

JUL 03 2023

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF UTAH

— 0000000 —

In re: Inquiry Concerning a Judge      Case No. 20221094-SC  
JCC Case Nos. 21-4JC-076

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ORDER


Pursuant to the authority vested in the Supreme Court by Article VIII, Section 13 of the Utah Constitution and Utah Code Section 78A-11-111, the Court approves the implementation of the Judicial Conduct Commission's Order of Public Censure. The Court notes that the Judge stipulated that his actions violated the Code of Judicial Conduct. The Court relied on that stipulation and therefore offers no opinion on whether all of the conduct listed in paragraph 8(a)-8(e) gives rise to a violation of Rules 1.2 and 2.8.

The Court orders that the complaints, papers, testimony, and the record of the Commission's hearing are no longer confidential under Utah Code Section 78A-11-112.

In response to footnote 1 of the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Court clarifies that a censure is a more severe discipline than a reprimand.

FOR THE COURT:

July 3, 2023  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Matthew B. Durrant  
Chief Justice

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on July 3, 2023, a true and correct copy of the foregoing ORDER was deposited in the United States mail or was sent by electronic mail to be delivered to:

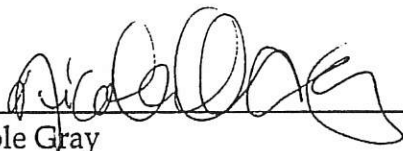
STEVAN RIDGE  
1204 S 50 E UNIT D4  
LEHI UT 84043  
steveridge2003@yahoo.com

AIMEE K THOMAN  
JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSION  
aimeemartinez@utah.gov

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JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSION  
ATTN: ALEX PETERSON  
1385 S STATE ST STE 143  
SALT LAKE CITY UT 84115

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By   
Nicole Gray  
Clerk of Court

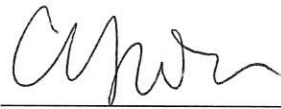
Case No. 20221094  
JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSION, 21-4JC-076



CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on the 29 day of November 2022, I hand delivered, a true and correct signed copy of the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and Order of Censure to:

Judge Stevan Ridge  
1204 South 50 East D4  
Lehi, Utah 84043

  
\_\_\_\_\_

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BEFORE THE UTAH JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSION

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IN RE:

HON. STEVAN RIDGE

FINDINGS OF FACT AND  
CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Case No. 21-4JC-076

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The Judicial Conduct Commission ("the Commission"), having reviewed the parties' Stipulation ("Stipulation") and having approved the same, having reviewed Judge Ridge's Judicial Conduct Commission's case history, having reviewed matters and briefings submitted by Judge Ridge, now enters the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Hon. Stevan Ridge ("Judge Ridge") was appointed to the bench at the Heber City Justice Court in 2002 and then to the Utah County Justice Court in 2008 and has served continuously as a full-time justice court judge since that time.

2. In 2010, Judge Ridge received a public reprimand from the Utah Supreme Court for a practice of imposing the maximum sentence when a defendant announced he was going to appeal but he then would stay the sentence pending the appeal. Judge Ridge's changing of the sentence created the appearance and caused a defendant to believe that the judge was punishing him for exercising his right to request a trial de novo. Judge Ridge violated then Canon 2 of the Utah judicial code "a judge shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in all activities" and then UCA § 78-11-105(1)(e).

**Count 1- bias and competence**

3. On July 19, 2021, when interacting with a non-native English speaking (“NNES”) defendant, Judge Ridge was trying to explain that the defendant needed to plead guilty or not guilty. The following exchange occurred between Judge Ridge and the defendant:

**Judge:** . . . How do you plead?

**Defendant:** Yes.

**Judge:** Yes is not an answer. Guilty or not guilty?

**Defendant:** I don’t understand a little bit.

**Judge:** Are you pleading guilty or not guilty?

**Defendant:** Oh, I pay. How much I pay?

**Judge:** You what?

**Defendant:** I pay the ticket, how much?

**Judge:** You’ve got to plead either guilty or not guilty first.

**Defendant:** I don’t understand a little.

**Clerk:** Your Honor should we reschedule this to a Spanish interpreter day?

**Judge:** He seems to be doing fine. He’s just being stubborn and won’t answer my question. Guilty or not guilty? It’s very simple.

**Judge:** Guilty or not guilty?

**Defendant:** Not guilty.

**Judge:** All right, we’re going to set it over for a pretrial conference . . .

**Defendant:** Oh no, no understand.

**Judge:** *Culpable or no culpable* [note: “culpable” is Spanish for guilty].

**Defendant:** *Culpable.*

**Judge:** Thank you, very simple.

4. On October 14, 2021, a NNES defendant appeared in front of Judge Ridge with an interpreter. The defendant wanted to change his plea which had been entered in May 2021. The following exchange occurred between Judge Ridge and the defendant:

**Judge:** [The Judge read the charges] Do you plead guilty on those? Donna?

**Clerk:** Yes I'm showing he has guilty pleas already on May 10.

**Defendant:** The thing is, I was pleading guilty to these but I was not understanding what was being asked.

**Judge:** Well it's a little late, you pled guilty on May 10. You're appeal time was up within 30 days. You can't even change your plea now, it's too late.

**Defendant:** I did explain that but since I cannot explain myself very well but I did use the public defender.

**Judge:** Well, you had counsel, you knew what was going on. You're stuck, if you had counsel, there's no going back at this point.

**Clerk:** Judge I show that he was sentenced to serve 360 days in jail.

**Defendant:** I need a public defender.

**Judge:** You had a public defender, you already pled guilty. It's a little bit late.

**Defendant:** The thing is, since I did not have an interpreter to assist me, that was my problem.

**Judge:** You had a public defender, you were represented by counsel. It's

too late.

**Judge:** You had an interpreter.

**Clerk:** Your Honor, the public defender was not appointed um, he was appointed at a later date by Judge Cullimore, while you were gone. When he entered the plea he did not have an interpreter there and he did not have a public defender there on that day.

**Defendant:** And I do need a public defender because I don't know what's going on.

**Judge:** Wow. We'll vacate the pleas and set it over for another pre-trial.

...

**Clerk:** We'll put it on a public defender day and get an interpreter.

5. On December 16, 2021, a NNES defendant appeared in Judge Ridge's court during a time when an interpreter was available. The following exchange occurred between Judge Ridge and the defendant:

**Judge:** Do you understand the charge?

**Defendant:** Yes your Honor.

**Judge:** Are you going to hire an attorney or represent yourself?

**Defendant:** Um, can I be able to have an attorney?

**Judge:** Sir this is a traffic violation, it's an infraction, there's no jail time attached to an infraction, you'll have to represent yourself or hire your own attorney.

**Clerk:** Your Honor, I do have a note that he does need an interpreter, maybe we can get Patricia to interpret so he understands what's being said?



**Judge:** Well he seems to be okay.

**Defendant:** Can I have an interpreter?

**Judge:** You can have an interpreter, yes.

**Defendant:** Thank you.

. . .

**Judge:** How do you plead?

**Defendant (via interpreter):** Not guilty.

**Judge:** Do you have proof of insurance?

**Defendant (via interpreter):** I have email of the insurance I got on that same day.

**Judge:** If you got it on that same day, it's not going to fly.

**Judge:** Did you get the insurance after the citation?

**Defendant (via interpreter):** Yes, I had to go to Puerto Rico on an emergency, after I got back . . .

**Judge:** Were you insured on August 29, 2021 at 6:30 in the evening?

**Defendant (via interpreter):** No, I started doing this process the morning before but it wasn't done.

**Judge:** Then you can't plead not guilty, let's get this handled. Sir?

**Defendant (via interpreter):** Okay.

**Judge:** I just need a plea of guilty or no contest. You weren't insured at the time the citation was issued.

**Defendant (via interpreter):** I didn't use my car frequently, it was just an emergency. I didn't have a social security they didn't allow me to do it.

**Judge:** Sir, I have a busy calendar today. We're spending a lot of time. I need you to take care of this today. If you want to set it over for pretrial we'll do that.

**Defendant (via interpreter):** What's a pretrial, excuse me, I don't know?

**Judge:** Well at this point in time, if you pled guilty or no contest the fine is \$200 because you're now in short.

**Defendant (via interpreter):** Okay.

**Judge:** What are you going to do?

**Defendant (via interpreter):** I plead guilty.

**Judge:** Thank you, again we'll reduce the \$400 fine to \$200. . .

**Defendant (via interpreter):** I would like to know why I had to get fingerprints, I just would like to know why?

**Judge:** Because it's State law.

**Defendant (via interpreter):** And what does that entail?

**Judge:** Did you get your fingerprints done already or nor?

**Defendant (via interpreter):** Yes, yes I did.

**Judge:** It's the law, it's a requirement, the charge requires that you get your fingerprints done.

**Defendant (via interpreter):** Does that mean that I have a record?

**Judge:** You have a traffic record, that's all.

6. Besides Judge Ridge and the defendants, there were attorneys, court personnel and witnesses present that heard the above exchanges.

7. Judge Ridge agrees that his actions and comments questioning

Hispanic defendants requests for an interpreter, entering pleas without counsel or an interpreter, and not allowing a defendant to enter a not guilty plea violate the following provisions of the Code of Judicial Conduct:

- Rule 2.2 . . . A judge shall uphold and apply the law, and shall perform all duties of judicial office fairly and impartially.
- Rule 2.3(B) A judge shall not, in the performance of judicial duties, by words or conduct manifest bias or prejudice or engage in harassment, including but not limited to bias, prejudice, or harassment based upon race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, or political affiliation . . .
- Rule 2.5(A) A judge shall competently and diligently perform judicial and administrative duties.

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**Count 2- undermine confidence judiciary and demeanor**

8. During WebEx hearings in 2021, Judge Ridge engaged in the following behavior:
- a. Sometimes Judge Ridge did not turn on his camera during court.
  - b. There were times when Judge Ridge’s camera was on and he did not wear robes and/or was dressed very casually.
  - c. Judge Ridge babysat his grandson on several occasions during court.
  - d. Judge Ridge’s TV was on during court.
  - e. Judge Ridge had his dog during court in home and at the courthouse; the dog is an emotional support animal.
  - f. On November 16, 2021, at the end of a court day, most people

were off WebEx; one defendant, the prosecutor and staff remained.

Judge Ridge made the following comments:

**Judge:** Okay, I'm going to go shoot myself. You guys have a good afternoon.

**Bailiff:** I have valium in my desk Judge. I'm gonna go take some. (laughing).

**Judge:** I wish you had some here, I'd take some with you.

**Prosecutor:** You guys have to be careful what you admit in front of the prosecutors. (laughing).

...

**Bailiff:** Yeah, I ain't afraid of you. (laughing)

**Prosecutor:** I'll come down harder on you guys. I'm going to ask for prison time for you. (laughing)

The comments were clearly jokes and everyone was laughing but a defendant remained on WebEx and was able to see and hear the conversation.

9. Besides Judge Ridge and the defendants, there were attorneys, court personnel and witnesses present that witnessed the actions and witnessed the remarks.

10. Judge Ridge agrees that the actions and comments described above violate the following provisions of the Code of Judicial Conduct:

Rule 1.2	A judge should act at all times in a manner that promotes - and shall not undermine - public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary and shall avoid impropriety and the
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appearance of impropriety.

Rule 2.8(B) A judge shall be . . . dignified . . . to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers, court staff, court officials, and others with whom the judge deals in an official capacity, and shall take reasonable measures to require similar conduct of lawyers, court staff, court officials, and others subject to the judge's direction and control.

**Count 3- undermine confidence in the judiciary and competence**

11. In June 2021, Judge Ridge was prescribed and took medication to relieve numbness of his feet caused by back problems. He took the medication while presiding in court and appeared tired and groggy.

12. Besides Judge Ridge and the defendants, there were attorneys, court personnel and witnesses present that witnessed his state while on the medication.

13. Judge Ridge agrees that taking his medication while presiding in court violates the following provisions of the Code of Judicial Conduct:

Rule 1.2 A judge should act at all times in a manner that promotes - and shall not undermine - public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary and shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.

Rule 2.5(A) A judge shall competently and diligently perform  
Comment 1 judicial and administrative duties.

*Competence in the performance of judicial duties requires the legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness, and preparation reasonably necessary to perform a judge's responsibilities of judicial office.*

**Count 4- confidence in the judiciary and demeanor**

14. Judge Ridge has been impatient with defendants. On October 25,

2021, a defendant asked if counsel could be appointed. The following exchange took place:

**Judge:** Since there's no threat of incarceration, your request is denied. The court is going to give you time to hire counsel.

**Defendant:** [is silent]

**Judge:** Hello?

**Defendant:** Can you say that one more time, about to hire counsel, um can you explain that end part, hire counsel?

**Judge:** I'll give you time to hire an attorney. [exasperated]

**Defendant:** Okay.

**Judge:** What are you going to do?

**Defendant:** Hire an attorney, look for an attorney, I'm not too sure how to go about this.

**Judge:** We'll set it over for pre-trial conference.

**Clerk:** Would like a date judge? We can schedule you for January 4 . . .

. . .

**Judge:** Thank you. Ah stupid. [sighed]

Judge Ridge's microphone was still on. This conversation, along with the comments made above, are examples of the judge exasperated and impatient with defendants.

15. Besides Judge Ridge and the defendants, there were court personnel and witnesses present that witnessed these comments and actions.

16. Judge Ridge agrees that his actions and comments described above

and those in paragraphs 3, 4, and 5 violate the following provisions of the Code of Judicial Conduct:

Rule 1.2                    A judge should act at all times in a manner that promotes - and shall not undermine - public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary and shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.

Rule 2.8(B)                A judge shall be patient, dignified, and courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers, court staff, court officials, and others with whom the judge deals in an official capacity . . .

**Count 5- diligence and demeanor**

17.    Throughout 2021, Judge Ridge came to the courthouse less and less and was not available to follow through on matters and was not responsive to staff.

Judge Ridge did not attend all the administrative meetings and did not communicate information to staff.

18.    Judge Ridge agrees that he has made comments and sent emails to staff with a tone of impatience and anger.

19.    Judge Ridge agrees that his conduct described above violates the following provisions of the Code of Judicial Conduct:

Rule 2.5(A)                A judge shall competently and diligently perform judicial and administrative duties.  
*comment 3*                    *Competent and diligent disposition of the court's business requires a judge to devote adequate time to judicial duties . . .*

Rule 2.8(B)                A judge shall be patient, dignified, and courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers, court staff, court officials, and others with whom the judge deals in an official capacity . . .

20.    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).

21. In June 2021, the Commission received the complaint in this matter. On February 22, Judge Ridge responded to this matter. The Commission considered this response and other evidence.

22. Judge Ridge did not intend to violate the Code of Judicial Conduct by making these comments, nevertheless, Judge Ridge's comments violated Code of Judicial Conduct Rules 1.2, 2.2, 2.3(B), Rule 2.5(A) comments 1 and 3, and Rule 2.8(B).

23. On April 1, 2021, Judge Cullimore retired from the Utah County Justice Court, Provo and a substitute judge was not provided. Judge Ridge was the only judge for the entire court, from April 1, 2021- January 2022.

24. Mitigating and extenuating factors include Judge Ridge's chronic poor health during 2021. Almost constantly, he was afflicted with chronic illness, pain, injuries and underwent surgery twice. While Judge Ridge dealt with his health issues, he oversaw the entire Utah County Justice Court, Provo location by himself.

25. Judge Ridge negligently (but not intentionally, willfully or with bad faith) engaged in conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice which brings a judicial office into disrepute in violation of UCA 78(A)-11-105(1)(e).

26. Judge Ridge has accepted responsibility for his actions, has expressed remorse for any harm his actions may have caused and has been completely cooperative in the investigation.



27. Also, Judge Ridge is retiring effective June 1, 2022. He agrees to never seek another judicial position or senior judge status.

28. In light of previous similar misconduct and other previous public sanctions, a public censure is an appropriate sanction in this matter and Judge Ridge agrees to accept the same.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

##### Conclusions of Law in regards to Count 1- bias and competence

29. Judge Ridge stipulated to the comments and actions supporting judicial misconduct in this count.

30. Based on its finding of facts, the Commission concludes that Rules 2.2 and 2.3(B) were violated as the comments and actions of not allowing NNES defendant access to interpreters were such that to a reasonable person would call into question Judge Ridge's impartiality, and be expected to raise concerns in a reasonable person as to the outcome or potential impairment of the fairness of the matter pending.

31. Based on its finding of facts, the Commission concludes that Rule 2.5(A) was violated as the comments and actions of not allowing NNES defendant access to interpreters and not letting one defendant plead not guilty were such that to a reasonable person would call into question Judge Ridge's impartiality and competence, and could be expected to raise concerns in a reasonable person as to the outcome or potential impairment of the fairness of the matter pending.

32. Accordingly, 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).

Conclusions of Law in regard to Count 2- undermine confidence in judiciary and demeanor

33. Judge Ridge stipulated to the comments and actions supporting judicial misconduct in this count.

34. The Commission concludes that Rule 1.2 requires that a judge should act at all times in a manner that promotes - and shall not undermine - public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary and that Judge Ridge not turning on his camera, babysitting his grandson, having his TV on during court, dressing casually during court, without robes, making inappropriate jokes and all actions as stipulated are in violation of Rule 1.2.

35. The Commission concludes that Rule 2.8 requires that a judge should be dignified and that Judge Ridge not turning on his camera, babysitting his grandson, having his TV on during court, dressing casually during court, without robes and making inappropriate jokes, and all actions as stipulated are in violation of Rule 2.8.

36. Based on Judge Ridge's stipulation, the other evidence received, and the Commission's findings of fact, the Commission concludes that Judge Ridge's not turning on his camera, babysitting his grandson, having his TV on during court, dressing casually during court, without robes, making inappropriate jokes and all other actions as stipulated does and did undermine public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary in violation of Rule 1.2 and 2.8.

37. Based on Judge Ridge's stipulation, other evidence received, and the Commission's findings of fact, the Commission concludes that Judge Ridge's not turning on his camera, babysitting his grandson, having his TV on during court, dressing casually during court, without robes, making inappropriate jokes, and all action as stipulated violated Rules 1.2 and 2.8 because they were behaviors and conduct that would undermine the confidence of a reasonable person in Judge Ridge's commitment or ability to act with independence, integrity, or impartiality in his judicial office.

38. Accordingly, 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).

Conclusions of Law in regard to Count 3- confidence in the judiciary and competence

39. Judge Ridge stipulated to the comments and actions supporting judicial misconduct in this count.

40. Based on Judge Ridge's stipulation, the other evidence received, and the Commission's findings of fact, the Commission concludes that Judge Ridge's taking medication while he presided in court and appearing groggy and tired violated Rules 1.2 and 2.8 because they were conduct and behavior that would undermine the confidence of a reasonable person in Judge Ridge's commitment or ability to act with independence, integrity, or impartiality in his judicial office.

41. Accordingly, 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).

Conclusions of Law in regard to Count 4- confidence in the judiciary and  
demeanor

42. Judge Ridge stipulated to the comments and actions supporting judicial misconduct in this count.

43. The Commission concludes that Judge Ridge was impatient and demeaning in the comments he made which are in violation of Code of Judicial Conduct Rule 1.2 and 2.8(B).

44. Accordingly, 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).

Conclusions of Law in regard to Count 5- diligence and demeanor

45. Judge Ridge stipulated to the comments and actions supporting judicial misconduct in this count.

46. The Commission concludes that Judge Ridge was impatient and not courteous with his staff and such comments and actions are in violation of Code of Judicial Conduct Rule 2.8(B).

47. The Commission concludes that Judge Ridge was not diligent in his administrative duties and such actions are in violation of Code of Judicial Conduct Rule 2.5(A) comment 3.

48. Accordingly, 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).

#### Appropriate Sanction

49. The Commission concludes that Judge Ridge's conduct under all five counts 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).

50. In evaluating what appropriate sanction to recommend, the Commission considers a number of factors. The capacity Judge Ridge was acting in when the misconduct occurred was official (in court, with staff, in his office, in his chambers sending emails).

51. The Commission also considers the various settings of Judge Ridge's misconduct: in his courtroom, home office and in an administrative setting (his office, home, and chambers).

52. The Commission also considers whether the misconduct was spontaneous or premeditated. The Commission found that Judge Ridge was publicly sanctioned for similar misconduct in the past and so the Commission concluded he knew of the possible outcome and the conduct was premeditated.

53. The Commission also concludes Judge Ridge's misconduct had both an appearance of, as well as an actual, impropriety. The appearance of impropriety extended to court observers, defendant, witnesses, other court clerks, many of

whom complained of the conduct. However, given that Judge Ridge in the past had been publicly advised and sanctioned for similar misconduct, the Commission concludes Judge Ridge's conduct carried with it more than the appearance of impropriety. It was factually improper.

54. The Commission also takes into account that Judge Ridge's misconduct was not an isolated incident. Rather, his misconduct is part of a continuing pattern that had been repeated for at least one year.

55. The Commission also considers the potential and actual harm to the public's perception of fairness and impartiality in Utah's judicial system. The Commission concludes that Judge Ridge's behavior caused both actual and potential harm to the public's perception of fairness and impartiality of Utah's judicial system.

56. The Commission concludes that there was harm to those members of the public that have watched Judge Ridge ignore public advice and public sanctions; harm to the court clerks who remain concerned for his behavior; harm to the defendants and court observers who were present when he made statements and jokes, harm to county officials who had to address complaints about Judge Ridge, and harm to those who saw actions not allowing due process to Hispanic defendants and were left with doubts about Judge Ridge's commitment to being independent and impartial in his judicial position.

57. Judge Ridge does acknowledge his misconduct, takes responsibility, and has shown remorse for his violations of the Utah Code of Judicial Conduct.

58. Further, Judge Ridge has begun his retirement process and his last day

was June 1, 2022.

59. Also, Judge Ridge agreed to not seek another judicial position or senior judge status.

60. The Commission also takes into account the fact that due to another judge's retirement, from April 1, 2021- January 2022, Judge Ridge was the only judge assigned to the Utah County Justice Court. Further, Judge Ridge suffered chronic illness and pain and underwent two surgeries during 2021.

61. Finally, the Commission considers Judge Ridge's judicial service. Although he has been on the bench since 2002 (almost 20 years), his judicial service includes one public sanction for similar misconduct. The Commission considers that his prior violations and failure to accept responsibility indicates that a strong sanction is appropriate.

62. The Commission notes that Judge Ridge has already been publicly reprimanded once and yet continues similar misbehavior, so concludes that a public censure (fn1) would have the necessary corrective or deterrent effect.

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<sup>1</sup> The terms "reprimand" and "censure" are not defined in the Utah Code of Judicial Conduct. The Commission spent considerable time deliberating how the public would understand the severity of a censure. Absent a clear definition of those terms, and given the different meaning and effect of censure in other contexts, the Commission respectfully requests the Supreme Court to provide more clarity on a reprimand and censure to provide guidance to the Commission and the public. See, e.g., Reprimand vs. Censure, Center for Judicial Ethics of the National Center for State Courts, Blog (July 28, 2014), available at <https://ncscjudicialethicsblog.org/2014/07/28/reprimand-vs-censure/>.

63. The Commission concludes that considering all the above factors, that a public censure is the most appropriate sanction for his violations of the Utah Code of Judicial Conduct identified in these findings and conclusions

DATED this 7<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2022.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cheylynn Hayman, Chair  
Judicial Conduct Commission