



October 10, 2018

Tara McGowan
Founder and CEO
ACRONYM and Lockwood Strategy Lab
1 Thomas Circle NW Ste 700
Washington, DC 20005-5800
weare@anotheracronym.org

Jeremy Crisp
Managing Partner
Nail Communications
63 Eddy St
Providence, RI 02903-1702
jcrisp@nail.cc

Hello Ms. McGowan and Mr. Crisp,

I write to you today regarding a social media ad campaign that has respectively been commissioned and created by your organizations as part of ACRONYM's "Knock the Vote" initiative.

[The American Society on Aging](#) believes these ads to be both ageist and short-sighted. Further, we believe that any advertising campaign that seeks to divide the electorate based on generational stereotypes—no matter its goal—is disrespectful to older adults and insults the intelligence of young voters.

The ads, which in their extreme tone unhelpfully contribute to the current adversarial political climate, target young voters who will carry valuable firsthand knowledge of today's issues forward into the latter half of the 21st century, just as past generations continue to carry memories of the First and Second World Wars, the Civil Rights Movement and conscription into the ballot boxes today. But peddling ageism to young voters is no way to make a point that has any permanence.

The members of the American Society on Aging see in this campaign a perfect example for our peers in other industries, especially advertising, of how ageism can be wielded as a weapon. It is also further proof that now is the time to [reframe the way society views aging](#) (and [also see here](#)).

Oversimplifying the diverse political views of older generations—some of whom dedicated their lives to preserve democracy for today's young voters to enjoy and critique—as is done with these ads, also implies that future generations should subsequently discount the independence and importance of future votes cast by Millennials.

ASA is the essential resource to cultivate leadership, advance knowledge, and strengthen the skills of those who work with, and on behalf of, older adults.

575 Market Street • Suite 2100 • San Francisco • California 94105-2869
Phone 415-974-9600 • Fax 415-974-0300 • info@asaging.org • www.asaging.org

It is through their lived experience that older adults have developed their voting habits, and we hope that all prospective voters can be encouraged to see the value of casting a ballot as it helps shape the future for everyone—today and tomorrow.

We call on your organizations to withdraw these unhelpful ads. There are surely creative ways for you to encourage younger voter participation without demonizing older Americans as being engaged in a perverse and selfish conspiracy. This kind of conspiracy-mongering recalls some of the most unpleasant episodes in history with its elements of scapegoating and straw-person posturing and is not a worthy complement to a progressive agenda.

Thank you for being attentive to these concerns.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karyne Jones". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Karyne Jones

President& CEO, National Center and Caucus on Black Aging
Chair, Board of Directors, American Society on Aging