



May 18, 2022

Matthew Singer
Lee Baxter
Kayla Tanner

Eva Gardner
Matthew Schechter
Benjamin Farkash

Holly Wells
Mara Michaletz
William Falsey
Zoe Danner

Re: *2021 Redistricting (Alaska Redistricting Board / Girdwood / East Anchorage)*
Supreme Court Case No. S-18419

Via Electronic Mail

Dear Counsel:

As you know, Senior Justice Eastaugh participated as a member of the court in the initial challenge to the 2021 Redistricting Cases (S-18332, consolidated) that resulted in entry of the order of March 25, 2022. In light of the renewed challenge that is now before this court (S-18419) involving new plaintiffs below (“Girdwood plaintiffs”) and Senior Justice Eastaugh’s *pro tem* appointment, he has asked me to inform you of the following:

One of the plaintiffs now challenging Senate District E is Jennifer Wingard. She was not previously a party in the case as presented to the Alaska Supreme Court, and was not a party as of March 25, 2022, when the Alaska Supreme Court entered its prior order. Senior Justice Eastaugh is acquainted with Ms. Wingard in two different ways.

First, beginning in about 2017, Jennifer Wingard acted as a rental agent for a ski cabin that Senior Justice Eastaugh owns in Girdwood. It was not an exclusive agency; she also managed her own properties and perhaps those of others. She found prospective tenants, arranged rentals, collected rents, and transmitted the net, after deducting finding fees, commissions, and expenses, to Senior Justice Eastaugh. Rents were at local market rates. She also arranged such routine services as repairs and cleaning for both units. She chose not to continue as the rental agent in the summer of 2021 and discontinued any services as of September 2021. In one summer, she and her family rented one of the units in the cabin themselves, and paid market rates. The last rental payment received with her assistance was in September 2021. They have had no professional contact since then beyond an exchange of emails to confirm he was accurately reporting 2021 income from the rentals for preparation of his 2021 tax return.

Second, prior to retaining Ms. Wingard as his rental agent, Senior Justice Eastaugh was casually acquainted with her from the ski community. They both were in the Alyeska Ski Club Masters program for several years. She has not been in the Masters for some years and now coaches with a different club program which he is not involved in. They exchange pleasantries upon meeting and would be considered friends. So far as Senior Justice Eastaugh can recall, neither has ever attended a social event in the other's house. He has never discussed any topic regarding redistricting with her or any member of her family.

Senior Justice Eastaugh believes that neither these contacts with one of the Girdwood plaintiffs, nor ownership of a Girdwood cabin, is a disqualifying interest. He also believes none of the aforementioned circumstances would affect his ability to consider any aspect of the redistricting cases fairly and impartially and without favoritism. But he also believes that the parties should be informed in case any party thinks his disqualification may be required.

Please inform me before Friday, May 20, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. of any objections by emailing a motion to me directly or to pleadings@akcourts.gov. Absent any motion to disqualify for cause, Senior Justice Eastaugh intends to continue to participate in the 2021 redistricting cases.

Sincerely,


Meredith Montgomery