

Letter to Lordstown Elected Officials:

As a lifelong resident and business owner in Trumbull County, I am deeply saddened and embarrassed by the lack of leadership and fortitude exhibited by Lordstown elected officials and community leaders. In the face of decades of population decline and economic challenges, the TJX Companies \$160 million distribution center project would have been a significant boost to our region. But instead of embracing this opportunity with open arms and portraying a business friendly attitude, as leaders, you cowered in the face of opposition and threats from a relatively few narrow-minded individuals. The industrial base of Lordstown has long been an economic engine for not only your village, but for our entire region. In fact, your village would have never been incorporated if not for its significance as a community that relies heavily – if not solely – on industry. As leaders, it was your job to conduct the appropriate due diligence and represent the best interests of your community as a whole. You should have – and perhaps still can – stand up and tell those in opposition to this project that you are willing to sacrifice your political futures and risk losing your next election because you are going to do what is right for your village and our region. After all, what is more important – your political aspirations or the wellbeing of our community?

TJX is a first-class organization that has been a leader in the off-price retail industry for decades. They have vast financial resources and therefore any commitment they make is likely to be upheld. Based on our experience as their landlord in dozens of sites across the country for the past 30+ years, they have been outstanding business partners and have always fulfilled each and every contractual commitment. Those in your community that believe they can sway TJX representatives to choose another site in Lordstown are naïve. That simply is not how site selection works. TJX selected a particular site in Lordstown. The site they selected is predominantly bounded by highways and other industrial users. It's a one-time opportunity. You either accept it or reject it – there are no second chances. TJX can and will seek opportunities elsewhere for this project. Unfortunately, it is unlikely the alternate sites will be located in the Mahoning Valley.

Your collective lack of backbone has cost this region sorely needed jobs, millions of dollars in new investment, and much needed optimism. And perhaps most damaging, you have now reinforced the national perception of the Mahoning Valley as a region that is unwelcoming to new business and unable to think and act with a progressive mindset when it comes to economic development. Shame on you! It is indeed a sad and embarrassing day for Lordstown and the Mahoning Valley.

Sincerely,

Anthony Cafaro Jr.

Co-President

