

Slusser Calls on Prenzler to Demand an End to Allies' Lawsuit Abuse

by Submitted by Chris Slusser
October 5 2023 3:56 PM

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EDWARDSVILLE - Today Madison County Treasurer Chris Slusser, candidate for County Board Chairman, called on current County Board Chairman Kurt Prenzler to demand that his political allies end their continuous costly, harassing and frivolous lawsuits against Madison County Officials.



Madison County State's Attorney Tom Haine recently released figures indicating the total costs of lawsuits filed by disgraced former county officials Doug Hulme and Rob Dorman have cost the county (taxpayers) more than \$270,000 to defend. The pair are two of Prenzler's top aides and supporters, and now have filed more than 20 lawsuits against various county officials since the County Board voted 26-1 to fire them in April 2020.

"This is a total waste of taxpayer funds as well as an abuse of the legal system," said Slusser. "The vast majority of their cases were dismissed. Those not yet dismissed are pending dismissal. None have ever made it past the hearing stage, due to their lack of merit. They've also lost every appeal. Unfortunately, these nuisance lawsuits clog up an already burdened court system essentially delaying other citizens their day in court."

“Mr. Hulme and Mr. Dorman are close political allies of County Board Chairman Kurt Prenzler. He opposed their firing, and he has sat quietly for 3 ½ years while the two have made a mockery of themselves in the court system wasting time and taxpayer money on his watch,” said Slusser. “Anyone who claims to be a fiscal conservative and concerned about taxpayer money would’ve already called for an end to this madness, but our Chairman remains silent. We need a new Chairman.”

The costs of Dorman and Hulme’s frivolous filings go far beyond legal fees. The State’s Attorney’s Office has had to hire additional personnel to handle all of the frivolous suits filed by Dorman and Hulme. In addition to their cottage industry of abusive lawsuits, the pair have filed more than 500 Freedom of Information Act requests of various County Offices, including the County Board, County Sheriff, State’s Attorney, County Treasurer, County Auditor, County Clerk and Madison County Transit. It’s estimated that more than 2,000 man hours have been expended to meet all of these requests.

“Any time Mr. Prenzler is criticized or doesn’t get his way, the ‘offending party’ is almost immediately the subject of numerous FOIA requests by Prenzler’s political allies,” said Slusser. “This drains county resources and takes employees away from their regular duties for hours at a time. Yet while his allies harass his own department heads and other county employees, the Chairman simply sits back and watches. It is ridiculous and it needs to end.”

This is just the latest page in Prenzler’s lawsuit saga. Last spring taxpayers had to pay \$1.3 million to settle a lawsuit from another top Prenzler hire who turned around and sued the county.

“Prenzler is distracted and has hired lawsuit-happy aides like Dorman and Hulme who end up sponging off the taxpayer and settling personal scores instead of developing our county,” said Slusser. “We need an adult in the room, a true conservative leader as Chairman. That is why I’m running. As treasurer, I have saved local taxpayers over \$31 million due to savvy investments and fiscal conservatism. I’ll take that same experience to focus on economic development throughout Madison County and lowering our tax burden.”