to perform abortions and would exempt doctors from criminal charges. I didn't make these claims up – Mr. Palumbo said them in public and on the record! The WEA would not do ANY of these things that he alleges, and his attempts to distort the truth are insulting to the Long Islanders he's supposed to represent. It's time for him to be held accountable for his words and actions.

By standing in the way of the full WEA, Palumbo is denying women the rights and protections they deserve. Why does Palumbo think women should accept less than their full rights? The women of New York deserve all 10 points of the WEA, and suggesting they settle and accept anything less is an attitude that is stuck in the past.

A woman's right to make her own reproductive health decisions should be between a woman and her doctor – not politicians, and not dentists as Palumbo would like you to believe. Making light of serious matters, spreading misinformation and belittling women's rights is unacceptable. The 10th point of the WEA simply aligns New York law with the federal standard established in *Roe v. Wade*. It would do none of the things that Palumbo falsely claims.

If elected, I will fight for the full 10-point WEA to ensure the women of New York State get the rights they've already had to wait too long for – essential rights like an end to workplace discrimination and sexual harassment, equal pay and stronger protections for victims of domestic violence. Additionally, I'll champion a five-point tax reduction plan to finally bring some tax relief to the North Fork. Our families deserve nothing less.

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