

Election Official Sues for Malicious Prosecution After Virginia's "Election Integrity Unit" Drops False Charges

10/17/24



Today, former election official Michele White [filed](#) a malicious prosecution lawsuit against Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares, former Assistant Attorney General Joshua N. Lief, and their investigators. This legal action follows the unjust charges brought against Ms. White by the state's controversial "Election Integrity Unit," which falsely accused her of felony election interference. Ms. White is represented by Selendy Gay PLLC, Protect Democracy, and The Erlich Law Office, PLLC.

In the aftermath of the 2020 election, which Ms. White helped administer, she became a target of a politically motivated scheme designed to cast doubt on the election's outcome. The charges against her were completely fabricated and strategically timed to coincide with the launch of the Virginia Attorney General's "Election Integrity Unit," which aimed to bolster unfounded claims of widespread voter fraud. Notably, prosecutors withheld critical evidence for over a year. Although the charges were eventually dropped, Ms. White has suffered severe harm, both personally and professionally.

"As an election official, I worked every day for nearly twenty years to ensure that Virginia elections ran smoothly and according to law," said **Plaintiff Michele White**. "None of that mattered to the defendants, who showed no interest in the truth. Instead, they treated my career and well-being as collateral damage in their effort to promote false claims of widespread election fraud. In doing so, they acted without any integrity, violating my constitutional rights. Today I am filing this lawsuit to hold them accountable."

The suit underscores the troubling collaboration between Miyares, Lief, and groups linked to the "Stop the Steal" movement, leading to the establishment of the Election Integrity Unit. Despite its formation, the unit has not produced any evidence of actual election fraud.

Virginia was not the only state to stand up an office to search for election crimes after the 2020 election. But, like similar initiatives in states like Texas and Florida, it [failed to uncover](#) any widespread fraud.

Election disinformation efforts like these have nonetheless sparked a surge in harassment directed at election workers across the nation.

“The prosecution of Michele White was built on shocking misconduct by lawyers and law enforcement officials who ignored the facts in front of them and abused their power to target an innocent person,” said **Corey Stoughton, Special Counsel at Selendy Gay PLLC**. “There is no excuse for letting politics run roughshod over the truth, and that is exactly what the defendants did in this case.”

In recent years, elected officials who seek to undermine the public’s faith in elections have wielded their authority to spread conspiracy theories about election fraud and sabotage non-partisan election processes. The creation of these so-called election integrity units is part of the [playbook](#) of this ongoing effort.

“Unjustly prosecuting a dedicated public servant like Michele White does grievous harm not only to the target, but to public confidence in our electoral system,” said **Rachel Goodman, Counsel with Protect Democracy**. “Election workers are heroes. As we approach the 2024 elections, those who would treat them as pawns in schemes aimed at eroding public trust are on notice: that behavior will not be tolerated.”

More information about the case is available [here](#).

Attorneys

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Practice

- Public Interest and Pro Bono