



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chol Majok Condemns Careless and Offensive Remarks Referencing Willie Lynch, Calls for Decency, Respect, Apology and Integrity in Syracuse Mayoral Race

Syracuse, NY – City Councilor Chol Majok, Democratic candidate for Mayor of Syracuse, strongly condemns the racially charged and inappropriate remarks made by City Budget Director Timothy Rudd, a fellow mayoral candidate, toward Deputy Mayor Sharon Owens, fellow mayoral candidate, and the Black community.

“These comments are deeply offensive and harmful, and I call on Timothy Rudd to issue a public apology. The impact of these words extends beyond politics—they have caused harm to Black men, mothers, children, and women. Healing begins with acknowledging the wrongdoing and taking responsibility.

“As a Black man and community leader, I find Timothy Rudd’s reference to Willie Lynch and his comparison of Sharon Owens to the ‘mothers of slaves’ both disturbing and unacceptable in today’s political discourse. These words evoke a painful history of oppression and division. The Willie Lynch concept has long been associated with the deliberate fragmentation of Black families and should never be invoked and repeated, especially not as a political strategy to gain votes from the Black community.

“While a shared frustration with our current city government mismanagement is understandable, it must never be used as an excuse to employ divisive or degrading language. Syracuse is a diverse and multi-racial community; our strength lies in our unity. Like many other communities, we are on a journey of healing, and as leaders, it is our responsibility to foster that healing rather than inflame tensions.

“This mayoral election should be about leadership and policies discourse, not insults. Syracuse deserves a mayor who leads with integrity, professionalism, and respect for all communities and people. I urge Timothy Rudd to take the first step toward accountability by publicly apologizing to Sharon Owens and the Black community. This act of responsibility would help move our city forward, allowing all candidates to focus on the issues that truly matter to the people of Syracuse.

“Our leaders must uphold dignity, respect, and decency for all communities. Syracuse needs leadership that will unite us, not divide us—fostering collaboration and collective progress. This is a time for new beginnings.”

###END###

Media Contact: Blake Carter, Campaign Manager

☎ (315) 935-3341

✉ contact@cholmajok.com