



**BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF TENNESSEE**

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RELEASE OF INFORMATION
RE: MATTHEW F. STOWE, BPR #29994
CONTACT: KRISANN HODGES
BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
615-361-7500

September 12, 2017

CARROLL COUNTY LAWYER CENSURED

On September 12, 2017, Matthew F. Stowe, an attorney licensed to practice law in Tennessee, was publicly censured by Order of the Tennessee Supreme Court. Mr. Stowe is ordered to pay costs to the Board of Professional Responsibility.

On February 26, 2016, the Board of Professional Responsibility (“Board”) filed a Petition for Discipline against Matthew F. Stowe based upon one (1) complaint of misconduct. The alleged ethical misconduct by Mr. Stowe arises from his actions while serving as the District Attorney General for the 24th Judicial District of Tennessee. The complaint alleged that Mr. Stowe engaged in multiple acts of harassment that had no substantial purpose other than to embarrass, delay, or burden a witness. In the prosecution of a murder trial, Mr. Stowe’s office, through an Assistant District Attorney, was working with a witness to secure her testimony at trial. After the witness informed Mr. Stowe’s office of a potential scheduling conflict, she was informed that her schedule could not be accommodated and she would need to appear as scheduled. Despite the witness’s agreement with the Assistant District Attorney to attend the trial as scheduled, Mr. Stowe began directly communicating with the witness and her supervisor in a harassing and hostile manner and stated that he would hold her personally responsible if she “blow[s] this trial.” Mr. Stowe indicated that he would prosecute her if she failed to appear and directed his office to begin preparation for those charges, even though he knew she had confirmed her appearance. As a result of Mr. Stowe’s harassment, the witness retained private counsel to accompany her to the trial as a precaution because she was concerned that if her testimony did not satisfy Mr. Stowe, he would take some kind of action against her.

An evidentiary hearing was held before a hearing panel. The hearing panel concluded that Mr. Stowe’s conduct violated Rules of Professional Conduct 4.4(a)(1), Respect for the Rights of Third Persons and 8.4(a) and (d), Misconduct.

For these violations, the Tennessee Supreme Court publicly censured Mr. Stowe. A public censure is a rebuke and warning to the lawyer, but does not affect the lawyer’s ability to practice law.