



Brothers and Sisters,

Before the recent court rulings ordering the McFarland Group to cease using the Grange name and return all Grange property in its possession to the California State Grange, Mr. McFarland repeatedly urged Granges in California to observe the “status quo” until the trial courts decided the matter. “We are confident we will prevail,” he said then. We all know how that turned out (and the federal and state court orders are available here, if you would like to read them and not just take my word for it). Now, Mr. McFarland says that the McFarland Group will appeal the two orders. “We are confident we will prevail,” he says now. He was wrong then, and he is wrong now. And the reason why is simple: as both the federal and state courts found, Grange rules are clear. Grange officers must follow those rules. Grange property must remain in The Grange. The McFarland Group is not a Grange and is not part of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry. Although the McFarland Group may appeal the recent court rulings, those appeals will be fruitless. They will accomplish nothing but the further waste of Grange assets and the further delay of the healing of our State Grange. Indeed, Mr. McFarland has yet to point to even one reason why the court orders were wrong and will be overturned. There is none. It is telling that two different courts considering the same facts reached the same conclusion and definitively rejected all of the McFarland Group’s arguments as to why it was free to disregard the Grange rules which it had agreed to follow since 1873. It is senseless to appeal when there is no hope of overturning the rulings, but Mr. McFarland seems intent on doing so, notwithstanding the waste of Grange resources earned by generations of Grange members that it will entail.

The “status quo” is clear now: Grange rules apply and must be followed. There is only one California State Grange, and the McFarland Group is not it. I want to make sure that no Grange member is confused or misled by Mr. McFarland’s propaganda and refusal to recognize what the court rulings mean. His most recent “legal update” threatened that Subordinate Granges that follow Grange rules may

face “significant consequences ... having to do with legal issues, your nonprofit status, tax designation and property.” This is not true. As Mr. McFarland noted, no Subordinate Grange is party to the litigation. The court orders have not changed the legal status of any Subordinate Grange. All Granges with an active Charter are part of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry. No Charters have been revoked. I sincerely hope that this remains the case and Subordinate Granges honor the commitments stated in their Charters, set forth in Grange rules, and sworn in the obligations all Grangers take when they are admitted to membership in The Grange and before they are installed into any office in The Grange. Similarly, the California State Grange has taken steps to ensure that all Subordinate Granges’ non-profit status and tax designation will be preserved, notwithstanding Mr. McFarland’s threats. If you have any questions about this, please feel free to contact me.

My message to you remains the same as it has since the beginning: please read and understand the facts for yourself. Read your Grange’s Charter. Read the California Constitution and By-Laws. Read the National Digest of Laws. Read the two court orders. Those documents contain only facts, no fiction. Any of those documents, or all of them, tell you what you need to do. If you receive an invoice for “Grange Dues” from the McFarland Group (or “CSG” or whatever name it finally settles on), do not pay them. They are not the dues that your Grange owes as a part of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry. If the McFarland Group tries to make you sign anything related to your Grange’s property, even under duress, do not sign it. Grange rules require all such property transactions to be approved by the State Master, and Mr. McFarland is not that person. If you have any doubts about what is required of your Grange under our Order’s rules, do not simply defer to the McFarland Group. Mr. McFarland is no longer a member of the Grange, and he has no authority over any Grange property, including yours.

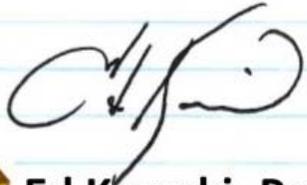
I want to do everything I can to help all Subordinate Granges return to good standing in the Order of Patrons of Husbandry after the unfortunate events of these past several years. The California State Grange has an amnesty program in place for those Granges that have paid dues to the McFarland Group in the past. Please look into it if you think it might apply to your Grange. If you have any other questions or concerns, you can contact me any time by e-mail or telephone.

I look forward to moving forward with the business of The Grange, and I hope that all Granges in California will join me in that effort as we put the unfortunate events of the past few years behind us.

Fraternally yours,

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Ed Komski, President, Master and CEO

California State Grange

The Grange of the State of California's Order of Patrons of Husbandry, Chartered
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