

Lawyers ask judge to dismiss Rep. Grossberg’s lawsuit

BY ALEX ACQUISTO
LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER
(TNS)

The Kentucky Legislative Ethics Commission has asked a judge to dismiss a lawsuit against it that was filed last month by state Rep. Daniel Grossberg, who is being investigated by the commission for alleged misconduct.

The commission is following its statutory obligation to investigate the complaints filed last year against the Louisville Democrat, and as an elected representative, he does not have immunity from the outcome of that investigation, lawyers for the commission argued in their July 18 request for dismissal.

“By asserting legislative immunity and asking this court to enjoin KLEC from investigating the complaints, (Grossberg) is asking this court to stymie the legislative branch’s efforts to determine whether disciplinary action . . . is appropriate,” Lindsey Keiser and Aaron Silletto, attorneys with Attorney General Russell Coleman’s office, wrote.

“Legislative immunity is not so broad as to prevent the legislative branch from exercising its proper and constitutional function of policing the conduct of its own members, and this court has no ability to prevent or interfere with (Grossberg’s) preliminary hearing before KLEC, which is a legislative proceeding,” they added.

Because the ethics commission has a “duty to determine whether (Grossberg) violated the Kentucky Code of Legislative Ethics . . . this action should be dismissed,” lawyers wrote.

A hearing in the petition for dismissal is scheduled for Wednesday, July 30 before Franklin Circuit Judge Phillip Shepherd.

Thomas Clay, Grossberg’s attorney, did not immediately respond to a Herald-Leader request for comment Wednesday morning.

‘BALD AND CONCLUSORY’ CLAIMS

Earlier in July, the nine-member ethics commission found probable cause that Grossberg violated the state ethics code



Photo by Tasha Poullard

Rep. Daniel Grossberg, D- Louisville, shown with legal counsel entering a closed session of the Legislative Ethics Commission, with testimony from complainants of his alleged misconduct at the Kentucky Capitol annex in Frankfort on June 17.

on three different counts, including when he threatened the manager of a Louisville strip club after being thrown out and banned for life for attempting to touch a dancer, and when he invited a young woman to his legislative office in 2023, asked her sexually probing questions and offered her alcohol.

Nowhere in the Kentucky Code of Legislative Ethics is it considered ethical misconduct to perpetrate sexual harassment — a reality the commission has formally asked the General Assembly to change in its 2026 regular session.

That July 8 decision from the commission came after hours of testimony from complainants and Grossberg that began at a June 17 preliminary inquiry hearing.

Grossberg has been the subject of public scrutiny for a year, after the Herald-Leader first reported the state Legislative Research Commission was investigating his conduct. Multiple reports have detailed inappropriate and

harassing behavior from Grossberg toward women that date back to his time in college.

Grossberg has long maintained his innocence. The next step in the process is a public adjudicatory hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

Prior to the June 17 preliminary inquiry hearing, the two-term lawmaker attempted to block the ethics commission from moving forward with its investigation by filing a lawsuit against its members in Franklin Circuit Court.

The 23-page complaint asked for immediate relief for Grossberg, who claims his constitutional rights are being infringed upon, and that he’s the target of harassment and discrimination by fellow Democrats and members of the commission because of his Jewish faith and “for the fact that he is neurodiverse,” according to the complaint.

Clay asserted that his client was “targeted for his faith as soon as he was elected to the legislature . . . this faith-based dis-

crimination culminated in attacks on him because of his defense of Israel as hostility between Israel and Palestine escalated.”

A judge quickly denied that request.

Though Grossberg has not appealed, the commission’s lawyers are asking for it to be dismissed outright.

Keiser and Silletto argue that though Grossberg’s lawsuit is against members of the commission, the case he tries to build to show he has been denied certain rights cites examples of behavior from former lawmakers, not commission members.

“To meet the minimum pleading standard, the Plaintiff must identify the claims he is making and plead facts to support those claims,” Keiser and Silletto wrote.

Instead, the “bald, conclusory” claims he makes are against fellow lawmakers and their alleged coordinated cabal to silence him.

What’s more, they argue, Grossberg inaccurately cites and conflates

what rights he’s afforded under state statute as an elected official.

For instance, Grossberg claims the ethics commission’s actions are “retaliatory and discriminatory,” but the section of statute and the Kentucky Constitution he cites to buttress that claim actually prohibits “discrimination in employment and public accommodations. But none of the defendants is (Grossberg’s) employer, (and) holding elective office as a state representative is not a public accommodation,” Keiser and Silletto explain.

On Grossberg’s claim that the commission and former lawmakers are penalizing him via the misconduct investigation for a speech he gave on the House floor when introducing a resolution condemning Hamas’ attack on Israel in 2023, they wrote, “even assuming (the complainants) had a discriminatory animus against (Grossberg), that has nothing to do with KLEC’s authority.”

The actual complaints

filed to the commission about Grossberg “are not related to (his) floor speech,” they said, adding, “the bald and conclusory claim that the KLEC investigation and hearing process is a cover-up for discrimination is not sufficient.”

LEGAL NOTICE

Public Notice

Notice is hereby given that City of Owensboro, Engineering Department, P.O. 10003 Owensboro, KY 42302, has filed an application with the Energy and Environment Cabinet to replace (1) 42-inch corrugated metal pipe with new 42-inch corrugated metal pipe in Cowhide Slough Stream at Ben Hawes Municipal Golf Course. The site is located approximately 5.0 miles northwest of Owensboro. Any comments or objections can be submitted via email to: DOW-Floodplain@ky.gov Kentucky Division of Water, Floodplain Management Section, 300 Sower Blvd. Frankfort, KY 40601. Call 502-564-3410 with questions.

Estate Sale
Thoroughbred Crossings

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Owensboro, KY 42301

Thursday, July 24, 9am - 4pm
Friday, July 25, 9am - 4pm
Saturday, July 26, 9am - 3pm

This beautifully decorated home is full of traditional furniture in current styles. Items include Maytag washer & dryer set (2019), iron dinette set, occasional chairs, black reeded leg console, iron and wooden end tables, glass top coffee table, area rugs, framed art, mirrors, hanging tapestry, iron queen size bed, rattan tables, maple dresser, decorative lamps, dark pine queen bedroom suite, linen cabinet, mahogany tea cart, painted trunk, patio table and chairs, outdoor tea cart, tool chest, hand tools, Rubbermaid storage cabinets, antique kitchen clock, costume, sterling, and gold jewelry, Bose radio, Hallmark ornaments and holiday decor, sewing machine and supplies, kitchenware, cds and dvds, reproduction pie safe, 2013 Toyota Prius w/36,724 miles (4-door), vintage Boy Scout manuals, vintage local phone books, local advertising calendars, fans, Gabe’s Restaurant menu (signed by Gabe) and so much more. Check out Estatesales.org to view photos of many of the items that will be in this sale.

Cash or check with proper ID, 3% fee will be added to credit/debit card purchases. We also accept Venmo. All sales are final. No returns or refunds. KY sales tax of 6% will be added unless buyer presents a resale exemption certificate. All items purchased are as-is. We are not responsible for accidents.

YOU MUST bring help to move large items as we DO NOT have staff to assist. All items must be removed on Saturday by 3pm. Please bring boxes and paper to pack your items. Call Donna at 270-903-7859 with questions.

Trump approves assists for areas affected by weather

BY CHRISTOPHER LEACH
LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER
(TNS)

President Donald Trump has approved public assistance for areas of Kentucky affected by this year’s flooding and severe tornadoes, Gov. Andy Beshear said Tuesday.

The money comes from the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Public Assistance Program, which provides grants to governments for recovery efforts from major disasters or emergencies. Certain types of private nonprofit organizations are also eligible for public assistance.

Affected areas were previously approved for individual assistance, which provides financial help and services for eligible individuals and households affected by a disaster. Beshear’s announcement marks the first round of FEMA financial aid for governments and private nonprofit organizations.

Public assistance was approved for victims of April’s major flooding and May’s severe torna-

do outbreak. Beshear said the help is essential for rebuilding communities and thanked Trump and Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem for the approval.

On Truth Social, Trump said the approval will give \$56 million to Kentucky. U.S. Rep. Andy Barr, a Republican from Kentucky, said the approval is great news for Kentucky.

“I worked with the Kentucky delegation to support disaster requests from the spring, and greatly appreciate the president’s leadership,” Barr said in a post on X.

In April, as much as 15 inches of rain fell on some parts of Kentucky, killing seven people, damaging homes and businesses, closing hundreds of roads, forcing evacuations and leading communities to conserve water.

An approved major disaster declaration gave 37 counties in Kentucky access to individual assistance. As of July 14, FEMA had approved more than \$26.4 million for more than 3,467 Ken-

tucky households affected by the storm, according to FEMA.

The deadline for April flood victims to apply for individual assistance is July 25, after it was extended by one month.

May’s severe tornado outbreak produced multiple tornadoes throughout the region, including a violent, EF-4 tornado that reached 170 mph wind speeds. The tornado traveled more than 55 miles across Pulaski and Laurel counties and destroyed or heavily damaged at least 1,500 homes.

In all, 20 people died in the storms, including 17 in Laurel County, where nine people died in one devastated subdivision. There was one victim each from McCracken, Russell and Pulaski counties.

Caldwell, Laurel, Pulaski, Russell, Trigg and Union counties were approved for individual assistance shortly after the storm. As of July 14, FEMA had approved more than \$2.4 million for 443 Kentucky households, according to FEMA.

The deadline for May

tornado victims to apply for individual assistance is Aug. 22, after it was extended by one month.

Beshear said more details about public assistance will be released soon.

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