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Florida National Organization for Women

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MDC Trustee Marcell Felipe Must Resign— And Gov. DeSantis Should Apologize

Statement by Florida NOW President Kim Porteous and National NOW President Toni Van Pelt

Miami-Dade College Trustee Marcell Felipe went on television to boast about his refusal to vote for one of the four candidates for president of MDC, the current Vice President and Provost Lenore Rodicio, who is the clear front-runner for the position. She would be the first female president of the college with the country's largest undergraduate class.

"If you want me to jump into bed at the very last minute, at least take me to dinner, give me a little wine and let's see where it leads," Felipe smirked on TV. How typical. How sexist. How disgusting.

This is another example of the inequality that women face in the work place. When qualified women, especially black and Latino women, face blatant sexualization during the hiring process of a public institution, we should all be outraged.

There is no difference between Felipe's remarks and Donald Trump's boast of "grabbing women." They are both designed to "keep women in their place," and that place is in a position of submission.

To imply that a Trustee should be dined, wined and aroused by a candidate before making a hiring decision is not only out of date and offensive, but also demonstrates that he is no longer capable of serving as a Trustee.

Florida NOW calls for the immediate resignation of Marcell Felipe. And we ask Governor Ron DeSantis to apologize for his appointee's comments and pledge to Florida's women that he considers such views to be unacceptable. In a state that has not ratified the ERA, and has the third highest rate of sex trafficking, we demand better.

Women won't have full equality and freedom—including freedom from state-sanctioned sexism—until we ratify the ERA. Our activists are sending 1,000 post cards to our Governor this month to push for ratification, and we will be holding a press conference at the Governor's mansion on Women's Equality Day, August 26.

Equal rights and justice are no laughing matter. We are serious, we are determined, and we will prevail.

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