

Richard Coolidge

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 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

7/29/2008

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-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