

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF UTAH

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In re: Judicial Conduct Commission
Inquiry Concerning a Judge;

Case No. 20100321-SC
JCC 09-4JC-062

Hon. Stevan Ridge

ORDER

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Supreme Court by Article VIII, Section 13 of the Utah Constitution and Utah Code Ann. § 78A-11-111, the Court approves the implementation of the Judicial Conduct Commission's Order of Reprimand.

For The Court:

May 12, 2010
Dated

Christine M. Durham
Christine M. Durham
Chief Justice

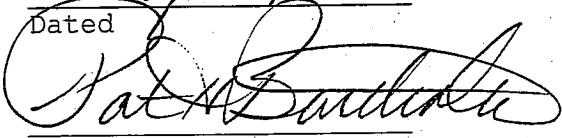
CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I certify that on the 12th day of May 2010, I mailed a true and correct copy of the foregoing order, postage prepaid, to the following addresses:

COLIN WINCHESTER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSION
2540 WASHINGTON BLVD. SUITE 703
OGDEN, UTAH 84401

HON. STEVAN W. RIDGE
UTAH COUNTY JUSTICE COURT
151 SOUTH UNIVERSITY AVE., SUITE 3300
PROVO, UTAH 84601

May 12, 2010
Dated


Pat H. Bartholomew
Clerk of the Court

Case No. 20100321-SC
JCC No. 09-4JC-062

BEFORE THE UTAH JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSION

IN RE:

HON. STEVAN RIDGE

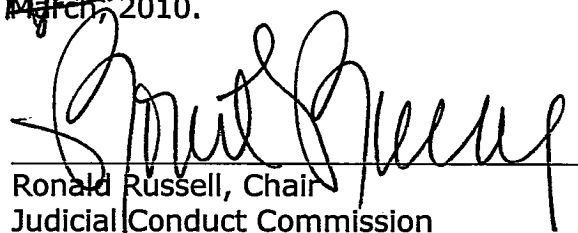
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) ORDER OF REPRIMAND
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) Case No. 09-4JC-062
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On March 16, 2010, the Judicial Conduct Commission received a proposed stipulation approved by the Honorable Stevan Ridge and his counsel, Corbin Gordon, both of whom were present before the Commission. The Commission voted to approve the stipulation subject to the filing of a properly executed written version, and to recommend that the Supreme Court impose a reprimand in this matter. A written Stipulation has now been executed by Judge Ridge and Mr. Gordon and filed with the Commission. The Stipulation sets forth facts and conclusions that support both a finding of judicial misconduct and the issuance of a reprimand.

Based on the Stipulation and the Commission's approval of the same, the Judicial Conduct Commission hereby orders that the Honorable Stevan Ridge be reprimanded.

This Order shall only take effect upon implementation of the same by the Utah Supreme Court.

DATED this 13 day of ^{April}~~March~~, 2010.

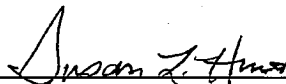


Ronald Russell, Chair
Judicial Conduct Commission

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on the 14th day of ~~March~~ APRIL, 2010, I served a true and correct signed copy of the foregoing Order of Reprimand upon the Honorable Stevan Ridge by mailing the same, via postage pre-paid first class mail, to the following:

Corbin B. Gordon
345 West 600 South, Suite 108
Heber City, Utah 84032



Susan L. Hunt
Investigative Counsel

COLIN R. WINCHESTER [4696]
SUSAN L. HUNT [6574]
Utah Judicial Conduct Commission
2540 Washington Blvd. #703
Ogden, Utah 84401
Telephone: (801) 626-3369
Facsimile: (801) 626-3390

BEFORE THE UTAH JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSION

IN RE:

HON. STEVAN RIDGE

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STIPULATION

Case No. 09-4JC-062

The Honorable Stevan Ridge ("Judge Ridge") and the Judicial Conduct Commission ("JCC") hereby stipulate and agree that they will jointly recommend to the Utah Supreme Court that Judge Ridge receive a reprimand in this matter. In support of that recommendation, Judge Ridge and the JCC stipulate and agree to the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. On March 16, 2009, Lon Child appeared before Judge Ridge at the Utah County Justice Court for a bench trial on charges of an HOV lane violation and speeding.
2. After the trial, Judge Ridge found Child guilty of an HOV lane violation and not guilty of speeding. Judge Ridge verbally announced that the sentence would be an \$82 fine.

3. After Judge Ridge announced the sentence, Child informed Judge Ridge that he intended to appeal the conviction. Judge Ridge then informed Child that he was changing the sentence to 90 days in jail and a fine of \$1387.50, the maximum penalty for the offense. Judge Ridge further informed Child that he would stay execution of the sentence pending Child's appeal to the district court.

4. Child informed Judge Ridge that he would rather just pay the \$82 fine, which he was allowed to do.

5. Child did appeal the case and was granted a trial de novo in district court. After the district court trial, Child was again found guilty of the HOV lane violation. He was sentenced to serve 90 days in jail and pay a \$750 fine. The district court judge suspended the jail time and all but \$82 of the fine.

6. Prior to being notified of the full investigation in this case, it was a standard practice for Judge Ridge to impose the maximum penalty at sentencing (but stay the sentence pending appeal) in cases where defendants informed the judge that they intended to appeal their convictions to district court.

7. Judge Ridge's motivation for changing the sentence in Child's case from \$82 to the maximum penalty was to provide the district court more discretion when sentencing Child if Child were found guilty after a trial de novo.

8. Judge Ridge's changing of the sentence in Child's case created the appearance and caused Child to believe that Judge Ridge was punishing Child for exercising his right to request a trial de novo.

9. Judge Ridge has served as the Utah County Justice Court Judge since June 1, 2001.

10. Judge Ridge has never been publicly, privately or informally disciplined by the JCC or the Utah Supreme Court.

11. Judge Ridge accepts full responsibility for his actions, and is extremely remorseful about this incident and the harm that it has caused to the integrity of the judiciary. He has changed his method of sentencing so that defendants who are convicted of offenses in his court will not be sentenced differently if they announce an intention to file an appeal.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

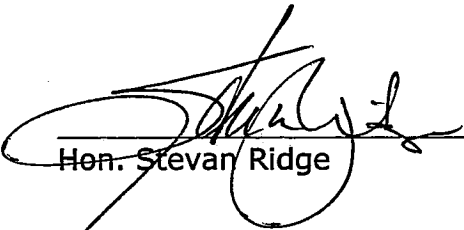
1. Judge Ridge's actions violated Canon 2 of the Utah Code of Judicial Conduct, which states, "A judge shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in all activities."

2. Judge Ridge's actions constitute conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice which brings a judicial office into disrepute, in violation of Article VIII, Section 13 of the Constitution of Utah and Utah Code Ann. §78A-11-105(1)(e).

3. A reprimand is an appropriate sanction in this matter.

REPRIMAND TO BECOME EFFECTIVE ONLY UPON IMPLEMENTATION

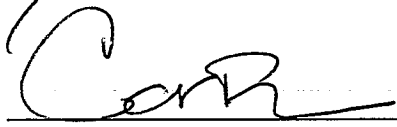
The recommended reprimand shall take effect only upon implementation of the same by the Utah Supreme Court. The Supreme Court is not bound by this joint recommendation. Rather, it may approve, reject, or modify the recommendation as it sees fit.



Hon. Stevan Ridge

3/26/2010

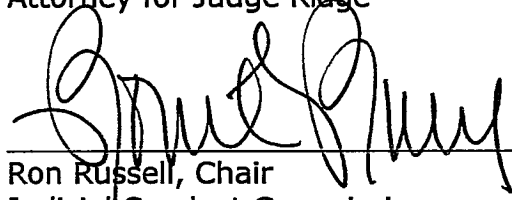
Date



Corbin B. Gordon
Attorney for Judge Ridge

3/23/10

Date



Ron Russell, Chair
Judicial Conduct Commission

4/13/10

Date