



# P A N D A

PEOPLE AGAINST THE NDAAs

P.O. Box 653  
Bowling Green, OH  
43402  
(567) 201-5432  
pandaunite.org

Rich's philosophy of persistence was driven by one thing: If he educated one more person, if his efforts protected one family, one town, one community from government overreach, then he would have accomplished his mission. That's why, week after week, he would show up to city council meetings in an orange jumpsuit, holding a sign, silently, politely, educating others on *their rights and the threat to them*.

Even when city officials harassed him and those he was close to, Rich never backed down. He would confront bullies in the newspapers, on the radio, in person at their offices, or wherever they afforded him the opportunity. He was an inspiration to the people in his community, as the countless people who decided to stand up for themselves after talking to Rich could easily attest. He was not just an inspiration to his community, he was also an inspiration to us, and his activism will live on in our hearts, and our actions, for years to come.

More than an engaged citizen, and an activist, though, Rich had a level of integrity that is all too rare in our society today. We all distinctly remember the time that the Mayor of Worcester, a man who had stood in the way of much of Rich's activism, was reported to have said some pretty embarrassing things about the protesters at his city council meeting. His comments made national news, and the mayor apologized for the comments, which was surprising.

Even though major national news organizations had run with the story, and the Mayor had apologized, Rich knew that he had been the one to make the comment and not the Mayor. Despite the fact that Rich could have let sleeping dogs lie, and let his political adversary take the fall, Rich would have never even considered it. Instead, he contacted each media outlet that produced the story to let them know the comments were his. Rich cared enough about his integrity that he was willing to embarrass himself on national news to set the record straight. That is the kind of man, and the kind of example for us all, that Rich was. That is the kind of example we should all strive to be.

Sometimes, Rich Aucoin was the role model that the Founding Fathers would have been proud of. Sometimes, Rich Aucoin was the lone dissenter in the tradition of civil rights activists before him.





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And sometimes, Rich Aucoin was the rock of integrity that could protect the truth from swirling storms.

But at all times and for all time, Rich Aucoin was and will be our friend, our colleague, and our inspiration.

May he forever rest in peace.

**Daniel Johnson**

Founder, People Against the NDAA

**Jeff Lewis**

National Director, Patriot Coalition

**Jason Casella**

National Director, People Against the NDAA

[fb.com/pandaunite](https://fb.com/pandaunite) | [info@pandaunite.org](mailto:info@pandaunite.org) | [twitter.com/pandaunite](https://twitter.com/pandaunite)