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SENATE MAJORITY WHIP

COMMITTEES

JUDICIARY, *CHAIR*
LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HOUSING, *VICE CHAIR*
APPROPRIATIONS, *MEMBER*
COMMITTEE ON LEGAL SERVICES, *MEMBER*

July 25, 2024

Senator Steve Fenberg
Senate President
Colorado General Assembly
200 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80205

Dear Mr. President:

The Senate Ethics Committee appointed pursuant to Senate Rule 43 has met to consider the complaint against Senator Faith Winter filed on May 1, 2024, by Mayor Meredith Leighty on behalf of the Northglenn City Council. In her complaint, Mayor Leighty alleged that Senator Winter was under the influence of alcohol at a community meeting in Northglenn on April 3, 2024, and that this was a dereliction of her legislative duties under various provisions of Senate Rule 41 (a.5). Senator Winter filed a written answer to the complaint with the Ethics Committee on June 13, 2024, asserting that her actions did not amount to a violation of the ethics rules of the Colorado Senate and requesting that the complaint be dismissed.

The Ethics Committee met on June 11, 2024, June 20, 2024, and July 8, 2024. Minutes of the discussions and actions taken at these meetings, along with copies of the complaint and Senator Winter's answer to the complaint, are maintained by the Legislative Council Staff and are available electronically on the General Assembly's [website](#). Requests for information submitted by the Ethics Committee and the responses to the requests are maintained by the Office of Legislative Legal Services and may be reviewed at that office or made available upon request.

At the meeting on June 11, 2024, the Ethics Committee requested information from the Northglenn City Council, the Northglenn Police Department, Thornton City Council, Westminster City Council, Adams County Sheriff's Office, the Colorado State Patrol, and the Office of Legislative Legal Services. The Ethics Committee received a response from the Colorado State Patrol, the Adams County Sheriff's Office, and Thornton City Council indicating none of the entities had any information responsive to the request. The Ethics Committee received responsive information from the Northglenn City Council, the Northglenn Police Department, Westminster City Council, and the Office of Legislative Legal Services. The information received included email and text message correspondence; video recordings, transcripts, and minutes of City Council meetings; relevant news articles and news coverage of the April 3, 2024, community meeting that formed the basis of the complaint; and body camera footage and video footage of the facility where the April 3, 2024, community meeting took place.

At the meeting on June 20, 2024, the Ethics Committee considered the evidence and, by a unanimous vote, approved a motion that probable cause existed to find that a violation of Senate Rule 41 (a.5) may have occurred. That same day, the Ethics Committee notified you and Senator Winter of its decision and advised Senator Winter of her right to request an evidentiary hearing pursuant to Senate Rule 43 (d), which Senator Winter declined to exercise.

At the meeting on July 8, 2024, the Ethics Committee determined it was ready to proceed with a final determination of the matter based on the complaint, Senator Winter's answer to the complaint, and the requested evidence. On a vote of 4-to-1, the Ethics Committee approved a motion finding, based on a preponderance of the evidence and the totality of the circumstances, that on April 3, 2024, Senator Winter failed to meet the standard of Senate Rule 41 (a.5) to promote public integrity and public confidence, which determination was informed by a pattern of conduct as demonstrated by the evidence before the Ethics Committee and with additional evidence of mitigating factors.

For this reason, the Ethics Committee recommends that you send a letter to Senator Winter that:

- Admonishes Senator Winter for her conduct at the April 3, 2024, community meeting and the underlying pattern of that conduct regarding substance abuse; encourages Senator Winter to continue her course of rehabilitation; and outlines the duties and expectations of a Senator pursuant to Senate Rule 41 (a.5);
- Invites Senator Winter to address the full Senate during the 2025 Legislative Session concerning her conduct during the April 3, 2024, community meeting; and
- Notifies Senator Winter that, in the event she fails to uphold her duties and the expectations under Senate Rule 41 (a.5) or fails to address her substance use disorder, the Senate may take remedial action against her without referring the matter to an ethics committee.

The first two recommendations were unanimously adopted by the Ethics Committee, while the third recommendation was passed on a 4-to-1 vote.

This report concludes the business of this Ethics Committee.

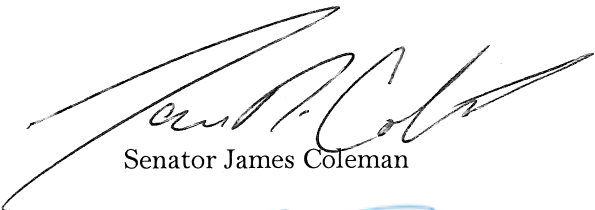
Respectfully submitted,



Senator Julie Gonzales, Chair



Senator Paul Lundeen, Vice-Chair



Senator James Coleman



Senator Bob Gardner



Senator Dylan Roberts

cc: Senator Faith Winter