

1 trying to get -- like, there wasn't a wheelchair
2 ramp, and I got that actually installed.

3 And he was just kind of a slumlord,
4 but -- so they had talked about moving and then
5 they had picked out an office and they said, No,
6 it's not going to become available. And then we
7 were told we are not moving. Like, we had gotten
8 everything all ready like we are going to move
9 and then randomly we are told we are not moving.

10 And then one day Congressman comes in
11 and tells Michele that his realtor found this
12 location. It's perfect. It used to be a bank
13 and we are moving there. And we moved, like, the
14 very next week. Well, no, we moved -- we moved
15 after the Christmas break. We ended up staying
16 closed pretty long because we ended up moving
17 right after all that.

18 MR. BROWN: I think --

19 FORMER STAFFER B: And it was a
20 very -- it happened quickly. There was a lot of
21 cosmetic changes that were made --

22 MR. BROWN: Yeah, I think --

1 FORMER STAFFER B: -- and nobody
2 knows why we moved.

3 MR. BROWN: I think you told Helen at
4 some point that there was, like, a remodel done
5 of the office. What -- what --

6 FORMER STAFFER B: Yes.

7 MR. BROWN: -- what did that entail?

8 FORMER STAFFER B: They installed a
9 shower. They took out -- I think there was a
10 second stall. They installed a shower. They
11 repainted the whole place. I want to say they
12 took down a wall. There was a lot of cosmetic
13 changes that had happened.

14 MR. BROWN: Was -- was -- was the --

15 FORMER STAFFER B: Repainted the whole
16 place -- I am sorry?

17 MR. BROWN: Was the Gulfport office
18 like, you know, the -- the new office, was that
19 better suited for the -- the needs of the
20 Congressional office than the Biloxi office?

21 FORMER STAFFER B: No. No, it was
22 horrible. It was -- it's in the middle of a

1 neighborhood. It's very hard to find. It's next
2 to a, like, mom-and-pop -- mom-and-pop hardware
3 store. That's about the only thing that's around
4 there. It's -- it's -- it's kind of hidden. It
5 used to be a bank.

6 So there is, like, the drive-thru
7 teller, you know, areas still up, but it was --
8 there was the -- the area -- how do I explain it?
9 Well, anyways, the big thing is that there wasn't
10 enough offices.

11 I didn't get an office and I was the
12 one that spent -- I was the only caseworker in
13 there. So I was the only one that met with
14 constituents. I was in an open area and there
15 would have been one, two -- like, four or five
16 people that was in the open area. Michele and
17 Leslie had an office and Michele -- I mean,
18 Leslie's office was big -- big enough to fit
19 three other people, but nobody was in there.

20 MR. BROWN: And in -- and in the
21 prior -- in the prior space you had more offices
22 and everybody had -- you know, everybody who was

1 a caseworker and was going to be on the phone had
2 their own private space?

3 FORMER STAFFER B: Correct.

4 MR. BROWN: Okay. Let me ask you
5 this. Do you -- do you -- do you know who Robert
6 Schwartz is?

7 FORMER STAFFER B: Robert Schwartz?
8 No.

9 MR. BROWN: Okay. And have you ever
10 heard of RedFish Properties, LLC?

11 FORMER STAFFER B: Well, let me be
12 honest. Yes, because of what's floating around
13 on the internet. But no.

14 MR. BROWN: Okay. So, well, I guess
15 what I am -- what I am driving at is do you know
16 whether or not the Congressman and the realtor --
17 or not the realtor, but the Congressman and the
18 lessor, the owner of RedFish Properties, which is
19 Robert Schwartz, did they have any sort of
20 relationship or was that ever discussed in the
21 office?

22 FORMER STAFFER B: That I don't know,

1 but the only thing I was told is that Michele
2 knew nothing about this building. It was a place
3 that he -- her -- that the Congressman's realtor
4 found for him and he liked it and that's where we
5 were going.

6 MR. BROWN: Okay.

7 FORMER STAFFER B: And that was the
8 only thing we were told about going.

9 MR. BROWN: I don't know if we are
10 going to be able to do this, but I want to try
11 and do it real quick. And if we can't, we can
12 scrap it.

13 But, Michael, can you pull up Exhibit
14 2? I -- I want Former Staffer B to be able to
15 see this.

16 VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Sure. Please stand
17 by.

18 MR. BROWN: Thank you. And, Former
19 Staffer B, you just let us know if you can see
20 it.

21 FORMER STAFFER B: Okay.

22 MR. BROWN: Michael, can you scroll

1 down a couple pages? Right there. Just, yup, up
2 one page. Sorry.

3 So, Former Staffer B, can you see this
4 document or is that too hard to see?

5 FORMER STAFFER B: I can. I can zoom.

6 MR. BROWN: Okay. What I want you to
7 look at is it says, The parties agree that either
8 party may terminate this lease with 30 days
9 written notice upon satisfaction of capital
10 improvements. And then under that it lists scope
11 of work for capital improvements.

12 It lists new carpet, new flooring,
13 shoe moulding, trim for the ceilings and the
14 walls, adding a toilet and new flooring in the
15 bathroom. It doesn't mention the shower that you
16 discussed.

17 I am curious if there is anything else
18 that was -- you know, any other capital
19 improvements that were made that aren't listed
20 on -- on this document. And it sounds like the
21 shower is the one notable thing.

22 FORMER STAFFER B: I think that's -- I

1 mean, the bathroom was completely remodeled and
2 there is only one bathroom in there. So I don't
3 know why they would have installed the toilet,
4 but --

5 MR. BROWN: In -- in the Biloxi office
6 was there a shower?

7 FORMER STAFFER B: No. There was one
8 bathroom and it was itty bitty.

9 MR. BROWN: Okay. So there is
10 nothing else that jumps out at you as --

11 FORMER STAFFER B: No.

12 MS. EISNER: And just to clarify, did
13 they add a shower to the new office or did they
14 update a shower? Was there a shower there before
15 that they just remodeled?

16 FORMER STAFFER B: I do not believe so
17 and I would lie if I know -- if I said that I
18 knew that there was a shower there before. But I
19 know that a shower was discussed and that was
20 being installed.

21 And that was -- I was very hands off
22 when it came to the actual remodeling of the

1 location, but that was discussed in the office
2 because they would keep us updated.

3 And then when it came time to the move
4 and going in there and seeing the location --
5 like, it was very weird because all the other
6 buildings we were -- as a staff we would go over
7 and look at them. You know, if it was something
8 that Michele and Leslie had looked at and
9 approved, we would go look there at them as a
10 staff.

11 This one we weren't given that
12 opportunity until after -- it was after it was
13 done and we were told, This is where we are
14 moving; we are moving in, like, a few -- I mean,
15 we moved very quickly.

16 MR. BROWN: Okay. Michael, you can
17 take the exhibit down and just put us back. Yup,
18 there we go.

19 MS. EISNER: Do you -- just one other
20 question on that. I mean, I -- I know that this
21 all happened very quickly, but do you have any
22 hunch or understanding of why this particular

1 location might have been appealing to the
2 Congressman?

3 FORMER STAFFER B: No. There was --
4 actually, there were several locations. We were
5 moving into a building that was across from the
6 FBI, like, the FBI was in the building. And one
7 of those -- one of those things that, you know,
8 people used to bring up about the Biloxi office
9 was that there was no -- no security.

10 But, crazy enough, so when you would
11 walk in the Biloxi office it would be, you know,
12 a lobby -- or not really a lobby, but it would
13 just be a room that had, you know, Gabby's desk.
14 And then straight forward would be the big, giant
15 conference room. And then you would walk past --
16 you know, walk down a hall and that would be
17 where the offices were. It was a smaller
18 building.

19 This was you would walk in, Gabby is
20 still in the open, but there is a brick -- there
21 is -- like a brick wall, but it's not really a
22 wall. There is a cutout, you know, so she is

1 still open and a seating area. And then to the
2 left was the conference room and then you would
3 walk back and the offices were there.

4 The -- the one thing that he did talk
5 about it is that he was able to enter where
6 the -- where the bank tellers used to be. There
7 was two lanes that used to be like bank teller
8 lanes and there was a door there and he would
9 enter in that. And he said he could enter
10 through that and constituents -- you know,
11 wouldn't have to be around constituents or
12 constituents couldn't see him.

13 MS. EISNER: Okay.

14 FORMER STAFFER B: But the big -- the
15 big reason for even ever talking about moving
16 was, you know, we had had some constituents or
17 dependents of constituents that were a little --
18 a little much and we had to contact Capitol
19 Police and take advice from them. And so that
20 was the original talks of why we were going to
21 move, for safety, but...

22 MS. EISNER: Okay. And just two other

1 questions about that location. You -- I think
2 when we spoke you talked about seeing a car
3 outside that you believed to be the
4 Congressman's. Can you just -- is that still the
5 case or when was the last time you saw that car
6 outside?

7 FORMER STAFFER B: What do you mean?
8 I am sorry.

9 MS. EISNER: Was there a point in time
10 where you had seen the Congressman's car outside
11 the office during weekends or during hours that
12 weren't working periods of time?

13 FORMER STAFFER B: Oh, at both of the
14 offices he was always -- I mean, always at the
15 Biloxi office and then on the weekends, yes.
16 And, actually, I was there I don't know how long
17 after, but I dropped off some shirts and some
18 items that I had that I didn't, you know, want
19 any part of and his car was there. But Michele
20 pulled up when I -- when I was dropping that off
21 and I just sat it down and got in my car and
22 left.

1 But, yes, his car was always there.
2 It still is always there. I have drove by --
3 it's kind of a weird location, but if you are
4 going to go certain parts of Gulfport you pass it
5 because it's -- it's on a main street in a
6 residential area, if that makes sense.

7 MS. EISNER: Okay.

8 MR. BROWN: It -- it sounds like -- it
9 sounds like the Congressman, between the sofa bed
10 and people not really knowing where he lives,
11 that there is -- there is at least some thought
12 amongst the staff that he is -- he is spending,
13 you know, nights and weekends at the -- the
14 official offices?

15 FORMER STAFFER B: Yes, that has
16 always been -- I mean, people talk about it
17 because they know that in D.C. he sleeps in his
18 office and people have talked about that because
19 there are times that he will stay at Camp Shelby
20 even though he is not drilling, which is really
21 weird, but he will be attending another event.
22 And, you know, the rumor house was -- I thought

1 it was where he lived but it was not somewhere
2 that he was --

3 MR. BROWN: Do you know if -- do
4 you -- do you think anybody else was living at
5 the river house?

6 FORMER STAFFER B: Kyle lived at the
7 river -- or I wouldn't say lived there, but
8 stayed there for quite a while.

9 MR. BROWN: All right. And around
10 what time frame was that?

11 FORMER STAFFER B: Whenever he came
12 back in to town.

13 MR. BROWN: So that would have been,
14 like, when you first started working with him was
15 about, like, October 2018, early 2019?

16 FORMER STAFFER B: It would have been
17 later because Kyle didn't come back -- I mean, he
18 just randomly appeared one day and then -- and,
19 like I said, he was around -- whatever time frame
20 he was around when all that went down was when he
21 would have been staying at the river house.

22 MR. BROWN: Okay. And do you -- do

1 you know he was staying there or that was just
2 your assumption? Did he tell you, like --

3 FORMER STAFFER B: No, I do know he
4 was staying there. He told me that and then him
5 and [REDACTED], they spent the night there and then
6 both showed up. I think he followed her next and
7 all of that and that's why -- then he talked
8 about how they were going through a bunch of old
9 pictures at the river house and he had told me
10 through text message that he was staying there.

11 MR. BROWN: Okay. You were -- we were
12 talking about the Congressman's vehicles. Do you
13 know what kind of vehicle he drives?

14 FORMER STAFFER B: Yes, it's a
15 black -- oh, either it's -- I want to say it's
16 a -- it's a very nice SUV. It's black.

17 MR. BROWN: Chevy Tahoe.

18 FORMER STAFFER B: It might be a
19 Tahoe.

20 MR. BROWN: Yeah, Chevy Tahoe, you
21 said?

22 FORMER STAFFER B: I -- I think

1 it's -- it might be a -- it's -- it might be a
2 Tahoe, yeah.

3 MR. BROWN: Are you -- are you aware
4 that -- of him driving a -- a Ford, as well?
5 Have you ever seen him driving small Ford SUV?

6 FORMER STAFFER B: No. That is a
7 vehicle that is a -- I was involved in that.
8 Okay. So that is a vehicle that was in D.C. and
9 the lease was up on it and I was asked to call
10 the dealership to ask if the Congressman could
11 allow one of his staffers to purchase that and I
12 was told no. That's a Ford Escape.

13 MR. BROWN: Okay. Does -- does the
14 Ford -- and -- and this is leased by the official
15 office, as I understand it. Does the Ford stay
16 up in D.C.?

17 FORMER STAFFER B: Yes.

18 MR. BROWN: Okay. And how is that
19 vehicle used? Do you -- do you know?

20 FORMER STAFFER B: I have no idea. I
21 know that Tyler Levins was, I think, who drove
22 that. That's who they were potentially going to

1 have buy that vehicle. They were talking about
2 him driving it back to the coast. So I think it
3 was a vehicle that he used when he did stuff in
4 D.C., but I don't know because it made it sound
5 like it was the vehicle that Tyler used
6 throughout the day.

7 MR. BROWN: Okay.

8 MS. EISNER: I -- I am sorry to
9 backtrack for one second, Jeff, if that's okay.

10 MR. BROWN: Sure.

11 MS. EISNER: Tyler Levins, so he was
12 based in D.C.?

13 FORMER STAFFER B: He -- so he was in
14 D.C. and then he came to the District office.

15 MS. EISNER: Okay. And when he came
16 to the District office do you know where he was
17 staying?

18 FORMER STAFFER B: I think he had an
19 apartment, but I don't -- no, I don't because he
20 was trying to buy a house.

21 MS. EISNER: Okay. Was there any
22 conversation about him staying at the river

1 house?

2 FORMER STAFFER B: I didn't hear a
3 conversation about him staying at the river
4 house.

5 MS. EISNER: Okay. What about, you
6 know, we talked about Kyle, but any other
7 staffers, anyone else who might have stayed a
8 night or two or more at the river house?

9 FORMER STAFFER B: Well, [REDACTED] would
10 stay there a lot, but --

11 MR. BROWN: With -- with Kyle?

12 FORMER STAFFER B: With Kyle, yes.

13 MR. BROWN: And you -- you know that
14 from what?

15 FORMER STAFFER B: It was --

16 MR. BROWN: Kyle -- Kyle told you that
17 or how do you know that?

18 FORMER STAFFER B: Because they would
19 come in and tell the office. [REDACTED]

20 [REDACTED]

21 [REDACTED]

22 [REDACTED] -- I mean,

1 the -- the river house was not a secret. When
2 people go to the river house it was not a secret
3 at all.

4 You know, many times Michele and
5 Leslie would go leave to meet the -- the Boss at
6 the river house, have a beer, and it was -- it
7 was kind of like -- I don't know -- kind of like
8 the party pad, I guess. You know what I mean?

9 I don't -- it wasn't -- it was no
10 secret to the river house, but Kyle -- I don't
11 know who all stayed there. I know that Tyler
12 would have stayed there a couple times, but I
13 don't know if that's he was staying altogether,
14 but I know he was trying to purchase a house.

15 MS. EISNER: You mentioned earlier an
16 event at the river house. We were talking about
17 something else but mentioned hearing about an
18 event. What was that event?

19 FORMER STAFFER B: He had a -- dang, I
20 can't believe I live in Mississippi and I can't
21 think what they are called. Oh, crawfish. He
22 had a crawfish boil at the river house.

1 MS. EISNER: And what -- who was that
2 for?

3 FORMER STAFFER B: And I think that --
4 that was a campaign thing.

5 MS. EISNER: Okay. And approximately
6 when would that have been?

7 FORMER STAFFER B: I think that would
8 be pretty early on because Jessica was still
9 there, but she didn't come. I don't really know,
10 to be honest with you.

11 MS. EISNER: Did you ever observe the
12 river house used as a campaign office?

13 FORMER STAFFER B: I did not. I never
14 went to the river house. I actually -- Jessica
15 had pointed it out a couple times because there
16 was signs outside and, you know, like political
17 signs outside of the gate, but I never even knew
18 where it was because I just kind of -- it was --
19 it just -- like I said, it seemed like the party
20 pad and so I just always, you know, never had any
21 desire to go over there or any of that. So I
22 always stayed away from it.

1 MS. EISNER: Okay. So besides the
2 crawfish boil, were there any other events that
3 come to mind that you would have been familiar
4 with that took place at the river house?

5 FORMER STAFFER B: No.

6 MS. EISNER: Okay.

7 MR. BROWN: I have got about, I think,
8 just 15 minutes worth of stuff and I would like
9 to move through it quickly and then I think we
10 can wrap things up. Is that all right with
11 everybody?

12 MS. EISNER: Okay.

13 FORMER STAFFER B: Yes.

14 MR. BROWN: Okay. So real quick,
15 Former Staffer B, the House Ethics Committee, did
16 you ever have any interactions with the House
17 Ethics Committee at all?

18 FORMER STAFFER B: Yes.

19 MR. BROWN: Okay. What -- was that in
20 reference to A Time to Honor, the book A Time to
21 Honor?

22 FORMER STAFFER B: Yes.

1 MR. BROWN: Okay. Any other
2 encounters with the House Ethics Committee?

3 FORMER STAFFER B: Not that I know of.

4 MR. BROWN: Okay.

5 FORMER STAFFER B: Not that I
6 remember. I don't -- I don't think so.

7 MR. BROWN: Okay. Just making sure.
8 The -- we have -- we have discussed a little bit
9 about the -- there was a staff retreat. Was that
10 retreat for official staff or for campaign staff
11 or -- or for both? Do you know?

12 FORMER STAFFER B: Official.

13 MR. BROWN: Okay. Do you know how
14 that retreat was -- was -- who organized it?

15 FORMER STAFFER B: Michele.

16 MR. BROWN: Okay. And was there an
17 agenda or was there a -- you know, a series of
18 events that occurred at the retreat?

19 FORMER STAFFER B: There was. And
20 there was an individual that was flown in, and I
21 don't know what his role or what -- you know, I
22 mean, I know he was -- he was supposed to talk

1 about improving office relations and he did -- he
2 made us do, like, a personality test beforehand.
3 That was the only agenda -- really thing put on
4 the agenda.

5 MR. BROWN: And that was -- that was
6 approximately how long?

7 FORMER STAFFER B: That I don't know.
8 That day -- not very long, I was told. Maybe an
9 hour, two hours. I --

10 MR. BROWN: So you weren't -- you
11 weren't -- you weren't at the retreat?

12 FORMER STAFFER B: I was having my
13 gallbladder removed that day and I showed up the
14 next day.

15 MR. BROWN: Okay. So it was a -- it
16 was a multi-day retreat?

17 FORMER STAFFER B: Correct. It was
18 two days.

19 MR. BROWN: And where -- where was it
20 housed? Do you know specifically or -- or more
21 generally can you describe where it was housed?

22 FORMER STAFFER B: It was in the

1 woods. And, you know, it's crazy because I have
2 tried to find that place and I cannot find it.
3 It was -- it was in the woods. It was -- you
4 know, there were cabins we would stay in with, of
5 course, like the dead animals all over the walls.
6 There was ponds and there was, you know, golf
7 carts for the staff to get around. There was an
8 archery and they do some shooting, but I can't
9 remember the name of it.

10 MR. BROWN: I mean, it sounds like
11 it's a weekend long sort of billed as a bit of a
12 team building retreat of some kind?

13 FORMER STAFFER B: I don't think that
14 the actual retreat was -- is -- is intended for
15 that. I think it is just more of a retreat, but
16 then the person was flown in from -- I want to
17 say he was flown in from D.C., that guy.

18 But, you know, they turned it into --
19 but, you know, they serve you dinner. We had a
20 very formal dinner. And then they had a very
21 open bar and in the -- in the main building, you
22 know, they had a pool table and a fireplace with

1 stuff set up. So I think it's, you know,
2 intended for groups of -- you know, like, large
3 groups of people, but I don't think they do any
4 team building or anything like that.

5 MR. BROWN: Do you -- do you have any
6 insight as to how it was all paid for?

7 FORMER STAFFER B: I was actually
8 asked to research about some of the -- how you
9 can do a staff retreat and what money has -- and
10 what -- what kind of consists of that. And that
11 was all I did was found that -- that I might have
12 talked to somebody about, to be honest with you.
13 Now that I think about it, I did talk to
14 somebody.

15 But you know what, I will be honest
16 with you, I would call up to D.C. and I think I
17 had the right area to call to ask these
18 questions, but I was just the caseworker. I
19 would call and they would be like, Oh, no, you
20 are not calling the right number, you need to
21 call -- so Michele had had me call and talk to
22 somebody in one office -- I don't know -- about,

1 you know, a staff retreat and the funding for
2 that and there is a book that that's in. There
3 is a whole section on that and paying for a staff
4 retreat.

5 MR. BROWN: How you pay for it -- it
6 talks about how you would pay for it with
7 official funds and such?

8 FORMER STAFFER B: Correct.

9 MR. BROWN: Okay. And -- and, again,
10 roughly, do you know -- this -- this was -- this
11 occurred within the year that you were in the
12 office. Do you remember roughly what month?

13 FORMER STAFFER B: I really want to
14 say it was around August, but I have no clue, to
15 be honest with you. I don't know why August is
16 jumping out to me, but it -- I --

17 MR. BROWN: Aside --

18 FORMER STAFFER B: It was a -- it
19 was -- go ahead.

20 MR. BROWN: Aside from the one
21 individual who was flown down from D.C. to -- to
22 do like a team building exercise, was there any

1 other formal stuff done by the Congressman or any
2 staffers?

3 FORMER STAFFER B: The only thing that
4 was done was at dinner time we would have to go
5 around and say -- like, make up a name for
6 ourselves that -- like, my first name is Former
7 Staffer B and so, you know, my Former Staffer B I
8 would have to come up with, like, Lucky Former
9 Staffer B or something like that and that was it
10 and that's what our names would be for the
11 remainder of the thing.

12 MR. BROWN: Let me just move on real
13 quick. You -- you submitted some material to our
14 office in the wake of your termination and then I
15 think that you said, you know, you -- part of the
16 reason why you didn't sign the severance is
17 because you wanted to be able to express some
18 concerns about stuff that you saw in the office.

19 Aside from submissions to our office,
20 did you submit material anywhere else?

21 FORMER STAFFER B: I actually reached
22 out to -- so I talked to -- so a lot of the

1 Wounded Warrior Fellows had reached out to me
2 and -- you know, I had talked to a lot of them
3 from all over the State and a lot of them reached
4 out to me and they advised me to contact some
5 representatives that they said would love to jump
6 all over this. And I don't remember who that
7 was, but I emailed them. Never heard back.

8 E. Brian Rose is a local -- he ran
9 against Palazzo that year, but he has a radio
10 show. He has been for years going after
11 retrieving the Congressman's records, proving
12 that he isn't drilling, proving that he is
13 scamming the National Guard.

14 And I reached out to him and the --
15 the next day Jessica and I attended the Claims
16 Clinic that I had set up and E. Brian Rose, the
17 only thing he did is he stood outside, talked to
18 us and he was going to make sure that they didn't
19 deny us access to going in to the Claims Clinic.

20 MR. BROWN: So I -- I -- I gather,
21 too, you know, you -- you guys had a conversation
22 with him about some of your concerns in the

1 office?

2 FORMER STAFFER B: Correct.

3 MR. BROWN: Okay. And you -- you said
4 you reached out to him proactively. Had -- did
5 you go to the Claims Clinic event with him or you
6 just happened to see each other there?

7 MR. BROWN: No, he arranged to meet us
8 there and Jessica and I went together. She came
9 to my house and picked me up. And, crazy enough,
10 they -- there was about six of them standing in
11 front of door and they actually -- the police
12 circled the building. And so we did not think
13 that they were going to let us in to the Claims
14 Clinic. And, of course, all the people that were
15 inside were people that I had arranged to be
16 there.

17 So, yeah, we went there, had a
18 conversation with him, talked to him and he
19 really just wanted to see if they denied me and
20 Jessica access to that. When we got inside he
21 left.

22 MR. BROWN: So you didn't know him

1 before you reached out to him and --

2 FORMER STAFFER B: Oh, I did know him.
3 I -- I have met him. When he was -- when he was
4 campaigning he and I would go to a lot of -- he
5 is a veteran and he goes to a lot of veterans'
6 events. So I had met him multiple times, plus he
7 lives in Ocean Springs and he -- I had met him --
8 actually, my first event I ever went to I met
9 him.

10 MR. BROWN: And so you sought him out
11 after your termination in -- in light of the fact
12 that you felt like there were some -- some issues
13 that -- some grievances that needed to be aired?
14 Yeah?

15 FORMER STAFFER B: Correct. And I
16 wanted -- I want -- the big thing with him is
17 I -- you know, the Congressman was acting like
18 this event was all put on for -- by him and, you
19 know, this is something that him and his office
20 had done and, you know, I had asked for \$200 for
21 a radio advertisement or to be put on some
22 advertisement and he wouldn't do that.

1 And so when, you know, they were
2 making this huge deal about it, he -- he -- he
3 has the radio show he talks about and that was
4 really what it started out reaching out to him
5 about.

6 But I also knew that he has records of
7 where the Congressman has gone directly to
8 Command and asked to be separated and then was
9 told, you know, another special favor. So I
10 talked to him about that.

11 MR. BROWN: Did -- let me ask you
12 this. Are there any other staffers you think
13 that we should chat with about these issues that
14 we have discussed today?

15 FORMER STAFFER B: I will say that I
16 think that T.J. Moran should probably be
17 contacted. I sent an email about him, but he is
18 still very much in the political world, although
19 he works for DMR now. But I -- I would think
20 that he may have some information that would be
21 very helpful for that office.

22 MR. BROWN: Okay.

1 FORMER STAFFER B: Not for that office
2 but towards this.

3 MR. BROWN: Anybody else come to mind?

4 FORMER STAFFER B: Well, Jessica Vera,
5 I mean, and --

6 MR. BROWN: I mean, if we were -- if we
7 were going to reach out to either one of them,
8 what -- you know, what might they be able to
9 corroborate some of the stuff you said? You know
10 is there something you think we should
11 specifically ask them about?

12 FORMER STAFFER B: Well, one of things
13 about Jessica is Jessica was -- she was a very
14 hard worker. She made mistakes. I mean, she
15 is -- she is a veteran. She has a heart for
16 veterans.

17 She was -- how do I say this -- in
18 the -- I don't know how to -- here is the thing
19 is if Leslie doesn't like you or has a problem
20 with you, you are going to end up gone. And so
21 even though Jessica was doing her job, even
22 though she has special needs children, even

1 though she is a mother, she had surgery, she had
2 her grandpa die, those things were held against
3 her.

4 And, you know, I am actually good
5 friends with Jessica. And she was told the same
6 thing. Something about an email is what she has
7 told me. She said she was given an opportunity
8 to resign.

9 But she has a lot of information as
10 far as, you know, seeing staff members do things
11 for him. The Time to Honor books, I believe she
12 was actually gone by the time that we got that --
13 told by Franking, caught that and then said, Hey,
14 you can't -- can't do that anymore.

15 MR. BROWN: Let me ask you one --

16 FORMER STAFFER B: But she --

17 MR. BROWN: -- let me ask you just one
18 question about the Time to Honor books.

19 FORMER STAFFER B: Yes.

20 MR. BROWN: I am sorry to interrupt
21 your -- you flow here --

22 FORMER STAFFER B: That's okay.

1 MR. BROWN: -- but I understand that
2 the staff was alerted to the fact that they
3 should not -- official staff should not be
4 handing out these books. Did you see -- you saw
5 those books being handed out at that Claims
6 Clinic the day after -- I think it was a day or
7 two after you were -- you were let go. Is -- is
8 that -- is that when you saw them being handed
9 out by Anita?

10 FORMER STAFFER B: Yes, and I took
11 pictures.

12 MR. BROWN: Okay. And Anita -- Anita
13 knew that she was wrong and quickly said, Oh, I
14 am handing these out for somebody else who had to
15 leave --

16 MR. BROWN: Were there --

17 FORMER STAFFER B: -- and then she put
18 them away.

19 MR. BROWN: Were there any other
20 instances where you -- you saw those books being
21 handed out? Are you aware of them continuing to
22 be handed out?

1 FORMER STAFFER B: Yes. So Stephen
2 Moore, who is the field rep -- there was a --
3 there was one last event that was scheduled for
4 the Congressman to attend to hand out those books
5 and we were, you know, going to cancel it and we
6 were told we were canceling it.

7 And I was -- I had called the VFW. I
8 would set all those up with the VFWs. I would
9 arrange them. I would vet all the DD214s to make
10 sure that they were eligible for the book because
11 there had to be boots on ground during Vietnam,
12 not just Vietnam era. And so that was all -- you
13 know, everything that I would have to do with
14 those.

15 And so I had done all of that for this
16 event, but then we were told we can't do this
17 anymore. And the very last event Stephen Moore
18 actually played the Congressman's role and handed
19 out those books. There is a news article on it.
20 And that was after. And then there was --

21 MR. BROWN: How -- how -- that --
22 that -- the Stephen Moore incident, that would

1 have been after the staff was directed not to
2 hand these out?

3 FORMER STAFFER B: Correct.

4 MR. BROWN: Just tell me real quick
5 how was it that the staff was informed that
6 handing out these books was -- was a -- was a
7 no-go?

8 FORMER STAFFER B: Well, after Michele
9 had me make that phone call and talk to them, I
10 let Michele know. And then she let everybody
11 know. And I don't -- I think -- and, honestly, I
12 100 percent can't tell you exactly, but I know
13 either I called and told Anita -- because we had
14 them displayed. Like, in the office we had them
15 displayed and on the Congressman's website there
16 was a link, like, hey, you know, click here to
17 get a book.

18 And so we collected all those and then
19 said, What do we do with those from Hattiesburg?
20 Should we send them there?

21 And I said, Well, I don't know what we
22 are going to do with them. Maybe we can contact

1 [REDACTED] to pick them up, because we really
2 went through hell to get those books, but --

3 MR. BROWN: Who is -- who is [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED]? He wasn't an employee of
5 Representative Palazzo's office?

6 FORMER STAFFER B: No. He is a -- he
7 is a county VSO, veteran service officer.

8 MR. BROWN: Okay.

9 FORMER STAFFER B: He -- I mean --

10 MR. BROWN: But -- but the staff
11 was --

12 FORMER STAFFER B: And then --

13 MR. BROWN: The staff was alerted at
14 some point, like, formally? They were formally
15 alerted that this is a problem or it's just by
16 mouth?

17 FORMER STAFFER B: Yes.

18 MR. BROWN: How were -- how were --

19 FORMER STAFFER B: No, no. And I
20 know -- I don't know if it was email, but I know
21 that they were alerted. And the thing is is that
22 it was done in a way to not try to make Colleen

1 feel bad because she -- she didn't realize what
2 she was doing when she spoke to Franking and --
3 and then it created this big, huge issue.

4 So I just remember that everybody
5 wanted to make sure that, you know, they didn't
6 make Colleen feel like she had done anything
7 wrong because Franking is the one that caught it
8 and then she had a conversation with, I guess,
9 whoever she had conversation with.

10 And then it went -- and then that's
11 when Michele asked me -- you know, came in and
12 told me and then asked me to call and I talked to
13 them about the Time to Honor and, you know, it
14 went back and forth on, you know --

15 MR. BROWN: You -- you called the --
16 you called the -- you called the Ethics
17 Committee, correct?

18 FORMER STAFFER B: Correct, I did.

19 MR. BROWN: Okay. And the Ethics
20 Committee tells you -- told you you can't hand
21 out these books, Franking was right, this is a
22 problem?

1 FORMER STAFFER B: Correct. And we
2 went -- we -- we had a very in-depth conversation
3 because the State of Mississippi had put a lot of
4 money towards it. But when you open the book, it
5 asks for donations and it -- it talks about the
6 fact that it is published by a nonprofit
7 organization.

8 So even though, you know, there has
9 been X amount of dollars that was set aside by
10 the State, it was determined that, no, we could
11 not do that. You know, if I wanted to go on my
12 personal time, not with any of my shirt, you
13 know, no uniform, no representation of
14 Congressman Palazzo, and hand them out on my
15 personal time, I was allowed do that, but we
16 could not do it if we were in our official
17 capacity.

18 MR. BROWN: Let me just make sure I
19 have this down real quick. There is a newsletter
20 and Franking is aware that the Congressman and
21 official staffers in his office are handing out
22 this book. Franking raises an issue. You and

1 others are alerted by Franking and the Ethics
2 Committee that these books cannot be handed out
3 and the staff is fully alerted that the books
4 can't be handed out.

5 And then after everyone is aware that
6 this is a problem, they are handed out at the one
7 Claims Clinic and then there was one other time.
8 So there were two occasions in which they were
9 handed out after the -- the staff is aware that
10 they should be not be handing them out?

11 FORMER STAFFER B: There is actually a
12 third location. The Congressman contacted me and
13 said, Send the book to this individual. And what
14 it was is he had come to D.C. to visit him and
15 met him and he didn't have a book to give him.
16 So he asked me. And all I did was put it in an
17 envelope and send it.

18 And, you know, I asked Michele. I
19 said, Are we supposed to do this?

20 And she said, Well, we are not
21 presenting them. So I think it's okay, you know.

22 MR. BROWN: Okay.

1 FORMER STAFFER B: So there was three
2 occasions.

3 MR. BROWN: All right. Helen, is there
4 anything else you wanted to follow up with Former
5 Staffer B on.

6 MS. EISNER: Just one thing. A few
7 minutes ago we were talking about other staffers
8 that might be beneficial for us to reach out to
9 and you talked a little bit about what Jessica
10 Vera might be able to share with us. You
11 mentioned T.J. Moran. You -- what is it that you
12 think he might have insight on that we have
13 discussed?

14 FORMER STAFFER B: I think he would be
15 aware of the time spent during personal errands
16 and -- I mean, that's really the big thing there
17 is the personal errands. He was not -- he was
18 not around when all of this happened with my
19 termination, but I think he was around long
20 enough that he would be able to tell about where,
21 you know, Michele and Leslie would go to pay the
22 contractor or they would go to the river house to

1 inspect, you know, the work that was being done
2 or the personal errands that would be done
3 throughout the day.

4 MS. EISNER: Okay. Yeah, Jeff, I
5 think that is all I have.

6 MR. BROWN: Yeah, so I guess we can
7 wrap -- we can start to wrap up. I just have,
8 you know, one more question for you, Former
9 Staffer B, which is, you know, this has been sort
10 of a long interview, I think, at this point.

11 Is there anything else that we haven't
12 touched on that you feel like we should be
13 touching on in some more detail?

14 FORMER STAFFER B: I know I sent an
15 email and I mentioned T.J., but I -- his -- his
16 departure is probably something that -- you know,
17 and I will leave that up to him to -- if he wants
18 to talk about that, but that's a pretty big issue
19 that I think, you know -- and but other than
20 that, that's probably it. I mean, I could
21 probably go on for days but --

22 MR. BROWN: Well --

1 FORMER STAFFER B: -- I will keep it
2 with that.

3 MR. BROWN: -- I -- I think I just --
4 before we officially end, I want to thank you
5 again for taking the time. I know, you know, we
6 are asking you to take a -- a fair bit of your
7 day here to speak with us. We very much
8 appreciate it.

9 It's possible we may have some follow
10 up and we -- we can do that, but I think at this
11 point I will just echo, you know, what I think we
12 said in the past, which is, you know, we are --
13 we ask that you, you know, keep our interview
14 here today confidential. We do that for the
15 integrity of the investigation and then, also,
16 for the -- you know, the sake of the individual
17 being investigated here.

18 But, again, I want to thank you. We
19 may have some follow up, but at this point I
20 think we can stop the recording and stop the
21 transcription and go off the record.

22 (Signature having not been waived, the

1 interview of FORMER STAFFER B was concluded at
2 1:40 p.m.)

3 (Former Staffer B Interview Exhibits 1
4 through 3 were marked for identification and
5 attached to the transcript.)

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF DEPONENT

I, FORMER STAFFER B, do hereby
acknowledge that I have read and examined the
foregoing interview, and the same is a true,
correct and complete transcription of the
interview given by me and any corrections appear
on the attached errata sheet signed by me.

(DATE)

(SIGNATURE)

1 CERTIFICATE OF SHORTHAND REPORTER/E-NOTARY PUBLIC

2

3 I, PEGGY L. DINGLE, the officer before
4 whom the foregoing proceedings were taken, do
5 hereby certify the foregoing transcript is a true
6 and correct record of the proceedings; that said
7 proceedings were recorded by me stenographically
8 and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my
9 supervision; and that I am neither counsel for,
10 related to, nor employed by any of the parties in
11 the foregoing proceeding and caption named and
12 have no interest, financial or otherwise, in the
13 outcome of the cause named in said caption.

14 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set
15 my hand and affixed my seal this 3rd day of
16 August 2020.

17 My commission expires: August 1, 2022

18

19 
20 _____

21 E-NOTARY PUBLIC IN AND FOR

22 THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Subject to the Nondisclosure Provisions of H. Res. 895 of the 110th Congress as Amended

ERRATA SHEET

Page	Line	Correction	Reason

This errata sheet is submitted subject to 18 U.S.C. § 1001 (commonly known as the False Statements Act).

Witness Name: _____

Witness Signature: _____

Date: 08/12/2020