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JUSTICE DENIED

Missouri Supreme Court Proclaims Itself Above the Law

“Secrecy and a free, democratic government don't mix.” –Harry S. Truman

(Jefferson City, MO) – The Supreme Court of Missouri stated in a letter dated April 16th that the state's Sunshine Law does not apply to them. This statement came in response to a request by Better Courts for Missouri (BCM) for records pertaining to the Supreme Court's usage of state resources to lobby against reforms that would provide accountability in the judicial selection system.

“In a Nixonesque act, the Supreme Court of Missouri denied our reasonable request for public documents that highlight their blatant usage of taxpayer dollars to wage a political campaign against judicial selection reform,” decried James Harris, Executive Director of BCM. “Public resources should not be used for partisan political purposes,” added Harris. BCM had made their document request pursuant to Chapter 610 of the Missouri Revised Statutes and sought information regarding the court's lobbying against House Joint Resolution 10 (HJR 10) and Senate Joint Resolution 9 (SJR 9)—measures that would provide accountability in Missouri's judicial selection system pursuant to Chapter 610.

“The courts and Justice Laura Denvir Stith are not above the law,” stated Harris. “Courts have one inherent function under the Constitution—administering justice. If the supreme court is engaging in activity that does not involve the administration of justice, it is taking taxpayer resources and using them for political purposes. Better Courts for Missouri is simply trying to determine how much time and taxpayer money the courts are using for their personal, political activities. The public has a right to know that information,” explained Harris.

“We call on the court to come clean and reveal their political and lobbying activities,” demanded Harris. “The Supreme Court of Missouri is not and should not be above the law,” added Harris.

To schedule an interview with James Harris, Executive Director, Better Courts for Missouri, please contact him at 573-690-7870 or james@thejharriscompany.com.

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