

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

Running for elected office requires a unique set of personality traits: self-confidence, resilience, thick skin, civic mindedness and a sensitivity to the needs of others. Those traits can be both blessings, but they can also be curses. For me they started out as a blessing but ultimately became a curse which led to my incarceration.

For over a decade I served the people of Allentown as mayor. I worked tirelessly to turn a dying rust belt city into a thriving urban center. The city turned the corner and became a success story of revitalization across the state. I loved being mayor and strived to be a good man, putting the needs of the community many times before my own. But, even good people sometimes make mistakes, give into pressures and take paths which lead them into places they should never venture. This is what happened to me. Maybe it was my ego, or maybe my desire for a new challenge, but I was intent on serving at a higher level. I should have realized that I faced insurmountable odds with no likelihood of having the adequate resources to run for statewide office, but I let myself be convinced that I could pull it off. I couldn't, I tried and that effort landed me in prison. It was the perfect storm, a pair of corrupt campaign consultants and a naive politician (me) who said stupid things brought my dream of becoming a U.S. Senator crumbling down. Mr. Smith goes to Washington was no more. In the end it was my stupidity, ego, naivete and reckless judgement which ultimately led me to this place.

As I have sat for almost seven years in a variety of places in our penal system, I've had time to think, pray and re-evaluate. I owe each of you an apology for my foolishness and ask for your forgiveness. When I leave the confines of the place where I've paid my debts, I hope to once again serve the community I love in some way that will make a difference. Only God knows what awaits me and so I will wait on His direction. I hope that I can be forgiven for my many mistakes by those who have meant so much to me, my family, friends and the people of my city. I was a foolish man, please forgive me.

Ed Pawlowski 
Former Mayor of the City of Allentown