

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF FULTON COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

THE STATE OF GEORGIA

Case Number 23SC188947

v.

DONALD JOHN TRUMP,
RUDOLPH WILLIAM LOUIS GIULIANI,
MARK RANDALL MEADOWS,
ROBERT DAVID CHEELEY,
MICHAEL A. ROMAN,
DAVID JAMES SHAFER,
HARRISON WILLIAM PRESCOTT FLOYD,
and CATHLEEN ALSTON LATHAM

Defendants.

**DEFENDANTS' JOINT MOTION FOR A CERTIFICATE
OF IMMEDIATE REVIEW.**

Defendants President Donald J. Trump, Rudolph Giuliani, Mark Meadows, Robert Cheeley, Michael Roman, David Shafer, Harrison Floyd, and Cathleen Latham file this Joint Motion for a Certificate of Immediate Review, and request that the Court grant a Certificate of Immediate Review of the Court's Order on Defendants' Motions to Dismiss and Disqualify the Fulton County District Attorney, issued March 15, 2024 (the "March 15 Order"), to the Georgia Court of Appeals pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 5-6-34(b).

The March 15 Order is of exceptionally great importance to this case, substantially impacting Defendants' rights to due process. Additionally, given the lack of guidance from the appellate courts on key issues, and the fact that any errors in the March 15 Order could be structural errors that would necessitate retrial(s), the grant of a certificate of immediate review is both prudent and warranted.

In its Order, the Court found that District Attorney Willis' actions had created an appearance of impropriety and an "odor of mendacity" that lingers in this case, as well as

the continuing possibility that “an outsider could reasonably think that District Attorney Willis is not exercising her independent professional judgment totally free of any compromising influences.” See March 15 Order at 10-17. Despite this, the Court declined to disqualify District Attorney Willis, finding that eliminating only the Special Assistant District Attorney would cure the lingering appearance of impropriety. *Id.* at 17. Defendants believe that the relevant case law requires dismissal of the case, or at the very least, the disqualification of the District Attorney and her entire office under the facts that exist here, and the resignation of Mr. Wade is insufficient to cure the appearance of impropriety the Court has determined exists. Given these facts and the current state of the case law, the Court of Appeals should speak definitively to this outcome-determinative issue now.

The Court also found that District Attorney Willis’ nationally televised speech at Big Bethel AME Church on January 14, 2024 was “legally improper,” *id.* at 20, but declined to disqualify her on the basis of this forensic misconduct (and the other forensic misconduct proven by Defendants), noting in particular a lack of guidance in Georgia case law for the standard for disqualification of a prosecuting attorney for forensic misconduct. *Id.* (“As best it can divine, under the sole direction of *Williams*, the Court cannot find that this speech crossed the line”); see also *id.* at 18 (“Unmoored from precedent, the Court feels confined to the boundaries of *Williams* and restricts the application of the facts found here to its limited holding.”) Based on the holding in *Williams v. State*, 258 Ga. 305 (1988),¹ and the other persuasive authorities from the U.S. Supreme Court and

¹ The law review note cited favorably by the Court in *Williams* defines forensic misconduct much more broadly than the facts in the *Williams* case itself, stating that “[p]rosecutor's forensic misconduct may be generally defined as *any activity by the prosecutor which*

other jurisdictions cited to the Court on forensic misconduct, however, it is likely that the Georgia appellate courts would decide that District Attorney Willis' forensic misconduct requires her disqualification in this case.

At a minimum, the factual findings of the Court and the lack of appellate guidance from the Georgia courts on the issue weigh heavily in favor of immediate appellate review, *especially* given that the failure to disqualify a prosecutor who should be disqualified is a structural error that could necessitate a retrial without any additional showing of prejudice. *McLaughlin v. Payne*, 295 Ga. 609, 613 (2014) (for a prosecutor to have a conflict of interest is contrary to public policy and could warrant a new trial) (citations omitted); *cf. Lewis v. State*, 312 Ga. App. 275, 282 (2011) (Erroneous deprivation of counsel is a “structural error, one that affects ‘the framework within which the trial proceeds,’ and it requires an appellate court to reverse any conviction that follows without any inquiry into harm or prejudice.”). Seeking clear direction from the appellate courts on these critical issues at this pretrial juncture is a compelling and immediate interest.

Immediate appellate review is also needed of the March 15 Order declining to disqualify District Attorney Willis based upon the personal stake that she has acquired in this prosecution, both through her actual conflicts of interest and the appearance of impropriety created by her actions. Specifically, the Georgia appellate courts, in applying their relevant precedent, including *McLaughlin*, 295 Ga. at 613, would likely determine that disqualification of the District Attorney is required when she has acquired a personal

tends to divert the jury from making its determination of guilt or innocence by weighing the legally admitted evidence in the manner prescribed by law.” See The Nature and Consequences of Forensic Misconduct in the Prosecution of a Criminal Case, 54 Colum. L. Rev. 946, 949 (1954) (emphasis added).

stake in the prosecution by *either* laboring under an actual conflict of interest, including non-pecuniary actual conflicts (which Defendants believe the evidence has established), *or* by creating the appearance of impropriety that this Court has already determined she has created, and remains here.

CONCLUSION

A criminal defendant is entitled to a disinterested prosecutor. *See Young v. U.S. ex rel. Vuitton et Fils S.A.*, 481 U.S. 787, 807 (1987). “If the assigned prosecutor has acquired a personal interest or stake in the conviction, the trial court abuses its discretion in denying a motion to disqualify h[er]...” *Amusement Sales, Inc. v. State*, 316 Ga. App. 727, 735 (2012) (citing *Whitworth*, 275 Ga. App. at 796; *Young v. United States*, 481 U.S. 787, 809–814 (1987)). Certificates of immediate review have been granted by courts under similar circumstances. *See, e.g., Registe v. State*, 287 Ga. 542, 544 (2010) (granting defendant’s motion for a certificate of immediate review following the court’s disqualification of the defendant’s counsel); *State v. Cook*, 172 Ga. App. 433, 434-435 (1984) (defendant granted certificate of immediate review from denial of motion to disqualify two Special Assistant District Attorneys); *State v. Mantooth*, 337 Ga. App. 698, 698 (2016) (granting interlocutory review following the trial court’s grant of motion to recuse the DeKalb County Solicitor-General).

Whether District Attorney Willis and her Office are permitted to continue representing the State of Georgia in prosecuting the Defendants in this action is of the utmost importance to this case, and ensuring the appellate courts have the opportunity to weigh in on these matters pre-trial is paramount. As noted, should such review not occur until after any trial in this case and these decisions were ultimately reversed on appeal, such reversal would likely require the retrial of every convicted defendant without any

additional showing of error or prejudice. *McLaughlin*, 295 Ga. at 613; *Amusement Sales, Inc. v. State*, 316 Ga. App. at 735. Given the length and complexity of the trial(s) in this case (should the current Indictment survive such that any such trials are possible), neither the Court nor the Parties should run an unnecessary risk of having to go through that process more than once.

For all of these reasons, Defendants President Donald J. Trump, Rudolph Giuliani, Mark Meadows, Robert Cheeley, Michael Roman, David Shafer, Harrison Floyd, and Cathleen Latham respectfully request that the Court grant the Defendants' Joint Motion for a Certificate of Immediate Review and issue a Certificate of Immediate Review of the Court's Order on Defendants' Motions to Dismiss and Disqualify the Fulton County District Attorney, issued March 15, 2024, to the Georgia Court of Appeals pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 5-6-34(b).

Respectfully submitted, this 18th day of March, 2024.

Steven H. Sadow
STEVEN H. SADOW
Georgia Bar No. 622075
Lead Counsel for President Trump
260 Peachtree Street, N.W., Suite 2502
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
404-577-1400
stevesadow@gmail.com

Jennifer L. Little
Jennifer L. Little
Georgia Bar No. 141596
Counsel for President Trump
400 Galleria Pkwy, Suite 1920
Atlanta, Georgia 30339
404-947-7778
jlittle@jllaw.com

/s/ L. Allyn Stockton, Jr.
L. ALLYN STOCKTON, JR.,
Georgia State Bar # 682909

STOCKTON & STOCKTON, LLC
191 SOUTH MAIN STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 1550
CLAYTON, GEORGIA 30525
TELEPHONE: (706)782-6100
LASTOCKTON@WINDSTREAM.NET

/s/ John S. Esposito

JOHN S. ESPOSITO,
(ADMITTED PRO HAC VICE)
New York State Bar # 2010809
DAVID L. LEWIS
(ADMITTED PRO HAC VICE)
New York State Bar # 1685791

Attorneys for Defendant Giuliani

**GRIFFIN DURHAM TANNER &
CLARKSON, LLC**

By: /s/ James D. Durham

James D. Durham
Georgia Bar No. 235515
jdurham@griffindurham.com
104 West State Street, Suite 200
Savannah, GA 31401

***Attorneys for Defendant Mark
Randall Meadows***

/s/ Christopher S. Anulewicz

Christopher S. Anulewicz
Georgia Bar No. 020914
Jonathan R. DeLuca
Georgia Bar No. 228413
Wayne R. Beckermann
Georgia Bar No. 747995

**BRADLEY ARANT BOULT
CUMMINGS LLP**

Promenade Tower
1230 Peachtree Street NE
Atlanta, GA 30309
E-mail : canulewicz@bradley.com
Telephone : (404) 868-2030
Facsimile : (404) 868-2010

/s/ Richard A. Rice, Jr.
Richard A. Rice, Jr.
Georgia Bar No. 603203
THE RICE LAW FIRM, LLC
3151 Maple Drive, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30305
Email: richard.rice@trlfirm.com
Telephone: 404-835-0783
Facsimile: 404-481-3057

***Attorneys for Defendant Robert
David Cheeley***

THE MERCHANT LAW FIRM, P.C.

/s/ Ashleigh B. Merchant
ASHLEIGH B. MERCHANT
Georgia Bar No. 040474
JOHN MERCHANT
Georgia Bar No. 533511
701 Whitlock Avenue, S.W., Ste. J-43
Marietta, Georgia 30064
Telephone: 404.510.9936
Facsimile: 404.592.4614
Ashleigh@merchantlawfirmpc.com
John@merchantlawfirmpc.com

Counsel for Michael Roman

/s/ Craig A. Gillen
Craig A. Gillen
Georgia Bar No. 294838
Anthony C. Lake
Georgia Bar No. 431149
GILLEN & LAKE LLC
400 Galleria Parkway, Suite 1920
Atlanta, Georgia 30339
(404) 842-9700
cgillen@gwllawfirm.com
aclake@gwllawfirm.com

/s/ Holly A. Pierson
Holly A. Pierson
Georgia Bar No. 579655
PIERSON LAW LLC
171 17th Street NW, Suite 1550

Atlanta, Georgia 30363
(404) 353-2316
hpierson@piersonlawllc.com

Counsel for David Shafer

Todd A. Harding
Ga. Bar No.: 101562
HARDING LAW FIRM, LLC
Attorney at Law
113 E. Solomon Street
Griffin, Georgia 30223

Christopher I. Kachouroff, Esq.*
**MCSWEENEY, CYNKAR &
KACHOUROFF, PLLC**
13649 Office Place, Suite 101
Woodbridge, Virginia 22192
(703) 365-9900
* Admitted *Pro Hac Vice*

Attorneys for Harrison Floyd

CROMWELL LAW LLC

/s/ William G. Cromwell
WILLIAM G. CROMWELL
GA BAR NO. 197240
400 Galleria Parkway, Ste. 1920
Atlanta, Ga. 30339
(678) 384-5626

Counsel for Cathleen Latham

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF FULTON COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

THE STATE OF GEORGIA

Case Number 23SC188947

v.

DONALD JOHN TRUMP,
RUDOLPH WILLIAM LOUIS GIULIANI,
MARK RANDALL MEADOWS,
ROBERT DAVID CHEELEY,
MICHAEL A. ROMAN,
DAVID JAMES SHAFER,
HARRISON WILLIAM PRESCOTT FLOYD,
and CATHLEEN ALSTON LATHAM

Defendants.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have, this 18th day of March 2024, served a true and correct copy of the within and foregoing DEFENDANTS' JOINT MOTION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF IMMEDIATE REVIEW via electronic filing which will serve all counsel of record in this matter.

Steven H. Sadow
STEVEN H. SADOW
Georgia Bar No. 622075

Lead Counsel for President Trump