

Based on included information and privileged sources, we believe Governor Bruce Rauner has given his campaign staff control over policy making decisions and communications from his gubernatorial, state government office and is, concurrently, forcing state government staff to work, against their will, on his re-election effort.

I believe this to be true because of the evidence of such behavior— emails from Rauner campaign aides, clearly directing government staff on major policy decisions— was recently leaked to my government watchdog organization. Subsequently, I've also heard from anonymous sources, fearful of retribution but inspired by my publishing of them, sharing their experiences in and around the governor's office, contemporaneous with the leaked emails.

Taken together, they paint what I believe is a clear picture.

1- Last July, Bruce Rauner hired new state government top staff members who had not, like his prior top staff, previously worked on his campaign.

Their expectations for the job, their responsibilities and, most critically, their authority, did not comport with those of Rauner, who expected his new team would report to and coordinate with his political re-election team.

2- Evidence of this illicit reporting hierarchy and its resulting coordination are in the emails we published, in a series of articles. They can be viewed at the following links and should be considered as exhibits to this complaint.

- <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2018/03/on-taxpayer-funded-abortion-bill-at-least-email-proves-it-diana-rauner-was-in-charge/>
- <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2018/03/source-of-policy-messaging-expertise-and-influence-that-is-not-controllable-in-governors-office-revealed/>
- <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2018/03/we-need-to-use-this-to-rewrite-the-narrative-polls-wifes-prodding-drove-rauners-change-of-heart-on-chicago-schools-bailout/>
- <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2018/03/if-we-give-them-what-they-want-are-there-folks-who-can-be-helpful-with-positive-statements-endorsements-etc/>

They indicate that major administration decisions in the late summer and early fall of 2017 were being driven by Rauner's campaign consultants. State government staff were expected to execute per the consultants' orders.

3- As one example, consider an email sent early in the morning of Thurs. Aug. 3, 2017 by Diana Rauner, the First Lady, to Mark Harris & Nachama Soloveichik, her husband's lead campaign consultants.

Top state government staff, including Chief of Staff Kristina Rasmussen and Communications Director Diana Rickert, were cc'd, albeit on their personal emails.

The subject was a pending K-12 school funding bill that Rauner had long opposed.

The substance? Inspired by polling, Ms. Rauner and Mr. Harris were dictating a new policy position and the corresponding “messaging” to Rasmussen and Rickert, who would be charged with its fulfillment in their official, state government capacities.

4- Since our publishing of this email, an anonymous source has told me that Gov. Rauner called a meeting for the next day—Fri. Aug. 4— that included both his new campaign staff and new state government staff.

The subject: the implications of Rauner’s political team leading his state government office.

The new staff members had been both reluctant and resistant to it, and then General Counsel Dennis Murashko openly expressed concerns in the meeting, the source said.

5- Approximately two weeks later, on Mon. Aug. 21, Murashko delivered an “Ethics Memo” on the subject to all staff and, after getting resistance from Rauner, tendered his resignation two days later, giving two weeks notice, according to published reports.

The next day, on Wed Aug. 24, Rickert and her communications team resigned.

Murashko was escorted out the State of Illinois building on Aug. 25.

What’s transpired since has been a series of media leaks, most aimed at undermining the integrity of Mr. Murashko as well as Ms. Rickert.

The pretext for Murashko’s abrupt departure- an anonymous OEIG complaint— was exposed last week, when your agency cleared him of wrongdoing.

It seems the case was flimsy and without merit. And perhaps politically motivated.

On Sept. 5, a source “with direct knowledge of the accusations” [told reporter Natasha Korecki of Politico](#) that the rumored OEIG complaint against Murashko alleged “he had misused the powers

of his office” and “(used) his position to dole out plum duties to someone with whom he had a personal relationship.”

Two days later, Capitol Fax’s Rich Miller wrote that [“there’s speculation from inside that the memo](#) Murashko wrote about politics in the governor’s office might have been drafted to somehow protect himself from the OEIG beef.”

The Murasko “Ethics Memo” [was leaked to Miller on](#) Fri. Dec. 8.

On Mon. Dec. 11, Korecki wrote that Rauner’s office had long refused Freedom of Information Requests for the Murasko [resignation letter](#) and [memo](#), finally releasing the letter that day, after the memo itself had leaked.

The next day, Gov. Rauner told reporter that the Murasko Memo was [“created at my urging.”](#)

On Jan. 4, [Murasko wrote on Facebook](#) that “I can now confidently say, because I know firsthand, that my professional integrity as a lawyer is non-negotiable. In 2017, presented with a choice of doing the easy thing and doing the right thing, I chose the latter. And I’ve never regretted it since, not for one second. It’s why I’m now and always will be able to hold my head up high and be proud of my service in state government.”

On March 9, nearly seven months after he wrote his memo, the OEIG officially exonerated Dennis Murashko.

In a statement, Murashko was emphatic that the complaint was baseless; he also emphasized that he stood by his memo and that it was his idea to write it-- not the Governor’s.

“Today, the Office of the Executive Inspector General notified me that the Office has concluded the investigation into the false, malicious, and defamatory complaint against me. The case has been closed as unfounded,” Murashko wrote in a statement. “In layman’s terms, the complaint has always been a lie.”

“I will just say this: The memo was necessary, and to this day, I stand by it 100 percent. I provided the memo to the staff and then resigned. If I were to do it all over, I would do the same thing.”

In conclusion, the activities and circumstances outlined above appear to be clear evidence of violation of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 430 5-15(a)-(c). They appear to reveal a governor who violated this law as he was gearing up for his re-election campaign,

allowing that campaign and those who run it to direct policy and communications for the official governor's office.

We request an immediate investigation and resolution of this matter and the recusal of Gov. Rauner from appointing the next Inspector General, as they will be investigating this very serious case. That person needs to be independent of the governor.

Timeline

- July 10, 2017 - Gov. Rauner hires new Chief of Staff, Kristina Rasmussen, new communications director, Diana Rickert and new campaign staff as well as new general consultancy, Coldspark, for his re-election campaign.
- July 27, 2017 - Amidst debate in Congress over repeal of Obamacare, Rauner Campaign Consultant Nachama Soloveichik and First Lady Diana Rauner discuss Gov. Rauner's public position on the issue, including which groups "can be helpful" to his re-election if he publicly opposed Congressional Republicans. Top State Government Staff, Chief of Staff Kristina Rasmussen and Communications Director Diana Rickert, are cc'd on the email.
- Aug. 3, 2017 - Diana Rauner emails Rasmussen, Rickert, Soloveichik and her partner, campaign consultant Mark Harris, advising that Gov Rauner should agree to support a K-12 School Funding measure he has long opposed "to rewrite the narrative of the past two and a half years."
- Aug. 4, 2017 - Gov. Rauner leads a meeting of his new state govt. staff and his campaign staff to discuss their organization structure and reporting. General Counsel Dennis Murashko expresses concerns in the meeting regarding political staff directing official staff.
- Aug. 21, 2017 - Murashko delivers a memo on Rauner's state government office and how it is ethically and legally required to govern itself with regard to campaign staff and the re-election team. Rauner resists the memo.
- Aug. 23, 2017 Murashko resigns, giving two weeks' notice.
- Aug. 24, 2017 Rickert and her communications team resign. Rauner's office publicly says it is about a communications flap; privately, sources say, their departure is actually over issues related to the memo.
- Aug. 25, 2017 Murashko is escorted out of his state office; The reason given: an anonymous OEIG complaint against him.
- Aug. 30, 2017 Rauner officially sign the K-12 school funding bill, the subject of the Aug. 3 email.
- Sept. 5, 2017 - An anonymous source tells reporter Natasha Korecki of Politico that the Murashko OEIG complaint alleged "he had misused the powers of his office."
- Sept. 7, 2017 - An anonymous source tells reporter Rich Miller of Capitol Fax that "there's speculation from inside that the memo Murashko wrote about politics in the governor's office might have been drafted to somehow protect himself from the OEIG beef."
- Sept. 20, 2017 Rauner publicly announces his opposition to the Graham-Cassidy Obamacare repeal bill pending in Congress, the subject of the Jul. 27 email. The language he uses in his statement mirrors the language suggested in that email.

- Dec. 8, 2017 Murasko's memo is leaked to Miller, who publishes it.
- Dec. 11, 2017 Korecki complains publicly that her Freedom of Information requests to the Governor's office, asking for Murashko's resignation letter and the memo, have been ignored. Rauner's office responds by releasing the resignation letter, but not the memo, which is already public on account of the leak.
- Dec. 12, 2017 Rauner tells reporters that the Murashko memo was "created at my urging."
- Jan 4, 2017 Murashko defends himself on Facebook, suggesting his "professional integrity" was tested in the governor's office, but he chose to do the "right thing."
- Mar. 9, 2017 The OEIG exonerates Murashko, who publicly slams the anonymous complaint as "baseless" and restates that the memo he wrote "was necessary." He does not validate Rauner's claim that he told Murashko to write it.