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## **Too Busy to Talk with Voters?**

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE--Freeholder Candidates Steve Bacher and Bob Jackson today publicly called for a response from incumbent Freeholders Gerald Thornton and Ralph Bakley over their proposal for a series of debates throughout Cape May County in the fall.

Bacher and Jackson sent the incumbents a letter on July 11<sup>th</sup> that called for debates to be held twice a week starting in September in order to hold forums in 14 different municipalities before November. The proposal suggested that the League of Women's Voters or another mutually acceptable third party moderate such events, with questions from the public.

In the letter to the incumbents whose terms expire this December, Bacher and Jackson stated, "In the spirit of conducting a positive campaign about issues that affect our county, we invite you to join us in a series of forums to discuss each of our visions for Cape May County's future and what County government can do to affect it."

The letter requested a reply by July 20<sup>th</sup>. However, the campaign for Bacher and Jackson has not received a reply as of July 27<sup>th</sup>.

"Democracy is about including the public," said Jackson. "Government should be open and fair to all. The freeholders should be more than willing to come with us to debate the issues and hear the concerns of the citizens of Cape May County. "

“We applaud the League of Women Voters for organizing a debate at election time. But it’s a large County, and it’s not realistic to expect everyone interested to be able to make it on a single date and time. We would like to hold forums up and down the County, from Cape May Point and the Wildwoods to Ocean City and Woodbine,” said Bacher. “A lot of people are busy in the fall. We want to give the public the chance to meet us and voice their concerns over the direction of county government.”

“The Freeholders have time for the public to voice their concerns at their meetings, however half of their meetings are held at 4:30 in the afternoon,” said Jackson. “How many people, between their work and parental responsibilities, can attend a meeting at that time?”

“We hope that the Freeholders will accept our proposal,” concluded Bacher. “It would be a shame to think that they don’t have time to listen to the concerns of the people that put them there.”

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