



Judicial Discipline & Disability Commission

JUDGE LEON N. JAMISON
CHAIRMAN

323 Center Street • Suite 1060
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 682-1050 • Fax: (501) 682-1049
E-Mail: jddc@arkansas.gov

DAVID A. STEWART
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PRESS RELEASE

POINT OF CONTACT: DAVID STEWART

PHONE: 501-682-1050

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 16, 2009

The Arkansas Judicial Discipline and Disability Commission today announced that an agreed Letter of Reprimand has been issued to Arkansas Supreme Court Justice Jim Gunter.

A copy of the formal reprimand against Justice Gunter and a press release from Justice Gunter is attached. Inquiries may be directed to Justice Gunter's attorney, Nicholas H. Patton (903) 792-7080.



Judicial Discipline & Disability Commission

JUDGE LEON N. JAMISON
CHAIRMAN

323 Center Street • Suite 1060
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 682-1050 • Fax: (501) 682-1049
E-Mail: jddc@arkansas.gov

DAVID A. STEWART
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

January 16, 2009

Honorable Justice Jim Gunter
Arkansas Supreme Court
Justice Building
625 Marshall
Little Rock, AR

Re: Letter of Reprimand, Case #07-347

Dear Justice Gunter:

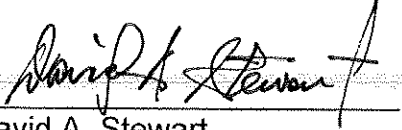
The Judicial Discipline & Disability Commission has considered the allegations and the results of the preliminary investigation in case #07-347. Your apology and statements of regret have been considered in determining the outcome of this case. The Commission made the following findings and disposition which you do not dispute.

While serving as an elected Justice on the Arkansas Supreme Court you were involved in an altercation with your sister, Janet Gibson. On September 2, 2007 an extra-judicial incident occurred in the home of J.H. Gunter in Hope, Arkansas. During the encounter your sister sustained bruises to her upper lip and lower back. This incident became a matter of public record due to a police report and the appointment of a Special Prosecutor. Although no criminal charges were filed, your conduct during the altercation gave rise to a complaint with the Judicial Discipline & Disability Commission. The Canons of Judicial Conduct apply to extra-judicial conduct such as described in this paragraph and your conduct in the described incident is a violation of Canon 1 and Canon 2A. The Commission notes that you have stated that you regret your actions on the day in question, have pledged not to engage in such conduct in the future and accept the finding that your actions fall under prohibited behavior in Canon 1 and 2A.

Canon 1 states that a judge shall uphold the integrity of the Judiciary. Specifically "[a] judge should participate in establishing, maintaining and enforcing high standards of conduct, and shall personally observe those standards so that the integrity and independence of the judiciary will be preserved." Canon 2A states that a judge shall avoid the appearance of impropriety in all of the judge's activities. In furthering that end "[a] judge shall ... act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary."

For your conduct in violating this provision of the Code of Judicial Conduct, it is the decision of the Commission that you be reprimanded. This public reprimand constitutes adequate discipline and no further action is warranted. Further discipline may occur if the Judicial Discipline & Disability Commission finds similar violations in the future. This Commission action is public information.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMISSION:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David A. Stewart", written over a horizontal line.

David A. Stewart
Executive Director

PRESS RELEASE

Justice Jim Gunter, of the Arkansas Supreme Court, today announced receiving a letter of reprimand from the Arkansas Judicial Discipline and Disability Committee.

Judge Gunter acknowledges that his conduct at his dad's house several months ago was inappropriate and has apologized to his family, and now apologizes to the public, with the assurances that such conduct will never occur again.



Judicial Discipline & Disability Commission

JUDGE LEON N. JAMISON
CHAIRMAN

323 Center Street • Suite 1060
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 682-1050 • Fax: (501) 682-1049
E-Mail: jddc@arkansas.gov

DAVID A. STEWART
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PRESS RELEASE

POINT OF CONTACT: DAVID STEWART

PHONE: 501-682-1050

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 16, 2009

The Arkansas Judicial Discipline and Disability Commission today announced that an agreed Letter of Reprimand has been issued to Judge Edwin Keaton of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Court.

A copy of the formal reprimand against Judge Keaton follows.



Judicial Discipline & Disability Commission

JUDGE LEON N. JAMISON
CHAIRMAN

323 Center Street • Suite 1060
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 682-1050 • Fax: (501) 682-1049
E-Mail: jddc@arkansas.gov

DAVID A. STEWART
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

January 16, 2009

Honorable Edwin Keaton
3rd Division Circuit Court
145 Jefferson St SW
Camden, AR 71701

LETTER OF REPRIMAND

RE: Cases 08124, 08154, 08155, 08263, 08268

Dear Judge Keaton:

During its January 16, 2009 meeting, the Judicial Discipline & Disability Commission decided to issue a Letter of Reprimand to you in complaint(s) #08124, 08154, 08155, 08263, 08268. At a Probable Cause Determination the Commission considered the findings of the investigation, your admissions and apology. The Commission found probable cause that you violated the Arkansas Code of Judicial Conduct.

The Commission found that you were an elected circuit court judge at all times relevant to the matter under consideration. The Commission also found that in several cases you have failed to decide matters before you in a prompt and expedient manner and failed to report those delays under Administrative Order #3.

You have admitted that you violated the Code of Judicial Conduct and apologized to the Commission. The Commission considered your agreement to hereafter report cases under advisement for more than 90 days to the proper authorities, clear the backlog of long-pending cases in your court within 20 days and waive your right to a Formal Disciplinary Hearing.

For your conduct in violating this provision of the Code of Judicial Conduct, it is the decision of the Commission that you be reprimanded. This public reprimand constitutes adequate discipline and no further action is warranted. Further discipline may occur if the Judicial Discipline & Disability Commission finds similar violations in the future. This Commission action is public information.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMISSION.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David A. Stewart", with a stylized flourish at the end.

David A. Stewart
Executive Director