

Former California Bar Executive Cleared of Certain Misconduct Allegations



A California State Bar Court judge has dismissed some of the disciplinary charges against former bar Executive Director Joseph Dunn. The charges were related to investigated and dismissed allegations eight years prior. The judge also dismissed a charge of making misleading statements about pending legislation, stating it was time-barred. However, the judge allowed the bar to argue claims of moral turpitude for alleged false remarks made by Dunn to the board regarding the use of bar funds for a trip to Mongolia in January 2014.

The bar filed disciplinary charges against Dunn last July, stating that the charges were based on an independent source, a retired judge's arbitration award in 2017. This was related to Dunn's employment arbitration over his firing in 2014.

Dunn's lawyer, Mark Geragos, called the ruling "the death knell for this sham prosecution" and stated that "this case should never have been brought in the first place." He also pointed out that the bar was spending a large sum of money, around \$500,000, to pursue their former Executive Director for a relatively small expenditure of less than \$5,000 that occurred nearly ten years ago while simultaneously seeking to increase the dues of every lawyer in California's Bar.

The judge also rejected Dunn's attempt to dismiss the case due to the bar's alleged slow responses to discovery requests, stating that there was no evidence of outright refusal to comply with discovery obligations or other evidence of discovery abuse.

A status conference previously scheduled for Friday has been continued to February 16th. A representative from the bar was not immediately available for comment.

the judge's decision to dismiss some of the charges against former bar Executive Director Joseph Dunn has been met with mixed reactions. While Dunn's lawyer has called the case a sham prosecution, the judge has allowed the bar to argue claims of moral turpitude for alleged false statements made by Dunn. The case continues to progress, with a status conference scheduled later this month.

REFERENCES:

California Bar Ex-Director Avoids Some Disciplinary Charges