

Lawsuit Demands Removal of Dallas DA Who Suffered from Depression



Summary: *A lawsuit demands the removal of a Dallas District Attorney Susan Hawk, who suffered from mental health issues.*

Dallas District Attorney Susan Hawk battled depression and thoughts of suicide, and she sought professional help in 2014. Her mental illness caused problems at work, but she claims she is now okay. A lawsuit was filed to remove her from her job, but is it fair to punish her for her illness? Are legal professionals held at such a high standard that they aren't allowed to be human?

On Tuesday, lawsuit statements were published from two former employees stating that Dallas District Attorney Susan Hawk acted paranoid and delusional during their tenure with her. NBC Dallas reports that Ellis County District Attorney Patrick Wilson is pursuing the lawsuit, which was filed in October 2013 by a fired employee and calls for Hawk's removal from office.

Wilson wants her removal to be immediate. He stated that Hawk should not be in office until her trial because witnesses in the case are current employees.

"The evidence shows the defendant is incompetent to perform her official duties and is personally responsible for numerous instances of official misconduct while in office," Wilson wrote in an amended complaint.

In the newly published statements, former employees Bill Wirskye and Jennifer Balido accuse Hawk of erratic behavior in the months before she took office in January of 2014.

Wirskye was a prosecutor and a supporter of Hawk's November 2013 election campaign. He joined her staff as an assistant, but he was fired after three months. He claimed she appeared to be abusing drugs.

"I noticed signs of what appeared to be substance abuse. When Ms. Hawk would enter my office and sit directly in the morning sun coming in through a window, her pupils were not responsive to the light. Her mood and demeanor was becoming almost exclusively agitated and manic," Wirskye said.

Wirskye said Hawk appeared to "break from reality." He claimed she thought secret recordings were being made of her, and he said she needed in-patient help.

Hawk admitted to leaving work in 2014 to seek mental health treatment. She conducted media interviews upon her return in October 2014, in which she bravely detailed her struggle with depression and thoughts of suicide.

"My depression and my anxiety had gotten out of control, and I didn't even realize what it was. All I knew is I didn't want to do this any more. I didn't want to be here any more. I thought about my job and my job was always such a big part of me, and I wanted to do the right thing for that. So I thought I'll resign and then I will just, I'll kill myself," Hawk said.

Hawk stated she was now well and fit for work.

Her lawyer Charla Aldous said that the newly published statements are nothing new, and the problems detailed are no longer an issue.

"All of the claims detailed in today's filing are and have been well-known, and present only one side of the story. The court can and will address them at Friday's hearing, which is the appropriate time for this. We look forward to the opportunity to provide the perspectives of District Attorney Hawk and others to the allegations and grievances in today's filing," Aldous said in a statement.

Source: <http://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/New-Details-in-Dallas-DA-Removal-Lawsuit-364319831.html>

Lead photo source: Dallascounty.org

www.jdjournal.com