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The Welcome Park press release has blown up. We received over 500 comments on Twitter. It's being carried by major national news organizations, in a way that reflects badly on the park. I received 49 emails and 23 voice messages on Sunday. Comments are overwhelmingly, perhaps 99%, opposed to the plan, especially the removal of the Penn statue.

I sent a draft press release Wednesday night which I worked very hard on. I kept to the purpose of the press release (to make people aware of the opportunity for comment) and carefully constructed each sentence.

I did not present this as we are tearing down a statue of William Penn. In fact, I didn't mention the statue at all. That type of detail is for PEPC. I did not suggest our story gets more inclusive by excluding William Penn. People can spot that nonsense from a mile away. I did mention there is an interesting Native American claim to the area which Marilou did not mention at all and I linked the rehab to 2026, like all our other rehabs currently in progress.

It was like I never sent it. It was completely ignored and then completely rewritten by Marilou and then revised by Amnesty. On Friday morning, looking at Marilou's rewrite and Amnesty's comments, I sent my original draft again and once again asked Marilou to just add a paragraph. It was not until I received the final edits from Steve and was sending to Adam to post on social media that I realized we were sending out Marilou's language. I was very frustrated and disappointed.

I knew there were lines which would cause problems. I did not think it would reach this level, but I knew it would create problems. My original said all that needed to be said and set up the public comment period perfectly because I have experience communicating with the public.

I am the Public Affairs Officer and have been communicating for this park, INHP, for 24 years. I understand Philadelphia and I understand people and I know how to write a press release. Just out of common courtesy, I would never completely rewrite someone's work. It's extremely arrogant and condescending. But that's what happened and we once again have a situation that reflects badly on the park. We asked for public comment. I sure hope we plan to honor public sentiment.

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