

ATTACHMENT

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State of Ohio Auditor's Office
Mr. David Yost
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88 East Broad Street
P.O. Box 1140
Columbus, Ohio 43215

(Corrected Version dated 1/17/19)

Sent via Certified Mail # 7018 0360 0001 8355 1082

HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. David Yost:

This letter is to notify your office about several very serious unconfirmed allegations and information that I've been made aware of regarding the Ross County Sheriff's Office and official[s] within that office and to request an immediate investigation to determine its accuracy and take action (if confirmed) where it is necessary. These reports also extend into other offices in Ross County including the Ross County Prosecution office, specifically regarding the risk of a significant conflict of interest that may arise if it is involved in any capacity in investigating these specific allegations.

The allegations and information involve a detective's alleged conduct while he was on duty working both regular and overtime hours. The official is John Winfield who was a detective from the Ross County Sheriff's Office and the Sheriff's lead detective on a local, State and Federal Task Force of the murdered and missing women of Ross County, which included victim's Charlotte Trego, Tameka Lynch, Timberly Claytor, Tiffany Sayre, and Wanda Lemons. It may also include victims Megan Kellough, Chanelle Watkins, and Angela Dyer.

On the State and Federal Task Force, Detective John Winfield was working with Ohio Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation (Agent Larry McCoy and Ryan Scheiderer). It is my understanding that he was also federally deputized to work with the Federal Bureau of Investigation under Agent David Knight. BCI Agents Larry McCoy and Ryan Scheiderer were also deputized to work on the Federal Task Force. It is reported that Ross County Prosecutor Matthew Schmidt was involved with the Task Force and was reported to have met with them regularly.

The residents of Ross and Scioto Counties and the families of the murdered and missing women in both counties signed a petition last year for Ross County Prosecutor Matt Schmidt and Judge Ater to be removed from their cases for reasons of bias and their legitimate concerns that Judge Michael Ater and Prosecutor Matt Schmidt provided leniency to and potentially protected an alleged longtime informant, Earnest "Dollar Bill" Moore and because they felt their cases were not being properly investigated or addressed. The community and victim's families petitioned the U.S. Attorney General to assign a special prosecutor to remove Judge Michael Ater and Prosecutor Matt Schmidt. This petition received over 2000 signatures. Scioto County citizens also requested that a special prosecutor be assigned on their cases citing similar concerns.

The missing women's task force was comprised of the following entities and individuals:

Ross County Sheriff's Chief Deputy T.J. Hollis- He led the local task force.

Ross County Sheriff's Office Detective John Winfield- Lead detective on the missing women's task force. (Federally Deputized)

Chillicothe Police Department

Federal Bureau of Investigation- Agent David Knight (SAC- Angela L. Byers)

Attorney General's Office Bureau of Criminal Investigation- Agent Larry McCoy and Ryan Scheiderer (Federally Deputized)

The current unconfirmed allegations and information include the contents below:

Detective John Winfield received approximately \$13,000 in overtime compensation, portions of which were federal funds provided to the Ross County Sheriff's office where he was employed. Because he was the lead detective on the missing women's cases, these allegations and reports require serious review for both criminal and civil action and demand a very thorough investigation.

It is reported that while he was compensated, Detective Winfield used company equipment (i.e. his official vehicle) and falsely reported that he was working when he was not. He was also engaged in an extramarital affair with another deputy from the same office, Ross County Sheriff's Deputy Jena Horiack. His conduct allegedly caused harm to that deputy as she was a victim of physical abuse, pregnant and was reported to have allegedly lost an unborn baby. She has since left her employment at the Ross County Sheriff's Office and was subsequently offered employment by the Ross County Prosecution office allegedly as a result of the circumstances that Detective Winfield placed her in. Detective Winfield's behavior was reported to Mike Preston from the Ross County Sheriff's Office and it is my understanding that Sergeant Lawhorn filed charges on him. He was then placed on administrative leave but stayed on the roster.

Ohio citizens who are taxpayers help fund these local, federal and state entities who are in place to protect and preserve life and they have every right to know where and how their tax dollars are

being spent. The reports and allegations additionally include that the Ross County Prosecutor's office "quietly" worked out a deal that Detective Winfield was to attend a six-month inpatient rehabilitation program in Kentucky where he was allegedly ordered to be treated for sex, drug, and alcohol abuse. However, he left approximately two months early, immediately violating the "leniency" that he was being given and subsequently committed a fourth-degree felony of criminal trespass on his wife's property.

After receiving this information, I checked for verification purposes which showed the court docket sheet displaying a criminal trespass charge on 9/26/2018 filed by his wife Michelle Winfield. The violation time was 9:10. Ticket number was S1983 and was visible on the court docket as a 4th degree misdemeanor Section 2911.21. The case number was CRB 1803360. Detective Winfield's date of birth is 3-5-82. The case was in the Chillicothe Municipal Court.

There is another pending case which is most likely a result of the above related incident. That case is 18 DR 000417. The case is a Dissolution with Children case that is currently being handled under Judge Michael Ater. This case is located with the Ross County Court of Common Pleas. Judge Ater's wife works for the Ross County Prosecutor's Office under former Prosecutor Matthew Schmidt and now it is alleged that Detective Winfield's victim (his former mistress) also works with the Ross County Prosecutor's office. Judge Matthew Schmidt is now working with Judge Michael Ater. Former Prosecutor Matthew Schmidt's wife works for the Ross County Sheriff's Office.

On a related note I have received numerous reports that Detective Winfield did not properly handle information from willing witnesses related to the murdered and missing women's cases. He did not act on information from those reporting parties or others nor did he follow up on information that was provided by people who contacted him directly or who contacted the Sheriff's office or others where he was the lead detective and they felt that he did not investigate the information he received.

The implications of these allegations are significant because the perpetrator[s] have not been arrested and because it raises the possibility if these charges are verified that some of these deaths could have been prevented if he had followed up on the information received or spoke to the reporting parties who could have provided information and/or physical evidence.

Below is a list of the information and allegations that Detective Winfield was allegedly engaged in while using his state and federal authorized time on duty that were not work related. These allegations have not been verified or confirmed and should be investigated:

- Theft in office
- Fraud
- Misappropriation of funds (fraudulent use of local, state, and federal tax dollars)

- Drug and Alcohol abuse
- Assault
- Insubordination
- Dereliction of Duty

I am sure the community does not care about the allegations of his extramarital affairs with another deputy, as that is a personal issue that should not be disclosed. However, they do care about his conduct as the lead detective on a federal task force for the murdered and missing women; especially if any deaths could have been prevented if he had followed up on witness reports or if he was actually working while he was supposed to be on duty as an official with the task force. Equally concerning is that federal funds and tax payer dollars may have been misappropriated to this detective in spite of his problematic conduct, including the allegations of theft in office and other misconduct which, if verified, should have led to criminal charges.

The following questions regarding Detective Winfield arise:

1. Were any emergency calls or any calls missed while he was on duty but not actually working that may have placed any lives in jeopardy?
2. Were any lives lost because he did not act on any leads or information that was provided by citizens on the murdered and missing women's cases?
3. Who investigated Detective Winfield's actions? Were they a biased party? What were the consequences of that investigation since it is reported that he terminated the alleged mandatory rehabilitation early?
4. Why was he reassigned a new position in Waverly after allegedly being demoted by the Ross County Sheriff's Office in spite of the fact that he allegedly prematurely left his ordered mandatory rehabilitation in Kentucky and had a trespass complaint against him?
5. Were the funds that he received in overtime and on the clock refunded if he was not working during the hours that he reported he was working?
6. Were the federal authorities notified that the funds were potentially misappropriated?
7. Has the Internal Revenue Service been contacted about the theft in office?
8. Has the Department of Justice Office of Inspector General been notified since he was on the federal task force as the lead detective for the murdered and missing women's cases and criminal acts have been allegedly committed?

9. Has an official government assessment been made as to how much money was received in a fraudulent manner that he claimed on his overtime and regular work shift specifically for the murdered and missing women's cases?

10. Were the BCI Agents that he worked with regularly, Agents Larry McCoy and Ryan Scheiderer, involved in any capacity with Detective Winfield for the allegations listed herein?

Finally, Detective Winfield is also reportedly a relative of one of the alleged killers of at least two of the murdered and missing women and should have never been placed in that position. He had already been reported to federal and congressional offices in Washington for other conduct that was problematic and questionable.

It is with this information that this request is made to (1) conduct a full independent investigation on these allegations (2) obtain the records of funding that has been expended to Detective John Winfield when he reported that he was on duty both as a federal task force officer and as a Ross County Sheriff's Deputy and (3) determine whether any deaths might have been prevented if he had followed up on any evidence or with any witnesses that claimed to have reported or attempt to report information to him.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela Clemente

cc: Internal Revenue Service
Department of Justice Office of Inspector General
U.S. Attorney General