

FIRST APPEAL

Dear APS Editor-in-Chief,

I am writing to formally appeal the rejection of my manuscript by the Physical Review C (PRC) Chief Editor on November 21, 2025. Based on the documentation, I believe the rejection process did not adhere to established APS policy.

My manuscript was submitted on October 25, 2025. The procedural timeline and resulting concerns are as follows:

The manuscript was accepted for consideration and the external review process was initiated by a PRC Managing Editor on October 28, 2025. Subsequently, the manuscript was sent to two external reviewers on November 3 and November 10, 2025. The rejection from the PRC Chief Editor was issued on November 21, 2025.

The following points detail the procedural discrepancies:

1. **Inaccurate Rejection Basis:** The Chief Editor's rejection email stated, "We are therefore not sending your manuscript out for review." This is factually incorrect, as the manuscript had already been sent to two reviewers (Nov 3 and Nov 10).
2. **Improper Desk Rejection Timing:** If the rejection was intended as a "desk rejection" (an editorial decision without external review), it should have occurred immediately after submission, before the paper was sent to two reviewers. The 27-day delay before rejection is an unreasonable minimal delay for a desk rejection.
3. **Lack of Transparency:** If the rejection was based on a comment from a reviewer (potentially the second reviewer, given the timeline), this does not constitute a desk rejection. In such a case, APS policy dictates that the reviewer's comments must be shared with the author to allow for revision and resubmission.
4. **Rejection Criterion:** The primary basis for rejection cited by the Chief Editor was the "scientific approach and context" of the experiment with "context" mentioned twice in the email. The "context" of this research is that it was independently performed and self-financed outside of a major institution (as part of my non-profit LOISAT, dedicated to increasing the number of Black STEM professionals). Rejecting a manuscript based on the context or source of the research, rather than its scientific correctness, importance, and technical rigor, introduces a bias that violates APS principles of fair evaluation. The merits of the theoretical and experimental results were not addressed.

I request a thorough review of this rejection process by your office to ensure compliance with APS editorial standards. I trust that you will make a decision regarding the next step for this manuscript with minimal delay.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.