



## **AABAR STANDS IN SUPPORT OF ATTORNEY'S FIGHT AGAINST JUDICIAL MISCONDUCT**

### **I. AABAR MEMBER, ATTORNEY MATT FAKHOURY, FILES MOTION FOR “SOJ FOR CAUSE” TO REMOVE JUDGE WILLIAM HOOKS ON MORNING OF JUNE 16TH**

On the morning of June 16, 2023, a prominent member of the Arab American Bar Association of Illinois filed a Motion under 725 ILCS 5/114-5(d) to remove Cook County Illinois Judge William Hooks from a pending criminal case based upon alleged racist comments he made to Attorney Matthew Fakhoury and his client during a pre-trial Supreme Court 402 settlement conference and while in the presence of Cook County Assistant State's Attorneys.

The Motion alleged that Judge Hooks made several personal disparaging remarks about Mr. Fakhoury's client (charged with domestic violence), and that Judge Hooks went on to make hateful comments to Mr. Fakhoury about his Middle Eastern heritage in the presence of party attorneys and prosecutors:

“Middle Eastern men [are]...controlling and abusive” and that “Middle Eastern men engage in this violent conduct---*I would shoot and kill men like that from Middle Eastern Countries*” while Hooks served in the U.S. Military.

Mr. Fakhoury alleged that Judge Hooks' remarks were “clearly prejudicial, offensive, and violent... and were meant to intimidate and harass Attorney Fakhoury and his client.

### **II. JUDGE HOOKS' EX PARTE INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION ON THE AFTERNOON OF JUNE 19<sup>TH</sup>**

On June 21, 2023, the Office of the State's Attorney reported to Mr. Fakhoury in a NOTICE OF DISCLOSURES - EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS that Judge Hooks was conducting an independent investigation of the facts on the afternoon that the June 16<sup>th</sup> motion was filed, in that he engaged and attempted to engage in *ex parte* communications with the Assistant State's Attorneys who were identified in the motion as being present during the 402 conference.

On June 22, 2023, Mr. Fakhoury filed an affidavit alleging that these *ex parte* communications were attempts to “influence” upcoming witness testimony at the requested SOJ for Cause Hearing in violation of the Illinois Code of Judicial Conduct, Rules 2.9(A) and (C) which prohibit judges from making *ex parte* communications outside the presence of the parties on an impending matter, and that Judges are prohibited from making independent investigations of the facts of impending matters.

### **III. RECUSAL OF JUDGE HOOKS**

Subsequently, on June 22, 2023, Judge Hooks recused himself rather than transfer the matter for a formal SOJ for Cause Hearing.

### **IV. STATEMENT BY THE ARAB AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS**

The Arab American Bar Association of Illinois (AABAR) maintains that the Cook County Judiciary and Bench are among the finest judges and lawyers in the nation who advocate principals of honesty, ethical conduct, and diversity. However, AABAR categorically condemns any hateful rhetoric which demeans any minority.

AABAR applauds the courage of attorney Matt Fakhoury as well as the men and women of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office for “outing” any alleged judicial misconduct bearing upon the orderly administration of justice.