

EXCLUSIVE: Dana Rohrabacher Called the Cops On Woman Who Asked Tough Questions

JEREMY FASSLER • JUL 27, 2018

Over the past two years, *The Daily Banter* has repeatedly scrutinized California Congressman Dana Rohrabacher for his [ties to Russia](#). Warned as early as 2012 that the Kremlin had been [cultivating him](#) as an asset, he continued to spout Kremlin talking points and meet with dubious actors, including [Russian spy Maria Butina](#), whom he met with in 2015. More recently, he found himself duped by Sacha Baron Cohen, who filmed him endorsing his bogus [guns-for-tots program](#) on his show *Who is America?*

All these issues have made Rohrabacher, running for his 15th consecutive term in California's 48th district, one of the most vulnerable Republicans in the 2018 midterms. But if you call his offices in Washington D.C. and Huntington Beach, CA, to register your dissent, you'll be treated very poorly - or worse, reported to the police.

Ivy Perlman (name changed) is an activist from Los Angeles who currently lives in another state. Last week, she repeatedly called Rohrabacher's offices with questions concerning these recent developments. Although any citizen is within their First Amendment rights to call a congressperson's office, regardless of whether or not they live in their district, the Rohrabacher office refused to answer her questions and hung up on her multiple times, occasionally sending her straight to voicemail.

When Ivy called again, she found that the office had redirected her to the Capitol Police, who then placed a report with the LAPD's Threat Assessments Unit and informed the Washington and Huntington Beach offices that they'd done so. Using her cell phone's area code, they traced Ivy's call back to the LA suburb where she was raised. Around 11:45 AM on Wednesday, July 18th, Ivy's mother, Jen, found a card from the LAPD on her doorstep that read, "Ivy Perlman, please call me. Thank you."

Jen's first instinct upon receiving the card was to call the Huntington Beach office. She recalled that when they answered, "I didn't even identify myself...and they['d] already pegged me as being related to her," she said. This led her to believe that his office had reported her daughter to the LAPD. The Washington office treated her the same way, hanging up on her mid-conversation after threatening to report her. The LAPD did not respond to her call. Eventually, Ivy talked with them, and said that the woman on the phone was "not very nice." The Los Angeles Police Department says that the card left on Ms. Perlman's doorstep was "for communication purposes only" and that no crime report was filed. The Capitol Police and the Rohrabacher office have not commented on the story.

Since Trump's inaugural, congressmen have become terrified of their constituencies, who are angry at them for enabling the Tweeter-in-Chief. Many of them have [run for the exits](#), like House Speaker Paul Ryan and Judiciary Chairman Bob Goodlatte. Those who have stuck around, like Rohrabacher, are ignoring and intimidating their constituents because if they have even the faintest glimmer of a conscience, they know their time is up.

Jeff Thomson, a former staffer for a prominent Southern California congressman, says this type of behavior is not a standard procedure - congressional offices are obliged to respond to callers and to answer their questions, even if the callers do not reside within the district or support the opposing party. Callers also have the right to phone in multiple times a day, "especially if they're just trying to obtain an answer and not...being insanely belligerent," he says.

The congressman Thomson worked for identifies as a person of color, and he remembers that they would occasionally get calls from people who unleashed a flurry of racial slurs. Even then, he says, "we would never contemplate calling the authorities...A threat is a threat, but constituents have a right to call their representative, or any representative, and tell them how they feel."

Rohrabacher constituent Amy Peller feels the Perlman's frustration. Like them, she has sought answers from his office and been refused. "Everything I've heard...is that people who have gone to his office have had the door locked and they refuse to answer," she says.

It's true: last year, a local chapter of Indivisible repeatedly went to the Congressman's Huntington Beach office only to find [the door locked](#). When an assistant finally opened the door, it hit a two-year-old girl in the head, an incident captured on film. Rohrabacher later called the protestors "enemies of American self-government and democracy."

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=XGAZZsj9aG4

Henry Bate of the Orange Coast College newspaper *Coast Report Online* reports that a year later, their policy has not changed. The Huntington Beach office, [he writes](#), is "a closed fortress to average constituents, often locking the door to the offices all day and disregarding the phone ringing endlessly."

To test this, I called the office earlier this week asking for answers and was re-directed to email spokesperson Ken Grubbs, which the Washington D.C. office did as well. They could not provide more for Grubbs than an email address, and though I wrote him multiple times, he never responded. When I called Huntington Beach again this morning, I was sent straight to voicemail both times.

Rohrabacher's cowardice has prevented him from holding an in-person town hall meeting for several years, opting instead for Facebook live conferences and meetings with wealthy donors. One meeting last fall featured [Vice President Pence](#), who flew directly to Newport Beach for a fundraiser with the Congressman right after he staged a phony "walkout" from an Indianapolis Colts game where players knelt during the National Anthem, a stunt which cost local police more than \$14,000.

Peller, who filed a [Change.org petition](#) with Indivisible to bring Rohrabacher to a town hall last summer, has watched some of the Facebook live meetings and says they "monitor who gets to ask questions because you don't really hear any questions that aren't preaching to the choir. I've listened to some of them and I've just had to hang up because there are people calling and going, 'Oh, Congressman Rohrabacher, we love you, you're doing such a good job. I don't know why they're harassing you about these things...' et cetera. Those aren't questions!"

At a time where Donald Trump uses on authoritarian tactics to quash dissent from the press and within the government, it is appalling for a sitting congressperson to call the police on a citizen for nothing more than expressing an opinion they don't like. This kind of police state tactic is an assault on our constitutional right to petition the government for redress of grievances - and that's in the First Amendment of the Constitution, which Rohrabacher supposedly took an oath to uphold. I hope he reads it someday.

