

July 9, 2024

Open Letter to the Plumas County Board of Supervisors and Plumas County Residents

Good morning.

I wanted to speak because I care about Plumas County and am concerned about the recent lack of collaboration on the part of elected officials and senior representatives of Plumas County.

The fact that limited information has been released about the Investigative Report from Boucher Law in response to County Administrative Officer Debra Lucero's hostile workplace complaint filed Feb. 20 against Plumas County District Attorney David Hollister can only add to the tension.

The DA requested release of the Investigative Report to the public and the CAO requested that the recusal letter and accompanying email from the DA which triggered the hostile workplace complaint be released simultaneously.

The public has been told that based on conclusions made by the investigator, the CAO's allegations do not support a prima facie case of violation of county policies and procedures.

Does this mean there is not a "hostile workplace"? I am not convinced.

The Investigative Report concludes that there is a lack of "prima facie evidence that the DA targeted the CAO because she is an "older, strong female" and that the CAO is not in a protected class.

The conclusion that there is a lack of prima facie evidence that the DA targeted the CAO is based on "applicable county policies and procedures", which specifically refer to actions such as harassment and discrimination as being tied to a protected class based on race, genetics, age, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. The County policies relied on were not released with the letter.

Both federal law and California state law protect you from "age discrimination" in the workplace if you are 40 or older and the CAO is both over 40. Her racial background also puts her in a "protected class." This was not addressed in the Investigative Report.

In addition, the statement of work given to the investigator was not released. How do we know what the BOS asked the Investigator to report?

The Investigative Report states that "although issues related to potential workplace bullying and abusive conduct were alleged, the County does not specifically have a policy prohibiting such conduct".

The Plumas Sun published an article with a quote from the DA, as follows, "Hollister said he was pleased to see that the investigator hired by the board concluded the CAO's complaint was "baseless." I do not see how the Investigative Report supports this conclusion.

It is also important to note that the Investigative Report includes suggestions that the Board consider:

- Amending existing policies and procedures to address specific behaviors alleged by the CAO, and optionally the Board may further define abusive conduct to be an independent cause and not dependent on an underlying finding of a protected class, and
- Provide training on workplace conduct, roles and responsibilities and policies to staff.

Given what we have seen transpire in the public eye lately, I would urge the BOS to consider the suggestions in the Investigative Report.

Thank you for your time.



Linda R. Judge