

Mark Flanders

From: Mark Flanders
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2017 11:44 AM
To: mwagoner@slk-law.com
Subject: Opportunity to respond
Attachments: Complaint details.pdf

Mr. Wagoner,

In accordance with the LSC Sexual Harassment policy, I send Senator Hite the attached "to give the alleged offender an opportunity to provide information about the alleged conduct and to recommend possible resolutions of the situation."

Please respond to me with any information the Senator provides. Thank you.

Mark Flanders
Director
Ohio Legislative Service Commission
(614) 466-3615
mark.flanders@lsc.ohio.gov

Memorandum

Re: October 11, 2017 sexual harassment complaint

Circumstances leading to the complaint

According to Complainant, she first spoke with the Senator in early August. They had a casual exchange on the north stairs from the Statehouse into the parking garage, in which the Senator asked her name. They exchanged pleasantries and continued on.

Approximately one week later, Complainant relates that they again passed on the garage stairs, and the Senator stated, "Nice outfit. It's nice to see you. What was your name again?" He then asked her to look him up on Facebook. She ignored the request. When they next encountered each other, he again asked her to look him up on Facebook. She said that she declined his second request and told him that it was inappropriate for her to friend him.

The following week, she said that he came to her office in the Statehouse. He generally engaged in small talk. That same day, she received a Facebook friend request from him. After looking at his Facebook friend list, she determined that he was friends with a number of other people who work in the Statehouse, so she accepted his friend request.

The Senator began messaging Complainant through the Facebook messenger application. The conversations included questions such as "Did you miss me?" and questions about how her weekend went. She then blocked him from contacting her.

The next day, the Senator entered Complainant's office and asked why she had blocked him. She told him that it was inappropriate. He initially left the office, then returned and sat down. She stated that he told her that he couldn't stop thinking about her and that he needed a [REDACTED] buddy." He said that he had an affair before, that he had a condo, and that no one would ever know. According to Complainant, he continued to try to convince her for more than an hour. He provided details about his sex life with his wife, including the length of time since they had engaged in sexual relations.

Complainant related that he said that he was a "grown man with needs" and that he needed oral sex. She said that she told him "no" approximately eight to nine times during the conversation. She related other comments that he made, including "You have no idea how much I can please you," "You have no idea how good I'll be," and "You know where to find me. You'll change your mind." Complainant stated that he was laughing and jovial throughout the conversation. She said that she was extremely uncomfortable and nervous during the exchange, because he was a State Senator sitting in her office.

The following day, Complainant said that the Senator returned to her office and asked her if she had changed her mind yet. She told him "no," and said that she was not going to change her mind. He continued to tell her that he had a condo and that nothing would change in her life.

Throughout the end of August and through September, Complainant stated that the Senator would come to her office and ask if she had changed her mind. He stopped in whenever he was in town, including on non-session days, and when not dressed for work at the Statehouse. He asked her to come to his condo and also physically hugged her. He invited her to dinner and asked her to accompany him to a reception.

Complainant relates that she missed two days of work during this time, calling in sick due to stress. She stated that she was unable to eat and sleep and was "a stress ball."

According to Complainant, the Senator continued to approach her in her office. He would go behind her desk into her personal space. He asked her for hugs, and he made suggestive jokes about the size of his feet. He told her that he would please her, and that no one would ever know. That he would stay married, and she would stay engaged. In one of these meetings, he asked her what LSC paid her. She commented that the attorneys on staff made good money, and he responded that "I can take care of that." She said that she laughed it off.

She stated that the Senator always had a joking, jovial manner. He was continually pushing the boundaries. He told her about his personal life, to the point that she felt that she was being used as his personal counselor. On one occasion he asked her whether she liked sex, and she said that she felt obligated to joke back, "Of

course. Who doesn't?" Complainant said that she knew the conversations were out of line, but that he was a Senator. She stated that she didn't want to embarrass him. She just wanted the situation to go away.

During the last week of September, she was planning a trip to Nashville. The Senator stopped in to her office and said that he was going to Nashville that weekend. She inadvertently referenced her own trip, and he said that he wished she would come with him. She said that she ignored his statement. She states that she did not see the Senator for a "week or so" after this exchange.

On Tuesday, October 10, 2017, the Senator again came to her office and asked her to attend a reception with him. Complainant stated that he hugged her and told her that she felt really good. She said that he was "nose to nose begging her to get together with him." He again said that no one would know.

She walked to the Riffe Building as part of her work duties, and he accompanied her through the parking garage. When she met up with another LSC employee, she said that "she got away." When she reentered the parking garage to return to the Statehouse, he was waiting for her in his convertible. She said that he told her to get into his car. She responded "no," that she was working. She said that he followed alongside her in his car as she walked through the parking garage until she reentered the Statehouse. She said that he asked if she liked his car, and she said "yes." She also stated that he asked if this was offensive to her, and she stated "Every minute."

The following morning, October 11, 2017, he entered her office with two bouquets of flowers. According to Complainant, a floral company was giving away flowers and encouraging people to keep one bouquet and give the second away. One of the bouquets had the following note attached:



Complainant indicated that the "101" at the bottom was the Senator's office room number. She also said that, during this interaction, the Senator stated, "Just for [REDACTED] and giggles, let's just try it a few times. We can stop it if it doesn't work out." He also stated that the flowers "are from your secret admirer."