

July 27, 2011

Mr. Steve Robertson  
PO Box 1068  
Frankfort, Kentucky 40602

Dear Mr. Robertson,

I am a 27-year public servant to the Commonwealth of Kentucky. I began my career in state government as an aid at Central State and worked my way through various positions over the last three decades. In 1991, I earned my doctorate degree and I am now at Hazelwood Center for the Mentally Retarded in Louisville where I remain an LPPA.

I write to you in an effort to bring to light certain mismanagement, abuses of authority, unethical and potential illegal activity that I believe compromises the integrity of state government administration. I hope you will use this information toward the goal of eliminating the now common practice of using state government as an extension of political campaigns.

Around the Christmas holiday of 2010, I began to hear significant complaints from my colleagues at DJJ that Justice & Public Safety Cabinet Deputy Secretary Charles Geveden was making phone calls to non-merit state government employees demanding significant political contributions to Governor Steve Beshear's re-election campaign. In fact, two division directors, Gary Sewell and Sherre Smith-Jones, stated to me that they received calls from Geveden in which Geveden asked them, "How much do you value your job?" and then went on to tell them that they should have a \$500 check to Beshear's campaign on Geveden's desk by the end of the week or, according to Geveden, "I [Geveden] may not be able to retain you." Obviously, these employees were quite upset that their job security would be threatened for political contributions.

I was also present when non-merit state government employee Dr. Patrick Sheridan confirmed that he received a similar call from Geveden. Dr. Sheridan was quite offended over the demand to give significant money to the Beshear campaign and stated that he may just retire rather than succumb to political pressure.

The complaints in the workplace regarding these political solicitations were widespread and it is my understanding that every single non-merit employee in the service of the DJJ received similar calls from Geveden. These employees include:

Stacy Floden (DJJ Director of Communications)  
Alfreddie Hasan Davis (DJJ Deputy Commissioner)  
Ronald Haws (DJJ Commissioner)  
Bob Hayter (DJJ Division Director)  
Dr. Bill Heffron (DJJ Chief of Mental Health Services)  
Sherre Smith-Jones (DJJ Deputy Commissioner)  
Anthony Payne (DJJ Division Director)

Joe Payne, Sr. (DJJ Division Director)  
Diana McGuire (DJJ Director of Legal Services)  
Gary Sewell (DJJ Division Director)  
Dr. Patrick Sheridan (DJJ Medical Director)  
Grace Smith (DJJ Division Director)  
John Weyers (DJJ Division Director)

It is my understanding that all of these calls were made between Christmas of 2010 and January 1, 2011.

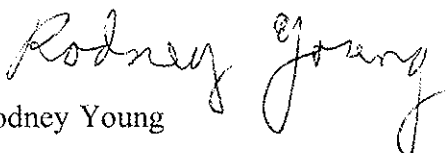
I have been told that campaign finance laws prohibit solicitation of all state government employees, whether they are merit or non-merit. Furthermore, the threatening manner in which these calls were made (where employees were threatened with termination if they did not contribute to Gov. Beshear's campaign) was at the very least, unethical.

I am aware that Deputy Secretary Geveden is an attorney who served in a management role at the Attorney General's Office during the investigation of the previous administration. He is certainly well aware of the laws regarding political solicitation of state government employees and the ramifications of extorting contributions from employees by threatening their jobs. It is disturbing that a man with such an extensive law enforcement background would so brazenly break the law.

I have submitted a letter to the Attorney General reporting this activity, thereby requesting whistleblower status. However, I will be able to retire in March so at this point in my career, I simply wish to do what I can to expose and change the pervasive practice of extorting political contributions from state employees who should be under pressure to do one thing...serve the people of Kentucky to the best of their abilities.

In my 27 years in state government, I have never seen such an audacious and systematic approach to using state government as an arm to raise money for a political campaign. Again, it is my hope that you will use the information in this letter to bring attention to this activity and to permanently separate public service from political solicitations.

Sincerely,

  
Rodney Young