

FLORIDA
COMMISSION ON ETHICS

JAN 28 2022

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THE LAW OFFICES OF
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ARTHUR I. JACOBS

January 28, 2022

STATE OF FLORIDA
COMMISSION ON ETHICS
ATTN: MILLIE W. FULFORD
P.O. DRAWER 15709
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32317-5709

RE: Response to Report of Investigation
Complaint No. 21-113, In re DENNIS WARD

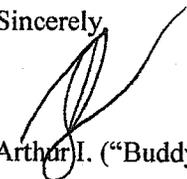
Dear Ms. Fulford:

As you are aware, this law firm represents the interests of Mr. Dennis Ward, the State Attorney of Florida's Sixteenth Judicial Circuit, regarding the above-referenced matter. We are in receipt of your correspondence, as well as the accompanying Report of Investigation, and we thank you for extending Mr. Ward's response deadline until January 31, 2022. Accordingly, please accept the following as Mr. Ward's response to the Report of Investigation.

Mr. Ward does not dispute the findings of the Commission on Ethics (Commission) as set forth in the Report of Investigation. Despite Mr. Ward's acknowledgement of the Commission's findings, it is significant that all the adverse findings of the Commission relate to the accidental non-disclosure of family related matters and real property of which Mr. Ward received no benefit, financially or otherwise. Thus, while Mr. Ward's omissions may qualify as a violation of Article II, Section 8, Florida Constitution, and Section 112.3144, Florida Statutes (Full and Public Disclosure of Financial Interests) there was no intention on the part of Mr. Ward to hide any assets requiring disclosure and there was no negative effect to the public interest at large as no impropriety has taken place with the financial interests at issue other than their improper disclosure. Moreover, prior to the filing of the complaint in this matter Mr. Ward quitclaimed his interest in his family home to his younger brother and upon knowledge of his omission Mr. Ward amended and corrected this and the other financial disclosures at issue.

Mr. Ward is remorseful and apologetic that the assets at issue in this investigation were improperly disclosed, yet based on the foregoing and Mr. Ward's explanation to the Commission it is clear that his omission qualifies as an excusable mistake that does not rise to a level warranting severe sanctions. Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,


Arthur I. ("Buddy") Jacobs, Esq.