

## **Springfield Community Members Rally Around Haitian Neighbors As Their Senator, JD Vance, Admits Making Up Racist Lies for Media Attention**

Following [dehumanizing and dangerous](#) rhetoric that has since led to the [harassment of Springfield's Haitian families](#) and the [emergency closure of several schools and government offices due to bomb threats](#), GOP Vice Presidential nominee J.D. Vance appears to have finally confessed to what [local officials](#), [local police](#), [independent fact-checkers](#), and [community leaders](#) have been saying all along about his despicable claims: none of it is true. He made the whole thing up as part of the campaign's cynical political strategy to demagogue immigrants no matter the cost to the safety of real people - including his own constituents in Ohio.

<https://twitter.com/atrupar/status/1835309555938480462>

During [a back-and-forth interview](#) where CNN's Dana Bash debunked his racist fiction with factual data from the Clark County Sheriff's Department and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Vance said that if he has "to create stories so that the American media actually pays attention ... then that's what I'm going to do." His admission left Bash looking completely bewildered.

"You just said that you're creating a story," she finally responded. But Vance just stared straight ahead and said nothing. "Sir, you just said that you're creating the story," Bash again stated. This time, Vance pretended to not hear the question, leaving the CNN anchor to make her statement for the third time. "You just said that this is a story that you created."

"Yes," he replied. "So, the eating dogs and cats thing is not accurate," Bash continued.

<https://twitter.com/RepShontelBrown/status/1833951111344259179>

When the Trump-Vance ticket promotes fiction about Haitian immigrants in Springfield, they are [echoing the message of neo-Nazis](#). They are also pushing a modern version of the old antisemitic "[blood libel](#)," pushing racist and bigoted lies that have a long history of resulting in downstream political violence. The target of the lies may have changed but the consequences remain the same.

They're also lying about workers like Daniel Campere, who helps make parts for vehicles. He arrived in the U.S. more than a decade ago, and for a while worked busing farmworkers within Florida before hearing about other job opportunities in Ohio.

He now makes a good salary, has been building a retirement account for himself, and has been contributing to his community. "We pay bills and taxes like everybody else," he [told](#) *The New York Times*. A coworker could not help but heap her own praises on Campere's work ethic.

"Vickie Stevens, an American worker, overheard the conversation in the break room, and shared her two cents," the report continued. "I can tell you, Daniel's a real good worker," she said. "He

works as many hours as he can get.' She added: 'We, the Americans, are just a little jealous of them.'" Jamie McGregor, Campere and Stevens' boss at McGregor Metal, also had nothing but compliments. Ten percent of his workforce is Haitian, PBS News Hour [reported](#).

"I wish I had 30 more. Our Haitian associates come to work every day," said CEO Jamie McGregor. "They don't have a drug problem. They will stay at their machine. They will achieve their numbers. They are here to work. And so, in general, that's a stark difference from what we're used to in our community." They contribute all over the state. According to the American Immigration Council, immigrants in Ohio [contribute](#) \$2.4 billion in total taxes annually. Immigrant workers without legal status also contribute to Ohio, paying just over \$265 million in local and state taxes annually, [according](#) to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.

<https://twitter.com/RonFilipkowski/status/1833594196630114747>

"By most accounts, the Haitians have helped revitalize Springfield," *The Times* said. It has been losing tens of thousands of residents over the years. New Haitian neighbors, many able to work and live in the U.S. [thanks to the Temporary Protected Status program](#), are now "assembling car engines at Honda, running vegetable-packing machines at Dole and loading boxes at distribution centers. They are paying taxes on their wages and spending money at Walmart. On Sundays they gather at churches for boisterous, joyful services in Haitian Creole."

"New Caribbean restaurants and food trucks have opened across south Springfield where once abandoned neighborhoods are now bustling with residents," The Guardian also [reported](#). Springfield community members looking to support their Haitian neighbors have been clamoring for a seat at these restaurants to say they reject hateful rhetoric seeking to divide the nation and their town. Local outlet WKEF [reported](#) that hundreds have shown up at a local Haitian-Creole restaurant to enjoy good food and show they're united:

"I think of people that work hard," said Springfield native, Mark Houseman.

"Springfield is diverse," added dinner organizer, Steve McQueen.

"We're actually a beautiful city," said Terrance Crowe, another Springfield native.

That was how some described Springfield, Ohio, a city of almost 60-thousand now in the national spotlight.

"I immediately shook my head and put my head down," Crowe recalled. "You can't conquer with hate, conquer with love."

<https://twitter.com/FacesOfHaiti/status/1835331996488274179>

"Springfield is a dynamic community with many positive attributes," City Manager Bryan Heck [told](#) WLWT. "It is disappointing that some of the narrative surrounding our city has been skewed

by misinformation circulating on social media and further amplified by political rhetoric in the current, highly charged presidential election cycle." Denise Williams, president of the Springfield NAACP, said Trump "needs to apologize to the citizens of this community. It's disgusting that he can even think of putting us on blast like that without investigating it."

Making Vance's efforts all the more reprehensible is that he's a sitting U.S. Senator for Ohio and has the power to help get Springfield's schools and hospitals the resources they need to address any strains posed by an increase in the population, as Bash pointed out. Vance is cloaking his lies in supposed concerns for his constituents. [But much like his cynical approach to the opioid crisis](#), he'd rather use immigrants to advance his own political agenda than actually get to work to address issues facing the communities he's supposed to represent – including his Haitian American constituents.

"But you're not just a bystander. You're the senator from Ohio," Bash said. "So instead of saying things that are wrong and actually causing the hospitals, the schools, the government buildings to be evacuated because of bomb threats because of the cats and dogs thing, why not actually be constructive and helping to better integrate them into the community?"

We'd love to hear the answer to that question as well. But, we know the answer. Vance doesn't care about his constituents. He cares about himself and his power. In that way, he's an awful lot like his running mate.

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[Experts and Advocates Weigh In on the Threats of Political Violence Downstream of Dehumanizing and Racist Rhetoric](#)