

1 Kathleen M. Paustian, Esq. SBN 3785
2 Law Office of Kathleen M. Paustian
3 3205 Skipworth Drive
4 Las Vegas, NV 89107
5 Telephone (702) 321-2222
6 Facsimile (702) 369-5727
7 kathleenpaustian@cox.net
8 Special Counsel for the Nevada
9 Commission on Judicial Discipline

6 **BEFORE THE NEVADA COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

8 IN THE MATTER OF STEVEN E. JONES,)
9 Respondent.)
10 _____)

Case No.: 2006-100

11 **FORMAL STATEMENT OF CHARGES**

12 COMES NOW Kathleen M. Paustian, Special Counsel for the Nevada Commission on
13 Judicial Discipline ("Commission" or "NCJD"), established under Article 6, Section 21 of the
14 Nevada Constitution, who, in the name of and by the authority of the Commission, as found in NRS
15 1.425- 1.4695, files this Formal Statement of Charges and informs the Respondent, Steven E. Jones,
16 former District Judge, Eighth Judicial District Court, County of Clark, State of Nevada, that the
17 following acts were committed by Respondent and warrant disciplinary action by the Commission
18 under the Nevada Code of Judicial Conduct.

19 **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

20 Beginning in or about September 2002 and continuing to in or about October 2012,
21 Respondent Jones knowingly used the status and prestige of his office as an Eighth District Court
22 Judge in the Family Division to conspire with others to devise and execute a scheme which used
23 false and fraudulent pretenses, misrepresentations, half-truths and false promises to defraud victims
24 of their money. The Respondent knew the scheme was devised to induce victims to invest money in
25 non-existent projects and that he would then convert the funds to his own use. At all times relevant,
26 the Respondent was a duly elected Nevada District Court Judge who knew that co-conspirators were
27 using the name, title and prestige of his office to vouch for their credibility and the alleged existence
28

1 of the fake projects.

2 One such project involved soliciting investments in alleged water rights associated with large
3 unspecified parcels of land in the Southwestern United States. The conspirators, including the
4 Respondent, falsely represented that Thomas Cecrle, Mr. Jones' former brother-in-law and ultimate
5 Co-Defendant in U.S. District Court, was a contractor for the U.S. Department of Homeland
6 Security. They further alleged Cecrle was involved in a top-secret project to purchase and sell water
7 rights throughout the Southwest. The conspirators misrepresented the project, allegedly worth
8 hundreds of millions of dollars, as being near completion and said Cecrle needed a short-term cash
9 loan to invest in the project's completion. The conspirators falsely represented that when the project
10 was finished, Cecrle would repay all monies the victims had loaned him, along with large returns on
11 their investments.

12 Respondent Jones knew that Cecrle and other conspirators were making such false and
13 misleading statements and promises to induce the victims to turn over money to Cecrle which would,
14 in turn, be distributed among the conspirators, including the Respondent.

15 During the course of the conspiracy, in March 2006, the Respondent used his position as a
16 Judge to assist Cecrle in obtaining release from custody on his own recognizance. Cecrle had been
17 in custody on state charges for writing bad checks to re-pay a victim of the conspiracy.

18 From March 2006 to June 2009, Respondent Jones used the status and prestige of his judicial
19 office to assure at least one (1) victim of the conspiracy that Cecrle was difficult to reach because he
20 was traveling in connection with a non-existent project. The Respondent assured the victim that the
21 fake project was lucrative and the Respondent was helping Cecrle complete it in any way possible,
22 knowing the victim was relying on the Respondent's position as a Judge to assess the credibility of
23 Cecrle and the project.

24 From March 2006 to November 2008, the Respondent used his position as a Judge to meet
25 with at least one (1) victim repeatedly in his Chambers and in other locations in the Family Division
26 of the Eighth Judicial District Court to discuss the victim's payment of money to Cecrle for the water
27 rights project. Respondent Jones knew the victim was relying on Jones' representations under the
28 cloak of his judicial office to assess the legitimacy of the project.

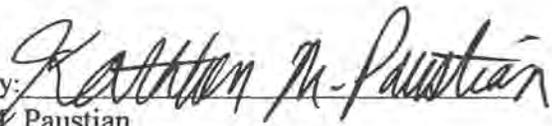
1 others, or allow others to do so.” Canon 1 Comment [1] states: “Public confidence in the judiciary
2 is eroded by improper conduct This principle applies to both the professional and personal
3 conduct of a judge.” The Respondent has pled guilty in U.S. District Court to the facts specified
4 above and been sentenced accordingly. Thus, by his own admission, he has violated the law and
5 violated the principle of public confidence and trust in the integrity of the judiciary. He also admits
6 that he abused the prestige of judicial office to advance his own economic interest and that he
7 allowed others to do the same to advance their interests.

8 **COUNT TWO**

9 By engaging in the fraudulent and conspiratorial actions detailed above, the Respondent
10 violated Canon 3.1(C) prohibiting participation in extrajudicial “activities that would appear to a
11 reasonable person to undermine the judge’s independence, integrity or impartiality:” along with (D)
12 which prohibits participation in “conduct that would appear to a reasonable person to be coercive,”
13 and (E) prohibiting use of “court premises...or other resources... .” for unlawful extrajudicial
14 activities. The Respondent’s admitted conspiratorial and fraudulent activities and the use of his
15 judicial chambers and other parts of the Family Division Courthouse, including the parking lot, to
16 pursue them violates these three (3) provisions of Canon 3.1.

17 Based on the information above, the Commission shall hold a public hearing on the merits of
18 these charges, pursuant to NRS 1.4673 and other Nevada Revised Statutes governing the
19 Commission. If violations as alleged are found to be true, the Commission shall impose whatever
20 sanctions and/or discipline it deems appropriate, pursuant to NRS 1.4673 and other Nevada Revised
21 Statutes governing the Commission.

22
23 DATED this 5th day of June, 2015.

24
25 Submitted by: 
26 Kathleen M. Paustian
27 Special Counsel to the NCJD
28

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the **FORMAL STATEMENT OF CHARGES** has been forwarded to the following parties via U.S. mail, postage pre-paid, on this 5th day of June, 2015.

Steven E. Jones
850 Fairview
Henderson, NV 89015

Steven E. Jones, Register No. 47332-048
Taft Correctional Institute
P. O. Box 7001
Taft, CA 93268

Commission on Judicial Discipline
P.O. Box 48
Carson City, NV 89702

By: 
Kathleen M. Paustian, Esq.