

**BEFORE THE FLORIDA  
JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS COMMISSION**

INQUIRY CONCERNING A JUDGE,

SC25-\_\_\_\_\_

THE HONORABLE LAUREN PEFFER  
\_\_\_\_\_ /

**NOTICE OF FORMAL CHARGES**

TO: Hon. Lauren Peffer  
West Regional Courthouse  
100 North Pine Island Road, Chambers 270  
Plantation, Florida 33324

The Investigative Panel of the Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission, at its meeting on March 28, 2025, by a vote of the majority of its members, pursuant to Rule 6(f) of the Rules of the Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission and Article V, Section 12 (b) of the Constitution of the State of Florida, found that probable cause exists for formal proceedings to be instituted against you.

During your 2024 campaign for election to the Broward County Court in the Seventeenth Circuit, you became aware of a former technology officer in the office of the Court Administrator for the Ninth Judicial Circuit. The employee, who was terminated from his employment, self-published an e-book called *The Ninth Circus Court of Florida, My 30-Year Job from Hell!* The e-book, which is full of gratuitous profanity, begins with a disclaimer and a list of over 1,300 synonyms for the word “sex.” The e-book portrays the judiciary in the Ninth Judicial Circuit as corrupt and

incompetent and attacks the character of former Chief Judges of the Ninth Circuit, Belvin Perry and Donald Myers, the current Chief Judge, Lisa Munyon, and others.

There was a website related to the former Ninth Judicial Circuit employee which contained links to recordings of purported phone calls between government officials. One of the recordings claimed to be an 18-minute call between Chief Judge Munyon and Florida Supreme Court Chief Justice Carlos Muniz, who are joined on the call by Florida Supreme Court Justice Renatha Francis. On the recording, the voices are purported to be Chief Justice Muniz and Justice Francis criticizing Judge Munyon and others for bringing disgrace to the judiciary and putting the State of Florida at risk of losing millions of dollars because of the former Ninth Judicial Circuit employee's termination. The recording is fabricated, likely using computer manipulation or generative-AI. While the voices resemble those of the purported participants, the manner of speech, tone, and much of the content are objectively unrealistic. For example, the recording includes Chief Judge Munyon purportedly saying the following to the two Justices about former Chief Judge Perry:

*If I can speak frankly, I sincerely believe that Belvin's first love is power, then money, then white women. I'm not trying to be glib, but my guess is if Belvin could have a perfect death he would be buried under the Lincoln Memorial next to Clarence Thomas in a solid gold coffin and have a live white hooker buried with him as a sacrifice.*

Probable cause exists as to the following charges:

1. During your 2024 campaign, while seeking a valuable endorsement by the editorial board of the South Florida Sun Sentinel, you stated “recent revelations from the Ninth Circuit have highlighted an image crisis within Florida’s judiciary.”
  - a. You did not exercise due diligence to determine the reasonableness of the former Ninth Judicial Circuit employee’s claims before using them to help your campaign.
  - b. You cited the e-book to the editorial board as your only example of the judiciary’s image crisis despite not having read any of it.
2. When the South Florida Sun Sentinel editorial board contacted you after this interview about the above statement and questioned your use of the former Ninth Judicial Circuit employee’s claims, you defended your statement by providing a link to the fabricated phone call between the two Justices and Chief Judge Munyon. You listened to the recording before providing it to the editorial board and have admitted hearing the excerpt on page 2 of this notice.
  - a. You did not exercise due diligence to ascertain whether the recording was fabricated before using it publicly to help your

campaign.

b. You shared the fabricated recording publicly despite clear evidence of its inauthenticity.

3. Before you conducted yourself in the above manner, you attended the judicial election training presented by the Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee (JEAC). You were taught not to engage in conduct unless it will “promote public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary”, and “[t]o be ethical, you have to be willing to lose.” You ignored these admonitions by relying on the contents of the former Ninth Judicial Circuit employee’s e-book and the fabricated recording of a conversation which any reasonable person would deem inauthentic.

You have admitted the above conduct and acknowledged a complete lack of due diligence, including:

- Never speaking with the former Ninth Judicial Circuit employee
- Never speaking with any of the judges or former judges identified in these matters
- Never reading the former Ninth Judicial Circuit employee’s e-book
- Not listening to the entire recording of the purported phone call before sharing it with the editorial board
- Doing nothing to determine whether the recording was legitimate, and realizing now that the recording is obviously not legitimate

- Helping to facilitate the former Ninth Judicial Circuit employee's farce which perpetuated a false perception and harmed the reputation of the judiciary

Artificially created deepfakes are a tool for misinformation and digital impersonation used to influence elections and spread disinformation. Your campaign theme was to restore the public's trust, but your behavior did the opposite and brought harm to the dignity and integrity of the judiciary. Rather than promote public confidence in the judiciary, your actions eroded public confidence by perpetuating a false perception of illegal, unethical, or immoral conduct by Justices of the Florida Supreme Court, a Chief Judge, and others working within the judicial branch.

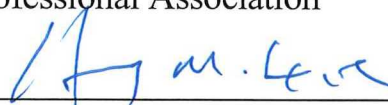
Your actions constitute inappropriate conduct in violation of Canons 7A(3)(b) and 7A(3)(e) of the Florida Code of Judicial Conduct.

You are hereby notified of your right to file a written answer to these charges within twenty (20) days of service of this notice upon you. The original of your response and all subsequent pleadings must be filed with the Clerk of the Florida Supreme Court, in accordance with the Court's requirements. Copies of your response should be served on the undersigned General Counsel for the Judicial Qualifications Commission, and the Executive Director of the Commission.

Dated this 9<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2025.

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Professional Association

By: \_\_\_\_\_



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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that on this 9<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2025, a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been electronically filed with the Clerk of the Court by utilizing the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, which will send a notice of electronic filing to:

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Attorney