



Arizona State Legislature
1700 West Washington
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

March 15, 2016

The Honorable David Stevens
Chairman, House Ethics Committee

Dear Chairman Stevens,

We are writing to submit a formal ethics complaint against Speaker David Gowan, Representatives Steve Montenegro, Darin Mitchell, and Michelle Ugenti-Rita for conduct impugning the integrity of the Arizona House of Representatives.

Statement of Facts

Based on our personal knowledge from media reports, it appears that Speaker Gowan and Representatives Montenegro, Mitchell, and Ugenti-Rita have engaged in conduct that may have violated state laws regarding use of state resources. As outlined in the attached news articles, these members used state vehicles for potentially non-official purposes and/or were reimbursed for travel for which they were not entitled to reimbursement. I am also personally aware of Speaker Gowan flying to Washington, DC in December 2105, but such plane trips do not appear in the news articles uncovering the travel activities of the above-named members, and thus deserve independent investigation. These recent events appear to be part of a pattern of inappropriate conduct that has caused the public to lose confidence and trust in the Arizona House of Representatives.

Additionally, it appears that Speaker Gowan has tasked his state staff with assisting his congressional campaign. Media reports provide accounts of state staff traveling with the Speaker both around the state as well as to Washington, DC. This may be an additional unlawful use of state resources.

Recently, Speaker Gowan has called on Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich to investigate his own travel and reimbursement activities. See enclosed news article. In those news reports, the Speaker claims to have sought advice, including potentially from house attorneys for the possible criminal investigation into the misuse of state funds. This may be a further misuse of state funds if he is using state staff to provide advice on a personal criminal matter. We believe Speaker Gowan should have sought outside counsel rather than placing his state-funded attorney(s) and other staff in the position of providing advice on a personal matter and potentially causing a conflict of interest for them.

To our personal knowledge, these additional issues were not part of the Speaker's request for an attorney general investigation, and none of the other members who were identified in news reports for having questionable use of state vehicles and reimbursement for travel has likewise asked for an investigation into their own activities. Although we support an independent investigation by the attorney general, we believe it is incumbent upon members to hold each other accountable, to ensure that no member has broken any House rules or state laws, and to take responsibility for any such violations.

Violations of Laws


The Ethics Committee is empowered to investigate complaints and charges against members, A.R.S. § 38-519, as well as claims of disorderly conduct, Ariz. Const. art. 4, pt. 1, § 11, violations of state or federal laws, such as the provisions proscribing the use of state resources including state motor vehicles in A.R.S. § 38-538.02, conduct violating the public trust or adversely reflecting upon the House, and unethical or unprofessional conduct, such as defined in A.R.S. § 32-1901.01.

Supporting Documents

Attached to this Complaint are copies of articles from the *Arizona Capitol Times*, which include an analysis of the travel activities of Speaker Gowan and Representatives Montenegro, Mitchell, and Ugenti-Rita, as well as Speaker's Gowan's request for an attorney general investigation into his own use of state resources.

Based on the foregoing, we request that the Ethics Committee immediately convene and investigate the alleged unethical conduct of Speaker Gowan and Representatives Montenegro, Mitchell, and Ugenti-Rita. We further request that Speaker Gowan and Representative Montenegro step down from their leadership positions pending the outcome of the ethics committee investigation.

Submitted by,


Rep. Eric Meyer, M.D.
District 28


Rep. Rebecca Rios
District 27

State of Arizona)
) ss.
County of Maricopa)

Sworn to and subscribed before me on 15th day of March, 2016, by Eric Meyer and Rebecca Rios.


Notary Public Signature

