

Letter: Divisiveness doesn't help our community

To the community,

An open letter to Mr. Bruce Grego:

Your **Nov. 2, 2016, letter** published by *Lake Tahoe News* was filled with misinformation and a clear attempt to mislead the community about the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber (Tahoe Chamber) and the current local political cycle. As chair of the board of directors, I am writing to call out your continued divisive tactics and clarify the facts.

First and foremost, there is no “Nevada-based” chamber in our community. You know this because we have repeatedly informed you and your cohorts that fully 70 percent of our more than 650 chamber members are California-based businesses. Our organization has offices in both California and Nevada and many of our events and programs, including the very successful Sample the Sierra, are held in California. Your continued use of the term “Nevada-based” chamber only seeks to divide our community rather than build our economy and support our local businesses.

Second, you know that the Tahoe Chamber has adopted a Tahoe Future 2020 Vision. This foundational document represents our members' vision for the South Shore. It sets forth our organization's commitment to economic vitality, quality of life, sustainability, infrastructure, and intellectual capital. Yet you consistently assail our motives for supporting these important community values and attack candidates who align with this vision.

Third, the Tahoe Chamber has a transparent endorsement process open to any interested candidates. Separately, Tahoe Chamber has a political action committee called the Tahoe Chamber

Independent Expenditure Committee (IEC). This is a separate, lawfully registered organization created to support business friendly candidates who align with the Tahoe Future 2020 Vision. Despite these facts, you work overtime to characterize our process and motives as subversive. The reality is that Tahoe Chamber is proud to identify and endorse candidates with platforms that align with the Tahoe Future 2020 Vision. The Tahoe Chamber IEC is proud to support these candidates through independent expenditures.

Mr. Grego, you present yourself as a community leader, but true leaders do not seek to divide a community. Your constant chorus of "Nevada vs. California" creates unnecessary animosity. It does not contribute to supporting our local businesses, the South Shore's quality of life, the betterment of our community, or the improvement of our political governance. I encourage you to take a more positive approach to community leadership. In an attempt to assist you in this transformation, I invite you to meet with our executive committee or our full board of directors so we can collectively engage in a more fact-based approach to supporting our local businesses and creating a robust South Shore economy.

Jason Drew, chair Tahoe Chamber board of directors