



VIA Electronic Mail

October 31, 2022

The Honorable Judge Jesse Caldwell IV
325 N Marietta St, Ste 4112
Gastonia, NC 28052

Dear Judge Caldwell,

Please be advised that I represent the North Carolina Republican Party. I write to you with regard to your actions on October 29, 2022, at the Gaston County Board of Elections.

As you are aware, Mr. Jonathan Fletcher serves as the Chairman of the Gaston County Republican Party. During the course of his duties as Chairman, Mr. Fletcher had twenty copies of a sign printed which reads "JESSE CALDWELL IV IS A PROUD DEMOCRAT." A depiction of this sign is attached to this letter. *See* Exhibit 1. The content of the sign is not false or misleading. In fact, these words are your own, as you stated in an interview with the Gaston Gazette on March 24, 2022, "I am proudly running as a Democrat."¹

On the evening of October 28, 2022, Mr. Fletcher lawfully placed several of these signs at early voting locations across Gaston County, including two which were placed at the Gaston County Board of Elections. Mr. Fletcher was careful to follow N.C. Gen. Stat. § 136-32, which regulates the placement of political signs and placed the signs after having confirmed their legality with the Director of Elections for the Gaston County Board of Elections.

On Saturday, October 29, 2022, at 8:50 a.m. you were captured on camera removing and carrying away one of the signs belonging to Mr. Fletcher without his permission.² *See* Exhibit 2. As the video and screenshots show, you clearly intended to deprive Mr. Fletcher of his property as you placed his sign in the trunk of a car and returned to electioneering in the parking lot. *See* Exhibits 3 and 4. Your intent is also clear because, as you are aware, Mr. Fletcher attempted to discuss this matter with you later that day, and you refused to return his property to him. As you know, when Mr. Fletcher asked you to return his property, he told you that if you returned his sign that he did not intend to pursue any further action against you. In response, you stated, "I'd love to see the magistrate that brought those charges." It appears that you believe yourself to be above the law, but as put by President Theodore Roosevelt more than a century ago: "No man is above the law and no man is below it; nor do we ask any man's permission when we require him to obey it."

¹ [Gaston Gazette Article, March 24, 2022](#)

² Video of the Incident, <https://youtu.be/H5vC-xh01y0>

As you know, “[a] judge should respect and comply with the law and should conduct himself/herself at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary.” North Carolina Code of Judicial Conduct Canon 2.A.

The North Carolina Republican Party and the Gaston County Republican Party hereby insist that you immediately cease and desist in your unlawful removal of their property, including but not limited to campaign signs. We demand that you immediately return Mr. Fletcher’s property, the sign that you stole from the Gaston County Board of Elections on October 29, 2022. The North Carolina Republican Party and the Gaston County Republican Party intend to pursue consequences for your unlawful behavior and abuse of power to the full extent of the law. You are not above the law.

Sincerely,



Philip R. Thomas
Chief Counsel
North Carolina Republican Party

CC:

Jonathan Fletcher
Chairman
Gaston County Republican Party

Exhibit 1



Exhibit 2



Exhibit 3

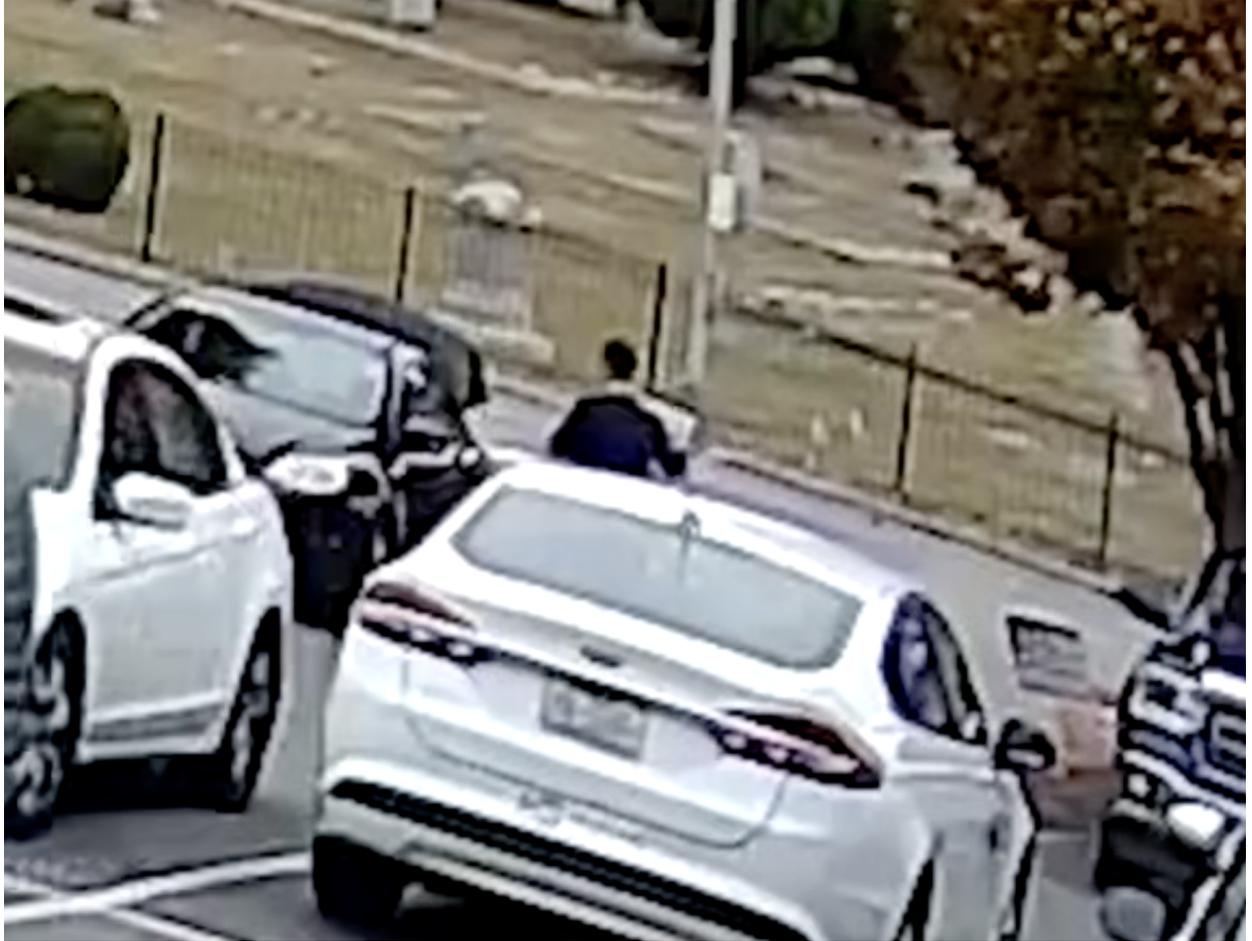


Exhibit 4

