

BEFORE THE JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS COMMISSION

STATE OF GEORGIA

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<i>In re:</i> Inquiry Concerning)	Docket No. 81-17C
Ralph O. Todd)	
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)	

**Report of Disposition to the Supreme Court of Georgia
Pursuant to OCGA § 15-1-21 (k)(1) and Commission Rule 11.A**

This matter originated before the Judicial Qualifications Commission’s (“the Commission”) Investigative Panel with a complaint of judicial misconduct on the part of Washington County Magistrate Judge Ralph O. Todd (“Todd”). More specifically, the allegations concerned Todd issuing warrants and making other rulings contrary to clearly established law. One of these allegations garnered media attention and concerned Todd issuing arrest warrants for criminal defamation in violation of OCGA § 16-11-40. However, criminal defamation was held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court and OCGA § 16-11-40 was formally repealed by the state legislature. See Williamson v. State, 249 Ga. 851, 851 (1982).

During the pendency of a full investigation into these allegations and prior to a vote on whether to file formal charges, the Investigative Panel and Todd mutually agreed to a disposition of this case pursuant to Commission Rule 17.D. Todd agreed to resign from his judicial post effective December 31, 2017, and to

never hold judicial office again, which Governor Nathan Deal accepted on December 4, 2017. (See Exhibits A, B.)

The Investigative Panel submits this Report of Disposition for filing in the public records of the Supreme Court of Georgia pursuant to OCGA § 15-1-21 (k)(1) and Commission Rule 11.A.

Respectfully submitted, this 4th day of January, 2018.

By: Ben F. Easterlin IV
Ben F. Easterlin IV, Director
Judicial Qualifications Commission
State Bar Number: 237650

Judicial Qualifications Commission
P.O. Box 2179
Covington, GA 30015

Certificate of Service

This is to certify that I have this day served a copy of the foregoing **Report of Disposition to the Supreme Court of Georgia pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 15-1-21 (k)(1) and Commission Rule 11.A** via mail and e-mail to:

Ralph O. Todd (Respondent)
P.O. Box 1053
Sandersville, GA 31082

Neal W. Dickert (Respondent's Counsel)
Counsel for Respondent
801 Broad Street, 7th Floor
Augusta, Georgia 30901

Hon. Robert McBurney (Hearing Panel)
Fulton County Superior Court
185 Central Avenue SW Suite T-5755
Atlanta, GA 30303

Jamala McFadden (Hearing Panel)
The Employment Law Solution: McFadden Davis, LLC
1100 Peachtree Street NE Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30309

Michael Register (Hearing Panel)
Chief of Police
140 North Marietta Pkwy
Marietta, GA 30060

This 4th day of January, 2018.

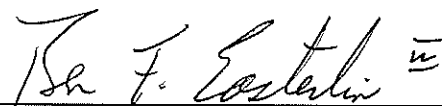
By: 
Ben F. Easterlin IV, Director
Judicial Qualifications Commission
State Bar Number: 237650

Exhibit A



STATE OF GEORGIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
ATLANTA 30334-0900

Nathan Deal
GOVERNOR

December 4, 2017

The Honorable Ralph O. Todd
Chief Magistrate
Magistrate Court of Washington County
Washington County Courthouse
P.O. Box 1053
Sandersville, Georgia 31082

Dear Judge Todd:

Thank you for the service you have rendered as Chief Magistrate Judge of Washington County. I appreciate you taking the time to apprise me of your resignation, effective December 31, 2017.

Your resignation as Chief Magistrate Judge is hereby accepted, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors. Once again, thank you for your service to Washington County and the state of Georgia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nathan Deal".

Nathan Deal

ND:rb

cc: The Honorable Brian Kemp, Secretary of State
The Honorable Kathy Palmer, Chief Judge, Middle Judicial Circuit
The Honorable Russell A. Sheppard, Judge, Probate Court of Washington County

Exhibit B

BEFORE THE JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS COMMISSION

STATE OF GEORGIA

*In re: An Inquiry Concerning
Judge Ralph O. Todd*

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) JQC Docket Number: 81-17 C
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Consent Order

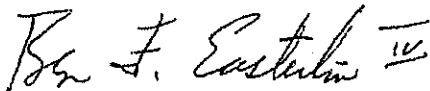
Pursuant to Rule 17 (D) of the Judicial Qualifications Commission (“the Commission”), the Commission’s Investigative Panel and Judge Ralph O. Todd (“Todd”) resolve the above-styled matter as follows:

1. Todd has agreed to resign from his position as a Judge for the Magistrate Court of Washington County, Georgia.
2. Todd’s resignation from the Magistrate Court of Washington County was accepted on December 4, 2017 and it becomes effective on December 31, 2017. (See attached Exhibit A).
3. Todd currently holds no other judicial office.
4. Todd will not seek, request, or accept elected or appointed judicial office in the future. This prohibition commences immediately and carries forward permanently.
5. Todd will not seek, request, or accept Senior-Judge status for any court for which he is currently eligible or might become eligible in the future.

6. This Consent Order resolves any allegations as to judicial misconduct in the above-styled matter as provided herein.

This Consent Order shall take effect immediately.

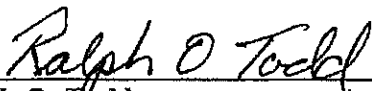
This 4th day of January, 2018 *act*



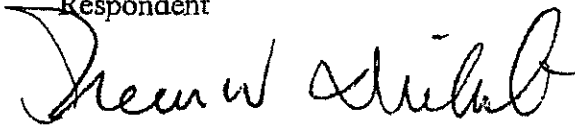
Ben F. Easterlin IV, Director
Judicial Qualifications Commission



Edward D. Tolley, Chairman of the Investigative Panel
Judicial Qualifications Commission



Ralph O. Todd
Respondent



Neal W. Dickert
Counsel for Respondent