

COLORADO COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE



May 4, 2023

Statement of the Colorado Commission on Judicial Discipline:

On May 3, 2023, based on a stipulated agreement between former Chief Justice Coats and the Colorado Commission on Judicial Discipline, the Commission filed court documents recommending the public censure of former Chief Justice Coats for his failure to “perform judicial and administrative duties competently and diligently,” as required by Canon Rule 2.5(A) of the Colorado Code of Judicial Conduct. The violation of Canon Rule 2.5(A) occurred while Coats served as Chief Justice and is related to events and actions surrounding former Judicial Department staff members, including Mindy Masias, Christopher Ryan, Eric Brown and others. According to the Colorado Rules of Judicial Conduct, a censure is appropriate when a subject judge or justice’s conduct “involves a substantial breach of the standards of judicial conduct.” Colo. RJD 35(f).

The entire Colorado Supreme Court has recused itself from hearing the case and has directed that a Special Tribunal made up of judges of the Colorado Court of Appeals be appointed to review the matter. Colo. RJD 41. The Special Tribunal will review the parties’ stipulation to affirm or deny the Commission’s recommendation.

The filings are publicly available from the office of the Clerk of the Supreme Court. The timing for action by the Special Tribunal will be determined in the coming days.

The Commission wishes to thank its appointed special counsel, Omeed M. Azmoudeh and Qusair Mohamedbhai for their commitment and work on this difficult and unprecedented assignment.

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