

Richard Coolidge

From: Mike Coffman
Sent: Saturday, December 01, 2007 12:47 PM
To: Mike Coffman; Bill Hobbs; Jacque Ponder
Cc: Richard Coolidge
Subject: RE: Press Release on Kopelman

What if the title reads that he was cleared of any "criminal" acts?

Mike

From: Mike Coffman
Sent: Saturday, December 01, 2007 12:45 PM
To: Bill Hobbs; Jacque Ponder
Cc: Richard Coolidge
Subject: RE: Press Release on Kopelman

Bill,

I'll work on another draft tomorrow and I'll take into account your concerns.

Mike Coffman

From: Bill Hobbs
Sent: Saturday, December 01, 2007 12:33 PM
To: Mike Coffman; Jacque Ponder
Cc: Richard Coolidge
Subject: RE: Press Release on Kopelman

I have several concerns about the latest version.

The headline says "State Audit Clears Election Worker". This is not really accurate. On Page 44, the audit report states

The conduct of the employee for whom the initial allegations were made does appear to have violated state statute [Section 24-50-117, C.R.S.] and State Personnel Board rules [rules 1-13 and 1-14].

Specifically, the employee owned and operated a partisan political business while employed with the Department of State. The employee's ownership and operation of this business appears to "raise criticism and the appearance of a conflict of interest" particularly given the job responsibilities for which this individual was assigned within the Elections Division. Furthermore, the employee engaged in outside employment/business ownership without advance written approval from the appointing authority.

Thus, rather than clearing the employee, the audit report confirms our original finding that he was guilty of two violations.

I am also concerned about the portion of the release that states, "It was alleged by the liberal oriented Progress Now Action and Colorado Ethics Watch that Kopelman stole the voter registration lists from the Secretary of State's office and profited by selling them."

First, this may not be entirely accurate about what they actually said. This week Rich went back and looked at the actual statements from Colorado Ethics Watch, and I believe he reported that they were a little different. I don't recall what Progress Now Action said, but we need to be accurate. The audit report, on page 48, says "One of the allegations made regarding an employee of the Department of State was that the employee had misused state assets and used his employment with the Department for personal gain." This characterization of the allegation appears immediately before the auditor's finding quoted in the release that "We found no evidence that the business benefited financially from the individual's employment with the Colorado Department of State." It would be safer to use the auditor's language.

Second, I think it's better not to name Colorado Ethics Watch or any other specific organization. It pits us directly in a battle with a group that we will continue to be involved with as we perform our responsibilities (such as the Yellow Cab

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investigation and campaign finance complaints), and it may compromise our neutrality and objectivity in the minds of some. Also, if we do refer to them by name, I would suggest it's better not to use a label such as "liberal oriented". While the label may be true, and it may explain their motivations, we should not imply that it matters to us whether a group is "liberal oriented".

-Bill

From: Mike Coffman
Sent: Saturday, December 01, 2007 10:34 AM
To: Jacque Ponder
Cc: Richard Coolidge; Dan Kopelman; Bill Hobbs
Subject: Press Release on Kopelman

Rich,

Please look at my version. I took from what you did, what Dan did, and what I added in.

Mike Coffman

Richard Coolidge

From: Mike Coffman
Sent: Sunday, December 16, 2007 8:11 PM
To: jmartinez@denverpost.com
Cc: Richard Coolidge; Jacque Ponder
Subject: Editorial Board

Julia,

First of all, you should take a look at the website for Colorado Ethics Watch. They give a description of an audit of my office that does not in any way compare to the actual audit. It's really too bad. We could use a credible organization that provides an ethical view into the conduct of our state's public officials but they lose credibility when they do what is obviously a partisan attack for their own fundraising purposes. The majority of the audit covers the four years prior to my taking the office.

Tomorrow, I'm releasing the results from the court-ordered recertification of Colorado's electronic voting equipment at 2:00 pm. I could meet with you late tomorrow afternoon or early on Friday afternoon.

Let me know.

Mike Coffman

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Richard Coolidge

From: Mike Coffman
Sent: Sunday, December 16, 2007 8:07 PM
To: Carroll, Vincent
Cc: Richard Coolidge; Jacque Ponder
Subject: Editorial Board

Vince,

First of all, you should take a look at the website for Colorado Ethics Watch. They give a description of an audit of my office that does not in any way compare to the actual audit. It's really too bad. We could use a credible organization that provides an ethical view into the conduct of our state's public officials but they lose credibility when they do what is obviously a partisan attack for their own fundraising purposes. The majority of the audit covers the four years prior to my taking the office.

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Mike Coffman

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Richard Coolidge

From: Mike Coffman
Sent: Sunday, March 16, 2008 3:57 PM
To: Harsanyi, David
Subject: RE: Colorado Ethics Watch, etc.

David,

This would be a great topic for you to expand on. I think that there are a lot of people that don't know that some of these organizations are highly partisan.

Mike Coffman

From: Harsanyi, David [mailto:DHarsanyi@Denverpost.com]
Sent: Friday, March 14, 2008 7:58 AM
To: Mike Coffman
Subject: RE: Colorado Ethics Watch, etc.

Mike,
The left has utilized these groups far better than the right. I'm sure you know they're heavily funded. Republicans need to start their own organizations in this state.
- dh

From: Mike Coffman [mailto:Mike.Coffman@SOS.STATE.CO.US]
Sent: Thu 3/13/2008 9:22 PM
To: Harsanyi, David
Subject: Colorado Ethics Watch, etc.

David,

Its interesting to note that there seems to be a plethora of supposedly nonprofit organizations out there whose only purpose seems to be in making highly partisan attacks on Republicans.

Mike Coffman

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Richard Coolidge

From: Stephanie Cegielski
Sent: Tuesday, April 01, 2008 1:00 PM
To: Mike Coffman
Cc: Jacque Ponder
Subject: RE: Statesman Response

I think a response would be beneficial. If we can convince him that there is no substance to Chantell's claim, he will either skip the story or "defend" the office.

From: Mike Coffman
Sent: Tuesday, April 01, 2008 12:45 PM
To: Stephanie Cegielski
Cc: Jacque Ponder
Subject: RE: Statesman Response

Should we hold off on responding?

From: Stephanie Cegielski
Sent: Tuesday, April 01, 2008 12:43 PM
To: Mike Coffman; Jacque Ponder
Cc: Richard Coolidge
Subject: Statesman Response
Importance: High

Chris Bragg has indicated to me that the he posed the questions based on the probability that Chantell Taylor would raise them and he is trying to determine for himself whether or not there is a story.

Thanks.

Stephanie Cegielski
Colorado Department of State
Legal Specialist
1700 Broadway, Suite 270
Denver, CO 80290
303.860.6937 (phone)
303.869.4891 (fax)
stephanie.cegielski@sos.state.co.us

Richard Coolidge

From: Jacque Ponder
Sent: Friday, April 04, 2008 11:03 AM
To: Mike Coffman
Subject: FW: Response to Ethics Watch Story in RMN
Importance: High

From: Richard Coolidge
Sent: Thursday, April 03, 2008 4:41 PM
To: 'Myaung Kim'
Subject: Response

Like all other statewide elected officials, the Secretary is on duty 24/7 and sets his own schedule. This is just another attack made without merit from this partisan liberal group who only attacks Republicans.

Richard Coolidge
Office of the Secretary of State
1700 Broadway, Ste 250
Denver, CO 80290
(303) 869-4921
Fax: (303) 869-4860

7/29/2008

Richard Coolidge

From: Mike Coffman
Sent: Saturday, June 28, 2008 6:48 PM
To: anasb@dailycamera.com
Subject: Ethics Watch

Brittany,

I find it interesting that Ethics Watch is singling out one candidate where candidates from both parties are often late with their reports.

A candidate who is late and assessed a fine can request a waiver of his/her fine. Waivers are uniformly granted or denied based on their previous history of whether or not they have been late and have been previously granted a waiver.

There is no complaint process that is required to trigger enforcement. It is a matter of public record if you would like to inquire into the status of any other candidates. I'm sure that Ethics Watch, which presents itself as a nonprofit nonpartisan organization for tax purposes, is as interested in the Democrats that are late as they are with the Republicans.

Mike Coffman

8/1/2008