

>> PLEASE RISE.

HEAR YE, HEAR YE, HEAR YE.

THE SUPREME COURT OF FLORIDA IS
NOW IN SESSION.

ALL WHO HAVE CAUSE TO PLEA, DRAW
NEAR, GIVE ATTENTION AND YE
SHALL BE HEARD.

GOD SAVE THE UNITED STATES, THE
GREAT STATE OF FLORIDA AND THIS
HONORABLE COURT.

>> LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE
FLORIDA SUPREME COURT.

PLEASE BE SEATED.

>> WELCOME TO THE FLORIDA
SUPREME COURT.

THE FIRST ITEM ON OUR DOCKET IS
THE ITEM RELATED TO AN INQUIRY
REGARDING JUDGE RALPH E.
ERIKKSON.

JUDGE ERIKKSON.

>> JUDGE ERIKKSON, YOU ARE HERE
TODAY BEFORE THE COURT BECAUSE
OF CONDUCT WHICH THIS COURT HAS
DETERMINED TO BE IN VIOLATION OF
THE CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT,
CONDUCT WHICH REQUIRES THE
PUBLIC REPRIMAND WHICH WE NOW
ADMINISTER.

AS THE CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT
RECOGNIZES, JUDGES INDIVIDUALLY
AND COLLECTIVELY MUST RESPECT
AND HONOR THE JUDICIAL OFFICE AS
A PUBLIC TRUST AND STRIVE TO
ENHANCE AND MAINTAIN CONFIDENCE
IN OUR LEGAL SYSTEM.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR

JUDICIARY ULTIMATELY RESTS ON THE TRUST AND CONFIDENCE THAT THE PEOPLE PLACE AND THE JUDGES WHO SERVE THEM.

THIS COURT RECOGNIZES THAT ONE OF OUR MOST IMPORTANT DUTIES IS TO CARRY OUT THE RESPONSIBILITIES GIVEN TO US IN THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION FOR THE DISCIPLINE OF JUDGES.

UNDER THAT AUTHORITY VESTED IN US BY THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION IT IS OUR SOLEMN DUTY TODAY TO PUBLICLY RECOMMEND YOU IN THE SESSION OF COURT.

JUDGE ERIKSSON, THIS COURT IN ITS OPINION, HAS DETERMINED THAT CLEAR AND CONVINCING EVIDENCE SUPPORTED TWO OF THE COUNTS BROUGHT AGAINST YOU.

IN THE FIRST THE DEFENDANT CAME BEFORE YOU IN A CASE THAT INVOLVED ADMISSIBILITY OF PORTIONS OF A VIDEO IN A TRAFFIC STOP.

BOTH THE DEFENSE AND THE STATE ASKED FOR TIME TO DEAL WITH THIS ISSUE BUT YOU DENIED THEIR REQUESTS.

WHEN THE DEFENDANT THEN ASKED YOU TO RECUSE YOURSELF YOU AGREED TO GIVE DEFENSE COUNSEL TIME TO PREPARE THE WRITTEN MOTION AS REQUIRED BY FLORIDA LAW, HOWEVER YOU ALSO RAISED THE DEFENDANT'S BOND BY A

SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT ON YOUR OWN MOTION AND THEN YOU DENIED DEFENSE'S REQUEST TO RECONSIDER THIS RULING.

WHEN YOU APPEARED BEFORE THE INVESTIGATIVE PANEL IN THIS CASE, THE MEMBER ASKED YOU IF YOU RAISED THE BOND SOLELY BECAUSE THE DEFENDANT FILED A MOTION TO RECUSE YOU.

YOU AGREED THAT YOU DID.

JUDGE ERIKSSON, THE DEFENDANT IN THIS CASE HAD A RIGHT TO FILE THE MOTION FOR RECUSAL.

AS A RESULT, WE HAVE CONCLUDED YOU IMPROPERLY USED YOUR OFFICE TO PUNISH SOMEONE FOR EXERCISING HIS LEGAL RIGHT.

THE OTHER COUNT AGAINST YOU DEALT WITH THE WAY YOU CONDUCTED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN JUNCTION PROCEEDINGS WITHOUT THE ASSISTANCE OF AN ATTORNEY.

ON OCTOBER 30, 2007, YOU PRESIDED OVER A SERIES OF SUCH CASES.

YOU ADOPTED AN UNDULY RIGID PROCESS THAT IMPEDED THE ABILITY OF THE PETITIONERS TO OBTAIN THE RELIEF AND PROTECTION THEY SOUGHT FROM YOU.

IN EFFECT YOU PENALIZED THE PETITIONERS FOR BEING UNFAMILIAR WITH THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM.

EXAMPLES OF THE BEHAVIOR YOU EXHIBITED INCLUDE DISMISSING

PETITIONS FOR LACK OF EVIDENCE
EVEN THOUGH THE PETITIONERS
COULD HAVE TESTIFIED ON THEIR
OWN BEHALF.

YOU FURTHER REFUSED TO CONSIDER
DOCUMENTS AND SWORN STATEMENTS
ON GROUNDS THEY CONSTITUTED
HEARSAY AND WHEN NO PARTY HAD
RAISED A HEARSAY OBJECTION.

THE WAY YOU HANDLED THESE CASES
IS ALL THE MORE INTOLERABLE
BECAUSE THE EVIDENCE REFLECTS
THAT YOU ARE DISSATISFIED WITH
THE WAY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CASES
WERE BEING ASSIGNED IN YOUR
CIRCUIT.

FOR EXAMPLE YOU ASKED
PETITIONERS EXTRA QUESTIONS SUCH
AS, WHO SENT YOU HERE AND WHO
TOLD YOU TO FILE THIS?

JUDGE ERIKSSON, THE COURTROOM IS
NOT A PROPER PLACE TO EXPRESS OR
IMPLY YOUR DISAGREEMENT WITH THE
PROCESS BY WHICH DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE CASES ARE HANDLED OR
ASSIGNED.

THERE ARE OTHER AVENUES TO DO SO
THAT WOULD NOT HAVE AFFECTED,
THAT WOULD NOT HAVE HAD THE
EFFECT OF PUNISHING INDIVIDUALS
WHO HAD NO PART IN YOUR PERSONAL
DISAGREEMENT.

THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE WHEN YOU
ARE HANDLING THE VERY SERIOUS
ISSUE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, AS
IT AFFECTS THE LIVES OF

FLORIDIANS.

JUDGE ERIKSSON, BY YOUR CONDUCT YOU STAND IN VIOLATION OF CANON I OF THE FLORIDA CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT WHICH REQUIRES JUDGES TO MAINTAIN A HIGH STANDARD OF CONDUCT, SO THE INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY MAY BE PRESERVED. YOU HAVE VIOLATED CANON 2A WHICH REQUIRES YOU COMPLY WITH THE LAW AND ACT AT ALL TIMES IN A MANNER THAT PROMOTES PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE INTEGRITY AND IMPARTIALITY OF THE JUDICIARY. YOU HAVE VIOLATED CANON 3B2, WHICH REQUIRES YOU TO BE FAITHFUL TO THE LAW MAINTAINED AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE IN IT.

YOUR ACTIONS ALSO VIOLATED CANON 3B7 WHICH REQUIRES YOU TO ACCORD TO EVERY PERSON WHO HAS A LEGAL INTEREST IN A WORK PRECEDING.

FINALLY, YOU VIOLATED CANON 3B8, WHICH REQUIRES JUDGES TO DISPOSE OF ALL JUDICIAL MATTERS FAIRLY.

FOR THESE VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT JUDGE ERIKSSON, THE SUPREME COURT OF FLORIDA HEREBY PUBLICLY REPRIMANDS YOU FOR YOUR MISCONDUCT.

YOU MAY NOW BE RELEASED.