



State of South Carolina
The Family Court of the Fifth Judicial Circuit

Rosalyn Frierson-Smith
Judge

Post Office Box 192
1701 Main Street
Columbia, SC 29202

November 6, 2022

Judicial Merit Selection Commission
104 Gressette Building
Post Office Box 142
Columbia, SC 29202

RE: Response to the Complaint filed by Rhonda Meisner

Dear Judicial Merit Selection Commission Members:

Please allow this letter to serve as my response to the complaint filed by Rhonda Meisner. As an initial matter, it would be improper for me to address the substance of the allegations that the Complainant raises as the trial is ongoing and appeals have been filed and some may still be pending.

This complaint is related to a pending case with Complainant as defendant. There have been numerous motions since the filing of the case and I, as well as several other judges, have heard and ruled on numerous motions since 2019. The Complaint was submitted to the Judicial Merit Selection Commission the week before the start of a three-week final hearing set to begin October 17, 2022. I was assigned to preside over this trial. I note that the trial date was set by the Chief Administrative Judge prior to May 19, 2022, based on the availability of the parties and counsel. Three of the six judges in the Fifth Circuit had previously recused themselves and I was the only judge available for the scheduled three non-consecutive weeks. Complainant filed a Motion to Recuse and Change of Venue. I denied the Motion to Recuse and Change of Venue. The order is included in the supporting documents. After notice of this complaint to the Commission, I requested that Court Administration reassign this case to another judge.

I do not believe that I have acted improperly in handling the pending case. While the Complainant may not be pleased with some of the outcomes, I have tried to be as fair as I can during the hearings and in my rulings. There will be a proper forum to address her disagreement with my rulings through the appellate process. I note that my orders included in Complainant's exhibits, address assertions of Complainant. I also note that the supporting documentation provided by Complainant includes documents related to other judges and matters not directly involving me. I believe that Complainant's general dissatisfaction with the rulings of several judges should not be a basis for determining my fitness to continue serving as a Family Court Judge.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Rosalyn Frierson-Smith in cursive.
Rosalyn Frierson-Smith