

NEWS RELEASE

Minnesota House DFL Caucus

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For immediate release

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REPUBLICANS ACCUSED OF COLLUSION IN LINDNER PROSECUTION

House Republicans are involved in collusion in a desperate attempt to keep the ethics complaint against Rep. Arlon Lindner from going through a fair and impartial process. DFL Rep. Ron Latz, one of the prosecutors in this ethics case says Republican lawmakers, and the attorney for Lindner are hiding important documents and trying old fashioned "legal trickery" to insure the Lindner case won't be heard in a fair and professional manner. Rep. Latz, who is also an attorney, said "every time we have tried to get documents relevant to this case, we have been shut out—all while Republicans have been sharing these documents with each other." Rep. Lindner's attorney sent a letter to the committee with a list of witnesses he planned to subpoena, which was not provided to DFL members of the panel.

Latz said hearing ground rules set by Ethics Committee Co-Chair Rep. Sondra Erickson are slanted against the complainants. Should Rep. Lindner testify to the committee, complainants will not be allowed an opportunity to cross-examine him directly. Rep. Keith Ellison and Rep. Ron Latz say Rep. Erickson - a Republican like Lindner - has also refused to respond to their request that she remove herself from the case, due to several conflicts--her own pattern of problems working with minorities--the American Indian community, and her involvement with Linder's original bill, H.F. 341 that led to his questionable remarks.

"We already know that Rep. Erickson has a record of her own that shows disrespect to minorities," Latz, of St. Louis Park, said. "And we know that she's worked to keep this process out of public view. It's time to have a full and fair discussion and resolve this issue - instead of trying to delay and bury it."

"We want to hear from Holocaust victims and many others in this case that has now brought national embarrassment to the state of Minnesota", said Ellison. "With so much to hear, Republicans are trying to severely limit the amount of time we will be able to spend on opening and closing arguments and testimony."

They also protested that Lindner's attorney, James Anderson, erroneously addressed a letter to Rep. Neva Walker - another complaint signer - as "Rep. Neva Walker - Black." Rep. Walker is African-American, as is Rep. Ellison.

"That oversight, or slip or whatever you wish to call it indicates more than anything where Rep. Lindner, Mr. Anderson and Chairwoman Erickson are coming from," Walker, of Minneapolis, said. "They just don't get it. They don't understand why the comments Rep. Lindner made could be hurtful and damaging to the House."

On March 11, eight House DFLers filed a complaint alleging that Lindner brought the House into disrepute with public comments questioning the historical reality of the Nazi persecutions during World War II and saying AIDS would make the U.S. "another African continent."