

## Conservative nomination candidate suspends campaign amid claims

A candidate vying to be the Conservative Party of Canada's nominee to carry the riding of Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill in the next Federal election has slammed the breaks on her campaign citing a ?lack of faith? in the nomination process.

On May 9, Sabrina Maddeaux, a former Postmedia columnist, announced the suspension of her campaign in a view posted to X (formally Twitter). There, she said the nomination process had been ?corrupted.?

?Living up to my values, why I entered this race to begin with, and my record of standing up for what's right, leaves me no other choice,? she said. ?It comes down to this: I no longer have faith in the integrity of this election.?

?Despite raising concerns to the Conservative Party nearly two weeks ago, despite submitting clear evidence of a corrupted process and potential legal actions taken by another campaign, nothing has been done,? Maddeaux went on to claim. ?We asked again and again for action but there has been no sign that a promised internal investigation is actually underway. No next steps shared as we get closer and closer to a vote. Despite repeated requests, there has been zero communication to candidates or the riding's Conservative voters to make them aware of interference with the democratic process, zero communication that my campaign has been the clear target of highly unethical and potentially illegal efforts to sway the vote.

?There has been zero meaningful reassurances to me, other candidates, or voters, that this will still be an open and fair election. My campaign hasn't been the only one to complain; others have as well. But I'll leave it to those candidates to decide if and when they would like to make their concerns public. When voters reach out to say they feel harassed or they don't feel secure voting, and those concerns continue to go unaddressed, anyone who is truly committed to freedom and electoral integrity has no choice but to act.?

Among the issues cited by Maddeaux were claims that emails were sent to long-standing and recently-signed-up Conservative Party members outlining comments Maddeaux made in her columns, words she said were ?mischaracterized and inflammatory? and came from an identity that ?did not exist.?

?I never asked to be acclaimed,? she said. ?I never asked for preferential treatment, and I never thought this wouldn't be easy, and there wouldn't be bumps or attacks along the way. All I ever asked and got assurances of that this would indeed be an open and fair nomination contest. This right now isn't that.

?I would like to thank my dedicated team, as well as supporters, donors and volunteers who believed in my mission and gave so much of themselves to it. I also couldn't in good conscience continue to ask you to contribute to a corrupted contest. The voters of Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill deserve to democratically choose their next conservative candidate and MP. They deserve to know when there has been a breach of trust. They deserve to feel safe voting. I hope they still get the chance to. I call on the Conservative Party of Canada to secure our democratic nomination process, protect our values, and stand up to corrupt campaigns that show disdain for both.?

The claims offered by Maddeaux, however, were rejected by the Conservative Party of Canada who responded with claims of their own.

In a statement also posted to X, Sarah Fischer, the Party's Director of Communications, said the allegations were ?completely false.?

?The Conservative Party received a complaint from her campaign about emails being circulated to members in the riding highlighting things Ms. Maddeaux has written and said in the past,? said Fischer. ?It's common for the Party to receive complaints from nomination candidates about their competitors over suspicions of wrongdoing and the use of lists. In fact, we received a complaint about Ms. Maddeaux's campaign sending out an email to current and former members of the Party when she should not have had access to a membership list.?

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