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Subject: THEY DID NOT RECUEDED THEMSELVES Rights of a Defendant

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## THEY DID NOT RECUEDED THEMSELVES!



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As a Result of Major Violations against the SC Constitution and Judicial Principals, I Will  
File a Lawsuit  
against the SC Senate Ethics Committee  
by Robert Ford

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Every defendant in our country must receive a fair hearing. Our system of justice is one of the best in the history of mankind. We spend billions of dollars in pursuit of justice and fairplay. There is no room in our judicial system for payback by officials, personal vendetta's and prejudice exhibited toward a defendant.

However, this is exactly what happened to me by members of the SC Senate Ethics Committee and as a result of this lack of fair play and justice; I will be filing a lawsuit against the SC Senate Ethics Committee. At least five of the ten member panel used their positions against me when they knew it was impossible for me to receive a fair and unbiased hearing. **The Chairman of the Committee Senator Luke Rankin** instructed his staff person to gather information against me and this information triggered the allegations. Chairman Rankin should have rescued himself from these entire proceedings due to the fact that I changed my position in support on a piece of importance to him named Flow Control, as a result he extremely upset. These proceedings started once I changed my support.

**Senator John Matthews** has been upset with me for the past 4-5 years because of my outspoken and public criticism through new conferences, commentaries and upon the request for an audit conducted by the Legislative Audit Council of SC State University. The audit confirmed state funds were

funneled through the institution for projects some of which personally benefitted legislator's non-profits and other entities to which they have direct ties. The fact is that Senator John Matthews has benefitted from the use of this pass-through appropriation process through SC State University for more than 30 years is contemptible. Approximately \$30 million state appropriated dollars for exclusive projects and non-profits that he is directly affiliated with.

I have made known through the same channels that SC State University with the knowledge of both Congressman James Clyburn and Senator John Matthews that SC State University has misallocated, lost, cannot account for more than \$175 million dollars intended for the SC State Transportation Center.

At least, twenty-five Senators and their family members make millions of dollars a year from taxpayers while they are serving in the SC Senate and many practice nepotism. This is a clear ethical violation all over the civilized world. This is why the majority of the members should have recused themselves.

**Senators Yancey McGill and Brad Hutto** have majority Black districts which means both are indebted to Senator John Matthews and Congressman James Clyburn for their political survival. Regrettably, **Senator Glenn Reese** of Spartanburg feels that he would lose the Democratic Primary without Congressman Clyburn and Senator John Matthews.

Both Senator's Hutto and Matthews' staff had several conversations about how Robert Ford will become the face of the South Carolina Ethics Reform; the sacrificial lamb, so as a result both senators should have recused themselves.

**Senator John Courson and Harvey Peeler** were extremely bitter towards me after I raised questions in a Senate Finance Committee meeting during a presentation about a \$250 million dollar industry project that is located in Senate District 42 which I represented at the time. My inquiry was based on the fact that 19 senators were asked to cosponsor the legislation and as the sitting senator, had not been contacted by the industry or the legislators who sponsored the bill. Both of those gentlemen should have

**RECUSED themselves.** I was told by several lobbyists who were present at that Senate Finance Committee meeting that the two senators were very angry about the fact, I confronted the presenter about the matter during the meeting. Two former Senators who were watching the broadcast concurred with their observations.

No one should serve on a judicial panel, jury or serve as a judge who cannot be fair to the defendant regardless of their position. There was no way in hell; those five gentlemen could be fair to Robert Ford. Many lobbyists and legislators have told me that at least three other members' of that ten member Ethics Committee panel held grudges against me; in that case they should have



**also recused themselves. I am not one hundred percent sure about that statement; I am sure about the five that I previously mentioned.**

**I was also told by both members and former members of the General Assembly they are trying to make Robert Ford the guinea pig and scapegoat for the ethics legislation in an attempt to satisfy Governor Nikki Haley. I was also chosen because of the fact the leadership of the Senate Democratic Caucus and the State Democratic Party would never support me if these kinds of allegations were brought.**

**It does not make any difference whether you like a defendant or not, it does not matter if the defendant has committed the most egregious crime of the century, in our system of justice they will get a fair and impartial hearing, while judges and potential jurors who cannot give them a fair and impartial hearing will be disqualified. This simply means, the five senators should have been disqualified, or at least recused themselves from the proceedings where the charges were brought against me in the first place. No, these proceedings were intended to admonish me because the Chairman of the Senate Ethics Committee had a personal grievance against me.**

**Every candidate for a state board or commission, magistrate, all judicial candidates, including the members of any State Supreme Court and every confirmation hearing conducted by the SC Senates since its conception asks the question: Do you have a personal or economic conflict of interest that would look like an impropriety? If so, what would you do? The only answer you can give in response to the question is that I would recuse myself. This is also the case with every judicial panel participant who has passed judgment on a defendant. Are you aware of any conflict or hatred that you may have towards this defendant? In our judicial system, in every state in this country all defendants have equal rights under the law and must have a fair hearing. These lawmakers on the Senate Ethics Committee who pass laws every day at least seven of them knew they could not give me a fair and impartial hearing.**

**This is why I contend, the Senate Ethics Committee members and the Chairman did not show any professional courtesy to even hear my explanation of the allegations. They did not have enough respect for me as a Senator to give me a hearing before the charges were levied. The hearings were scheduled either when I was in the hospital or undergoing a series of physician appointments. Under these circumstances there was never a mechanism for me to defend and provide information or documentation before the charges were actually imposed.**

**The bottom line, this particular process should never have taken place against me because of the circumstances and the people.**

