



Meredith Leighty

Mayor

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www.northglenn.org

May 1, 2024

Colorado State Senate
Senate President Steve Fenberg
200 E. Colfax, Room 346
Denver, CO 80203

Dear President Fenberg,

Please let this correspondence serve as a formal complaint against Senator Faith Winter filed on behalf of the City of Northglenn City Council for violating Rule 41, specifically 41(a.5), of the Colorado Senate Rules (the "Rules"). This complaint is being filed pursuant to Rule 43, which requires the signed, written complaint be filed with the Senate President.

Background and Facts

On April 3, 2024, the City Council held a special community meeting (the "Meeting") to discuss the siting of a Mental Health Transitional Living Facility (the "MHTL Facility") in the City.

As has been well documented in the media, Senator Winter appeared at the community meeting that was attended by between 300 and 400 community members, as well as the entire Northglenn City Council and other state and local elected officials, and Senator Winter appeared disoriented at best at the Meeting. Throughout the public comment period, for which [video is available](#), she appeared at various times, disinterested, annoyed, and combative, to the point where others had to intervene to cool tensions. In one notable example, she simply refused to answer one of my direct questions. She also appeared to have glassy eyes, slurred speech, and some individuals smelled alcohol on her breath. After the meeting, multiple news sources indicated she was unable to drive herself home, and that she intended to enter rehab for alcohol addiction. Marianne Goodland, *Colorado Senator Faith Winter to seek treatment for alcohol use, checking in to rehab*, COLORADO POLITICS (Apr. 4, 2024).

Senator Winter is the Senate representative for the vast majority of the City. While the City is sensitive to the disease of alcoholism, there is simply no excuse for showing up to a community meeting under the influence of alcohol. From the City Council's perspective, this is at a minimum a dereliction of her legislative duties under Rule 41(a.5) as set forth below.

Charge

Rule 41(a.5) states the following on Senate standards for legislative ethics and official conduct:

Legislative office is a trust to be performed with **integrity in the public interest**. A member is to **be respectful of the confidence placed in that member** by the other members of the Senate and **by the people of the state of Colorado**. **A**

Colorado State Senate
Senate President Steve Fenberg
May 1, 2024

member shall respect and comply with the law and shall **perform his or her legislative duties at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity** and independence of the Senate and of the General Assembly. **By personal example** and by admonition to colleagues whose behavior may threaten the honor and integrity of the lawmaking body, **the member shall watchfully guard the responsibilities of the public office and the responsibilities and duties placed on the member by the Senate.** To this end, **each member shall be accountable to the Senate** for violations of the Rules of the Senate, the Joint Rules of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the Constitution of the state of Colorado, or any provision of the code of ethics set forth in article 18 of title 24, Colorado Revised Statutes.

Colorado Senate Rule 41(a.5) (emphasis added).

As outlined in the background and facts, and evidenced by video record of the entire meeting, the City Council of the City of Northglenn alleges the following based on her conduct at the April 3, 2024 community meeting:

- Senator Winter has failed to uphold her office with integrity in the public interest;
- Senator Winter was disrespectful to her constituents and the people of the State of Colorado, as well as to herself;
- Senator Winter lost confidence from the public, most damagingly from her own constituents that elected her to office; and
- Senator Winter has failed to watchfully guard the responsibilities of the public office and the responsibilities and duties placed on her as a member of the Senate.

This charge is filed by the City Council because the City still believes she must, as all members of the General Assembly must, be held accountable for her behavior and conduct. Accordingly, the City respectfully requests you convene a Senate Committee on Ethics pursuant to Rule 43 to address this matter.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Respectfully,



Meredith Leighty
Mayor

Rule 43(c) Written Answer of Senator Faith Winter

June 13, 2024

Dear Senators Gonzales, Coleman, Gardner, Lundeen, and Roberts,

Thank you for the time and attention you are dedicating to the consideration of the Ethics Complaint that was filed by the City of Northglenn; please consider this my Written Response.

First, the trust and confidence that my colleagues and constituents have in me is—and has always been—deeply important to me, and I regret my actions led to the filing of this Complaint. I hope that the details and information I provide will lead you to dismiss the Complaint pursuant to Rule 43(a) during this preliminary investigation stage.

Sequence of Events

In 2022, I was a sponsor for HB22-1303, which was designed to provide residential facilities for adults in need of supportive services. During that legislative session, there was no opposition to the bill from the City of Northglenn. However, as implementation progressed, the City developed concerns and questions. Mayor Leighty sent a letter on April 1, 2024, inviting bill sponsors to “consider attending” a community meeting on April 3 at 6:30 p.m., and that same letter requested clarification and correction of HB22-1303 through a late bill.¹

It was clear from the April 1 letter that the meeting would include opposition to my prior work, but I attended the community meeting on April 3, 2024, after a long day of performing my duties. I was never invited to speak at the meeting; my RSVP was requested but I was uncertain about whether my committee work would conclude in time, so I said that I would attend if I was able. I expected the meeting to be emotionally charged, so I had a drink before walking in. Upon entry, I was surprised to be asked to sit in front of the crowd, but I joined the panel and the conversation without hesitation. For the next three hours, I sat on the panel answering questions, weighing in, and actively listening to the concerns of my colleagues and constituents.

At the conclusion of the meeting, after spending time speaking with constituents, the Police Chief quietly informed me that there had been a report that I had been drinking, and he asked me to find a ride home. I promptly called a Lyft. This incident has been a learning experience for me, and I am committed to ensuring that I never again find myself in a situation where an allegation like this is made.

¹ See Exhibit 1.

It's no secret that alcohol is often present at the Capitol, as articulated in recent press coverage, and is used in many ways, including promoting camaraderie and as a coping mechanism. On the evening of April 3, 2024, I realized that for me the use of alcohol in connection with stressful situations is no longer a path that I wish to travel.

When I decide on a course of action, I do not hesitate. The very next day, on April 4, 2024, I set up a medical appointment, submitted a late bill request via google form to request changes in law in response to the conversation at the community meeting,² and issued a public apology:

I deeply regret my behavior last night. I made a mistake and I'm truly sorry for any inconvenience or discomfort I caused. I take full responsibility for my actions and I am committed to making things right. I especially apologize to the City of Northglenn and the citizens that came out - I deeply care about your thoughts and community. I am now under the care of medical professionals and getting treatment. I apologize to anyone who was affected by my actions and I appreciate your understanding. Thank you for respecting me and my family's privacy at this time.

The City received this information nearly a month before their May 1 special meeting to make a determination as to whether to file a complaint against me. My physician has provided a statement regarding treatment and my commitment to achieving my treatment goal.³ Additionally, I have been connected with a wonderful therapist who is working with me as I strengthen healthy coping skills.⁴

My treatment began on Friday, April 5, 2024, and I stayed home for the next week, returning to the Capitol on Monday, April 15, 2024.

From April 15, 2024, through the end of the session, I worked with my constituents in Northglenn by passing priority bill HB24-1107 and amending HB24-1313. I interacted regularly with the Northglenn team working on state legislative affairs and not once did anyone express anything other than gratitude for my consideration. Not once did they suggest I might not be capable of doing my work. I sent a letter to the City of Northglenn in anticipation of their May 1, 2024, Special Meeting and asked that it be read publicly.⁵ It was not read publicly. The request was turned down, and their judgment of me was made without my voice being heard.

² See Exhibit 2, created by Meredith Cooke, Senior Advisor to the Senate Majority Leader, which is a duplicate of the sheet, with responses and other requests removed to protect privacy.

³ See Exhibit 3, Physician Statement.

⁴ See Exhibit 4, Therapist Statement.

⁵ See Exhibit 5, Letter to Northglenn.

Request for Dismissal

Though I regret having a drink before entering the April 3 community meeting, and I would reverse that decision if I could, I can confidently say that I have fulfilled my responsibilities and duties as a Senator, including on April 3, 2024. No constituent has contacted me to express that I have lost their confidence. On the contrary, I have received several Letters of Support⁶ and I am very touched by the grace that has been extended to me during this period of vulnerability and accountability.

Even if everything alleged by Northglenn even after my multiple apologies is true, the actions they allege do not amount to a violation of the ethics rules of the Colorado Senate. Northglenn alleges that I consumed alcohol while acting as a Senator, but consuming alcohol while acting as a Senator is commonplace in this state, so much so that it is widely publicized.⁷ Northglenn alleges that I was at times combative during debate of a contentious issue, but this is also commonplace in the conduct of public affairs. I understand how Northglenn officials were offended on April 3rd. I apologized the next day, I immediately went to work to help them with the specific issue they were addressing that night and the other issues they requested my assistance with throughout the rest of the legislative session. I wrote them a specific apology on the night they considered this complaint, which they chose to ignore. I've apologized for my actions. I apologize again now, but I have done nothing in violation of the ethics rules that does not happen regularly in legislative business and I did everything I could to address this with the Complainant in the month between April 3 and the special meeting on May 1, but unfortunately those efforts fell on deaf ears.

As elected officials, each of us have weathered political attacks made directly to the press; I respectfully request that your consideration be limited to the allegations of the official Complaint that was submitted.

I am certainly willing to speak with you and continue in this process if you deem it necessary, but I hope this Complaint will be dismissed at this juncture.

Thank you,

Faith Winter

⁶ See Exhibit 6, Letters of Support.

⁷ <https://www.cpr.org/2024/05/03/culture-of-social-drinking-runs-deep-in-the-traditions-of-the-state-capitol/>



Meredith Leighty

Mayor

11701 Community Center Drive

P: 303.918.1568

mleighty@northglenn.org

www.northglenn.org

April 1, 2024

Senator Faith Winter
Senator Jim Smallwood
Representative Judy Amabile
200 E. Colfax
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Senator Winter, Senator Smallwood, Representative Amabile,

I am writing on behalf of the City of Northglenn City Council and our residents to respectfully request late bill status for a piece of legislation that you sponsored in order to clarify and correct the significant public safety concerns with House Bill (HB) 22-1303 [Increase Residential Behavioral Health Beds](#), a bi-partisan effort.

Our request is in response to the Department of Human Services, Office of Civil and Forensic Mental Health's (OCFMH) implementation of a Mental Health Transitional Living Facility at 11255 and 11275 Grant Drive in Northglenn. This location is in proximity to two schools that house over 500 students, adjacent playgrounds, and an in-home daycare. There are also several neighboring churches that provide programming for children throughout the week.

The City has conducted a review of the House and Senate Committee hearings for HB22-1303 and the testimony and description of the legislation contain absolutely no mention of housing sex offenders. We do not believe the housing of sex offenders at this location is consistent intent of the legislation. Additionally, the City has identified that no legislative rulemaking process took place. We would like to know, why not? The implementation of this legislation has lacked transparency and accountability. The authority granted to the OCFMH for program development has been abused. Efforts to seek out information have been driven by the City and media inquiries.

The manner in which the City learned about the State's plans for this living facility lacks any forethought whatsoever. My staff was notified of the intent to house sex offenders on January 16, 2024, through a general police department email address obtained from our City website. The State's intent to house sex offenders at this location is well documented. This is unacceptable. The State should be required to notify the local government to include myself, the City Manager and the Chief of Police.

On Friday, March 30, the State shared an FAQ document with Channel 7 News responding to program questions in writing for the first time. This document indicates that the State will, in fact, house sex offenders even though their statement to CBS4 News on March 26 indicated that there are "no current plans" to house sex offenders at the facility.

Senator Winter
Senator Smallwood
Representative Amabile
April 1, 2024
Page 2

Our reading of the State's FAQ below is that there could be 4 sex offenders housed at the facility in Northglenn. Given the number of beds, 32, at this location, Northglenn is disproportionately impacted compared to other locations.

Do you have a limit on how many registered sex offenders you allow?

Yes, we only allow up to two registered sex offenders in a home at once. In smaller homes with 11 people or fewer, there would be only one registered sex offender. However, the number of referrals we get for registered sex offenders is very low, less than 2% of all referrals. So it's likely that there won't be any registered sex offenders living in a home most of the time.

The State's response to our concerns with the argument that sex offenders already live in the area is irresponsible and dismissive. We know that there are registered sex offenders living in our community. However, a state-run facility with multiple sex offenders moving into a former senior living facility should require public notification and local collaboration. The change of use to this facility is significant. This has been minimized by the state with the belief that this is an "innovative new program." Again, program implementation has lacked transparency with no consideration of impact to the local community.

Northglenn is a working-class community with 6.5 square miles, 39,000 residents and 13 schools. We are not the right community for this type of facility. The State's plan to house multiple sex offenders at this location will create a public safety risk to our community.

The City is hosting a community meeting on April 3 at 6:30 p.m. at the Northglenn Recreation Center. I encourage you to consider attending this meeting so that you can hear first-hand the concerns of our community.

Again, our request is that you request late bill status for a piece of legislation that will clarify and correct the significant public safety concerns with House Bill (HB) 22-1303 [Increase Residential Behavioral Health Beds](#), a bi-partisan effort. State officials need to be transparent and there needs to be accountability.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I can be reached by phone at 303.918.1568 or by email at mleighty@northglenn.org.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Respectfully,



Meredith Leighty
Mayor
Enclosure

From: Lucas - CDHS, Lindsay lindsay.lucas@state.co.us

Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 12:03 PM

To: Police police@northglenn.org

Subject: Inquiry

You don't often get email from lindsay.lucas@state.co.us. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello:

My name is Lindsay Lucas and I am on the admissions and coordination team for the Mental Health Transitional Living Homes; this is a new level of care within the Colorado Department of Human Services. We have two homes opening in Northglenn in the near future and I wanted to introduce myself and hopefully connect with someone at the police department. We will be housing registered sex offenders and I wanted to gather some information on who the best contact person is at the PD for these inquiries in addition to creating a partnership with the PD in regards to these homes. Please let me know who I can reach out to.

Thank you,

Lindsay

--

Lindsay Lucas
Mental Health Transitional Living Homes
Admissions & Coordination
Office of Civil and Forensic Mental Health



C 720-520-9068

Lindsay.Lucas@state.co.us | cdhs.colorado.gov

Thank you.

Madeline

From: Jim May <jmay@northglenn.org>

Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 10:33 AM

To: Madeline Norconk <mnorconk@northglenn.org>

Subject: Re: Houses

What state office is she a part of

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

| 1 | Date Received | What type of late bill are you requesting? | Your name | Short Title | LLS Number or Bill Number | FOR CO-PRIME REQUESTS: which Senator are you requesting to add as your co-prime sponsor? Or, If you are requesting to be added as a co-prime sponsor to a Senate bill, please provide the name of the current Senate prime | FOR INTRODUCTION DELAYS, please share the current deadline, your preferred new date of introduction, and an explanation of why an introduction delay is needed | If this is a committee delay request, please share the committee of reference, your preferred committee deadline, and an explanation of why a committee delay is needed | Any additional comments? | | |
|---|-------------------|--|--------------|---|---------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| 2 | 4/4/2024 13:04:08 | Introduction Delay | Faith Winter | Rules Regarding Sex Offenders in Mental Health Facilities | xxxxx | | | | After last night I need to apologize to Northglenn and this would mean the world to them and repair the damage I did last night - please, | | |



6/12/2024

Faith K Winter
4300 Red Deer Trl
Broomfield CO 80020

To Whom It May Concern:

Please be advised that Ms. Faith K. Winter is currently receiving substance use treatment through the Department of Chemical Dependency at Kaiser Permanente in an effort to treat her Alcohol Use Disorder. Ms. Winter is currently on Naltrexone, a medication intended to curb cravings and had demonstrated a strong commitment towards achieving her treatment goal.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Yolanda Flores-Cueva, MD
Chemical Dependency Treatment Services

Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Colorado - Colorado Permanente Medical Group, P.C.

This letter was originally viewed by Faith K Winter on 6/12/2024 1:54 PM.

Julie L Mayer, LCSW

To: Faith K Winter (Viewed)

Jun 11, 2024 at 02:02:00 PM

Message body:

To Whom It May Concern:

Faith Winter is receiving bi-weekly support for her Mental Health and Alcohol use Disorder from provider Julie Mayer MSW, LCSW, APHSW-C here at Kaiser Permanente Rock Creek.

Julie Mayer MSW, LCSW, APHSW-C

Supportive Care Specialist

Main Clinic phone: 720-536-6404

Voicemail: 720-536-6432

M, T, and TH 8:00-4:30pm

5/1/2024

Mayor Leighty and City Council Members;

I am sorry for the discomfort I caused at the Northglenn community meeting. I value my relationship with the City of Northglenn, and have always prioritized meeting with city leaders to understand policy positions and how to best serve the interests of our shared constituency. My commitment to this community has not wavered for the last 17 years I have served in elected office.

I know the way I showed up at the community meeting was inappropriate and hard for those in attendance. That night led me to seek treatment for substance abuse disorder, which was difficult, especially with the eyes of the world watching, but I'm glad I did.

While serving in the legislature I have worked hard to reduce the stigma of substance abuse disorder, allocate funding to get more people treatment and increase access for all Coloradans to take care of their mental health. Along the way of passing policies to support people facing mental health illness, I heard numerous stories of pain and healing. As I heard these courageous people come forward and tell their story in committee, I would tell them I know it is really scary to be vulnerable and your vulnerability is showing up as strength.

Coming forward so publicly to admit I had a substance abuse disorder has been incredibly scary and hard. And I recognize how meaningful leading policy from lived experience. I have had numerous constituents and colleagues reach out to me to share their stories of themselves or their loved ones. They shared that I have opened the door for them and their loved ones to see safety in seeking treatment and reducing stigma. If my pain and the stigma I faced publicly even helped one person seek treatment and find peace, then I can find peace myself. I am asking today for empathy from the Northglenn City Council.

I, like you, have taken an oath to represent the citizens of Northglenn. I, like you, know that the way to uphold that oath is to lift up those in our community who are going through hard times, not tear them down. Now it is time for my actions to show my dedication to the people I serve. I will continue to work hard to represent the city of Northglenn and our shared constituency with mutual respect.

Sincerely,

Senator Faith Winter

June 13, 2024

Dear Members of the Ethics Committee;

I am writing this letter in support of my friend and colleague, Faith Winter. It has been difficult to watch her battle with alcohol addiction. I am, however, incredibly encouraged by the progress she has made over the past few months. I talk to her frequently, and treatment is going well. Faith seems healthy and focused, and I fully believe that she is committed to recovering and repairing any damage that might have been done to community and her relationships.

I know Faith to be a dedicated, passionate and effective public servant. She has continued to be an effective chair of the Transportation and Energy committee, always demonstrating deep understanding of the issues and conducting our meetings professionally. Despite the personal and health challenges issues she had dealt with in her own life, she has shown up and delivered results for her constituents. I don't believe that Faith has never acted against the best interest of her community. In fact, because of her dedication to fulfilling her commitment to community, I believe she has often acted against her own best interests and put her responsibilities above self-care.

As you well know, being a committed and caring public official is often a difficult path. I know many colleagues who have faced depression and other mental and behavioral health issues. It's unfortunate that Faith's struggles have been more public and therefore disruptive, but she is committed to doing the work to get better, and I hope you do not punish her for the very real health issue we know alcohol abuse to be.

Best regards,

Lisa Cutter
State Senator, District 20

Hazel Gibson

3447 St Paul St.
Denver, CO 80205
(713)502-9446
hazelcgibson@icloud.com

June 11, 2024

Dear Members of the Senate Ethics Committee,

My name is Hazel Gibson and I was Senator Faith Winter's Senior Aide from 2021 to 2023. I was her campaign manager during her 2022 re-election campaign. I also worked closely with her during the 2024 legislative session.

During my time as her Senior Aide, Senator Faith Winter passed approximately 81 bills. She has protected our environment, expanded healthcare, helped students, protected workers, expanded public transportation, made our state safer and our economy stronger.

I can attest to how responsive Senator Winter has been to her community, her constituents, and local governments in her district. The amount of stakeholding meetings she organizes for every single one of her bills required her to work long hours. She always took them incredibly seriously and amended her bills to serve her constituents best interests.

She personally taught me how to build a diverse coalition. She taught me how to take a loss and keep fighting (that one is a hard one for me). She taught me how to support a team. How to show up authentically. How to handle political minefields. How to multitask like a machine. How to work an 18 hour day and still show up with a smile. How to write legislation. How to pass legislation in a building that puts every obstacle in your way.

Since the April 3rd meeting occurred, Senator Winter has made her recovery her main focus and has continuously worked to repair her relationships professionally and personally. I have spent time with her and I have seen this first hand.

Outside of my relationship as Senator Winter's employee, I would also like to speak to her character. Senator Winter is a selfless dedicated public servant. She lifts up those in need. She has spent her lifetime fighting for the voiceless. She has shown me that you can be an elected official that is compassionate and kind. She mentored me. She taught me. She pushed me. She also called me out when necessary. She had an office that was welcoming and safe in a building that can be stressful and toxic. In my 8 years working in politics, she has taught me more about being collaborative, responsive, and accountable than any other elected official. It was an honor and a privilege to work with her.

It would be a complete disservice to the state of Colorado to allow the vendetta of some to overshadow the tremendous work she has done and will continue to do for the rest of her term.

Thank you for your time.

Kind regards,

Hazel Gibson

Dear Members of the Senate Ethics Committee,

I am writing to extend my wholehearted support for Senator Faith Winter during this pivotal moment. As both a Broomfield County Commissioner and Councilmember, and as Chair of the Metro Area County Commissioners, I've had the honor of collaborating closely with Senator Winter on a multitude of endeavors that have greatly enriched our region and state.

During my time on the Broomfield city council, Faith consistently demonstrated responsiveness and proactivity in addressing a range of projects and concerns. Her dedication to our city's welfare shone through in her tireless endeavors to secure resources and champion legislation that benefitted our residents. She has consistently proven to be an invaluable collaborator in our shared mission to enhance the quality of life for our constituents.

As you navigate the recent incident at the Northglenn community center, I wanted to weigh in with an equity and trauma informed lens. I've had a candid conversation with Faith about her path to recovery. She's taken ownership of her mistakes and is actively pursuing treatment to grow personally and prevent future occurrences. Substance use disorder is a recognized illness, and as leaders, it's imperative we acknowledge this reality. Our response should prioritize compassion and support for individuals facing such challenges, rather than solely relying on punitive measures which only retraumatizes the person. I think it behooves us to also take into account this situation and the context of the situations at the Capitol. The prevailing culture at the Capitol, where alcohol consumption is normalized, underscores the need for a more extensive dialogue and a holistic strategy to tackle the root causes. It's crucial that we cultivate an atmosphere where the welfare of our legislators takes precedence, and robust support mechanisms are established to tackle substance use and mental health issues head-on. We often talk about the carrot versus the stick, and the stick in this case has already been administered by the public eye and further adds to the traumatization of a female leader whose health has been constantly under attack as it is. Additionally, and I think it goes without saying, we could bring many others under "ethics violations" under the conditions in which you are all convening. Equity is lost if we tackle the person and not the problem.

Given these factors, I implore the Senate Ethics Committee to consider the wider context of the Capitol's culture, Faith's proactive measures towards recovery, the equity required, the potential re-traumatization of a fellow human, and her significant contributions to our community. My earnest hope is that we can collaborate to address these matters thoughtfully, offering support to our colleagues as they navigate personal challenges while remaining dedicated to effectively serving our constituents.

Sincerely,

Heidi Henkel

Heidi Henkel

Bromfield City Councilmember

Dear Members of the Senate Ethics Committee,

I am writing to express my support for Senator Faith Winter during this challenging time. As the State Representative for HD 31 and a former member of the Thornton City Council, I have had the privilege of working closely with Senator Winter on numerous initiatives benefiting our city and my district.

Throughout my tenure on the Thornton City Council, Faith was always responsive and proactive in assisting with various projects and concerns. Her commitment to our city's well-being was evident in her efforts to secure resources and advocate for legislation supporting our residents. She has been a valuable partner in our work to improve the quality of life for our constituents.

The recent incident involving Senator Winter at the community meeting in Northglenn is undeniably concerning. However, it is important to recognize that alcohol use and related issues are not isolated to a single legislator. The culture at the Capitol, where drinking is normalized, calls for a broader discussion and a comprehensive approach to address the underlying issues. It is imperative that we foster an environment where the well-being of our legislators is prioritized, and support systems are in place to address substance use and mental health challenges.

I have spoken with Faith regarding her journey towards recovery. She has acknowledged her mistakes and is actively seeking treatment to better herself and ensure that such incidents do not occur in the future. Substance use is an illness, and as leaders, we must be cognizant of this reality. It is crucial that we offer compassion and support to those who are battling such challenges, rather than solely focusing on punitive measures.

Senator Winter's swift apology, decision to begin a treatment program, and decision to step down from her role as chair of the Transportation and Energy committee, demonstrates her commitment to taking responsibility for her actions and prioritizing her recovery. I believe that with the appropriate support and treatment, she can continue to be an effective and dedicated public servant.

In light of these considerations, I urge the Senate Ethics Committee to take into account the broader context of the culture at the Capitol, the steps Faith is taking towards recovery, and the valuable contributions she has made to our community. It is my hope that we can work together to address these issues constructively and support our colleagues in overcoming their personal challenges while continuing to serve our constituents effectively.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julia Marvin".

Julia Marvin
State Representative, HD 31

June 12th, 2024

Senate Ethics Committee
200 E Colfax Ave,
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Senators Gonzales, Lundeen, Roberts, Coleman, and Gardner,

I am writing to urge you to dismiss the ethics complaint filed against Senator Winter by the Northglenn City Council in regards to the Senator's actions at an April public meeting. Given my intimate knowledge of how the Colorado General Assembly operates, and proximity to Senator Winter over the past several months, including the time frame of the complaint and subsequent treatment, I believe this complaint to be made in excess and is serving to drag an accomplished Stateswoman's medical and personal history through the media and to tarnish the name of an otherwise competent, ethical, and effective legislator to her community.

The complaint stated that the Northglenn City Council believes that Senator Winter had failed to uphold the integrity of her office and to her constituents by appearing intoxicated at a public hearing with many constituents and elected officials in attendance. I disagree wholeheartedly with this assertion because of her prompt and humble apologies and actions taken to mitigate any future impropriety; in the days and weeks following the event she issued apologies, took steps to address her consumption of alcohol including entering substance abuse treatment, voluntarily stepped down from the Transportation Committee chairmanship and has shown remorse and regret for her actions both publicly and in private.

Given the context of this complaint I would further like to address the culture of consuming alcohol at the State Legislature which has been extensively reported on including as recently as the [May 3rd CPR article by Bente Birkeland](#) discussing this exact complaint: "Culture of Social drinking runs deep in the traditions of the state Capitol." As a former employee of the General Assembly I can also attest to and have experienced the widespread culture of drinking of which Senator Winter is not to blame. This committee must weigh the culture of consumption and the implications of this kind of selective enforcement among your elected peers when evaluating the worthiness of this complaint.

Senator Winter is someone I admire and am proud to call my friend - flaws and all. I believe that the foundation of good leadership is the ability to recognize our faults with grace, understand how they impact others, and take steps to improve. Despite the perception of some, I see a Stateswoman who has taken clear and public accountability for her actions, has issued considerate apologies and taken actionable steps to address this issue promptly and in the face of tremendous personal stressors.

I ask the committee - what more is there to expect of any one individual when the culture of substance use in the building is prolific, yet ignored? I must insist that this ethics complaint be

dismissed and no recourse be taken against the Senator as she has already been an active participant in the healing and accountability process necessitated by her actions and any further admonishment would serve no one, least of all the people of Colorado and Senate District 25.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my letter in support of Senator Faith Winter as she navigates this unwarranted ethics complaint.

Respectfully,

Kira Mazzola
Former House Majority Caucus Staff
Constituent of Senator Faith Winter
Broomfield, CO 80020

June 12, 2024

Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Ethics:

In my decade-plus lobbying at the Colorado State Capitol, I've often had the privilege of working with my good friend, Sen. Faith Winter. We've collaborated on legislation to advance the rights of workers, improve environmental protections, and address Colorado's affordable housing crisis, among others. In my experience, Faith keeps her constituents front and center, and eagerly seeks opportunities to have them engage in the process. She is grounded in her community and is as responsive to her constituents' concerns as any legislator I know. Faith sincerely cares for the people of SD25 and is grateful for the trust they place in her.

I worked closely with Faith on a couple of bills during the 2024 legislative session and was worried for her when I learned of her struggle with alcohol. I have immediate family and other close friends who've struggled similarly, and that concerned feeling is familiar. However, I've rarely seen someone take accountability and commit to recovery as urgently as Faith did. Once she began treatment in early April, I noticed a remarkable improvement in her condition. She was characteristically sharp and strategic, while also being protective of the progress she was making in her treatment. I was so happy to see it. I am very proud of my friend, Faith, and look forward to our continued collaboration in the coming years.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration.

Sincerely,



Danny McCarthy

June 13th, 2024

Dear Senators Gonzales, Coleman, Lundeen, Gardner, and Roberts,

My name is Emma Menchaca-Chavez and I've served as Senator Winter's Senior Legislative Aide since July of 2023. I was born and raised in Colorado and like all of you care about our great state and its residents. I write you not only as Senator Winter's aide but as someone who has lost two Uncles to what is now known as Substance Use Disorder. The harms of substance use is something I am all too familiar with. Due to my personal experience, I am well aware that the ethics complaint being put forth is not an issue of ethics or integrity, rather it's that of someone who had to deal with a very personal matter in the public eye.

Senator Winter is a dedicated public servant who has a deep care for the policy making process and, most importantly, the people she represents. In my time working for Senator Winter I was never once concerned about her care for her work and constituents. I could, however, tell that the responsibilities and stress were taking a toll on her. We all saw the culmination of the stress in the behavior exhibited during the Northglenn community meeting on April 3rd. Since this meeting, Senator Winter has taken full accountability for her actions and harm caused not only to her constituents, but to me as her staff and as someone who has formed a close relationship with her. The unfortunate incident on April 3rd was a major turning point for Senator Winter. I can confidently say Senator Winter is taking her treatment seriously and she is the best I have ever seen her. It takes true integrity to admit you have a problem and the harm that you have caused others. Senator Winter, and anyone who has dealt with substance abuse, should be extended the grace of moving forward from this. Since returning from her treatment, Senator Winter passed some of the most important legislation of the 2024 session such as: [HB24-1107](#), [HB24-1311](#), [HB24-1313](#), and [SB24-229](#) to name a few. This is the best I have seen

her since I started working with her one year ago. The future is bright for Senator Winter and I look forward to what she can accomplish with the robust treatment she is receiving.

Thank you for your consideration,

Emma Menchaca-Chavez, Senior Legislative Aide to Faith Winter