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District Attorney Seeking Special Prosecutor for OWN Open Records Complaint Against Gableman *Records Denial Came As Questions Remain on Prohibited Use of State Resources*

Milwaukee – Burnett County District Attorney Ken Kutz is requesting a “special prosecutor” for One Wisconsin Now’s verified open records law complaint filed with the Burnett County District Attorney’s office after Burnett County Judge Mike Gableman refused repeated requests to release emails from his taxpayer-financed state account.

“The Burnett County District Attorney has contacted law enforcement officials to serve as a ‘special prosecutor’ regarding Mike Gableman’s refusal to release his public records,” said Scot Ross, Executive Director of One Wisconsin Now. “The Burnett County District Attorney’s actions in seeking a special prosecutor demonstrate the seriousness of ignoring open records laws in the state, as we contend sitting judge Mike Gableman has.”

District Attorney Kutz informed OWN that he has contacted several prosecutors, the District Attorneys from Barron, Sawyer, Bayfield, St. Croix, Eau Claire and Douglas Counties, asking them to serve as a “special prosecutor” in the case. In Kutz’s request, he asks for an immediate response from potential prosecutors.

OWN’s complaint filed with Burnett County came after Gableman refused to fully-comply for months with a reasonable and timely request OWN made for certain emails from Gableman’s state account under the open records law. OWN’s open records request also targeted emails that included the names of noted political conservatives, campaign officials and political organizations.

Other records obtained from the state have shown Gableman’s questionable use of state resources for political purposes, including news last week that Gableman made over 50 long distance phone calls from his Ashland County District Attorney’s office to top contributors and fundraisers for Governor Scott McCallum in the months directly preceding a fundraiser for McCallum that Gableman hosted in June 2002.

Among the terms in OWN’s open records request were emails with former McCallum fundraiser Mary Stitt’s name. Among the political calls Gableman made from his state phone were 11 separate calls to McCallum’s campaign fundraiser, Mary Stitt. At the time of the calls, Gableman was on the host committee for a McCallum fundraiser. Stitt has also served as a Gableman fundraiser.

(more)

Gableman personally responded refusing to release eight separate emails calling them “purely personal.” A second Gableman response, which came well after the Wisconsin Department of Justice’s reasonable guideline of ten working days, abruptly claimed the records he previously denied did not exist.

OWN verified complaint filed with the Burnett County District Attorney is available at:

http://advwisc.3cdn.net/fb700d20555c161eda_j0m6ipysb.pdf

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