

## ***Rapid Response Team***

**Arkansas Judicial Campaign Conduct & Education Committee, Inc.**

P.O. Box 141475, Little Rock, Ark. 72223

Members: Olly Neal (chairman), Elizabeth Andreoli (secretary), Audrey Evans, Hal Bass, Roy Ockert Jr.

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Press release

For release immediately

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The Rapid Response Team of the Arkansas Judicial Campaign Conduct & Election Committee Inc. has issued a cease-and-desist letter to the Republican State Leadership Committee because of what the team contends is a false and misleading reference in a campaign flyer used in the campaign for position 5 on the Arkansas Supreme Court.

The flyer supports Circuit Judge Shawn Womack of Mountain Home in his campaign against Clark Mason, a Little Rock trial attorney.

One point on the flyer alleges that Mason “admits his support for Obama’s executive actions that kill Arkansas jobs while making trial lawyers rich.” A footnote refers the reader to a blog at [www.clarkmason.com](http://www.clarkmason.com), which is a part of the Mason legal firm’s Web site. On that page is a Jan. 15 press article about former Faulkner County Circuit Judge Mike Maggio pleading guilty to a federal bribery charge.

Ryan West, an official of the Mason campaign organization, complained to the Rapid Response Team that “I don’t see how that story on Mike Maggio has anything to do with Clark supporting presidential orders that kill “jobs and make lawyers rich.””

The 5-member team, formed to monitor advertising and other promotional materials in the Arkansas appellate court races this year, met Saturday at Little Rock and reviewed the complaint, the flyer and the reference.

The team found that the flyer did not provide factual support for its allegation and was therefore false and misleading. A letter was sent to the Republican State Leadership Committee, which has headquarters in Washington, D.C., allowing a full business day to respond. When no response was received, a cease-and-desist letter was issued and sent to the committee.

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The second letter asks the Republican State Leadership Committee to discontinue using the false and misleading reference in further campaign advertising. At the same time, the letter said, the Rapid Response Team would make the action public.

Meanwhile, the Republican State Leadership Committee established a Web page at [www.arkansascourtfacts.com](http://www.arkansascourtfacts.com) making similar allegations in the position 5 race. The allegation about Mason supporting presidential orders “that kill jobs and make lawyers rich” was not used. But a footnote at the bottom of the page again referred readers to the Maggio article at [www.clarkmason.com/blog](http://www.clarkmason.com/blog).

A news release issued by the committee’s Judicial Fairness Initiative announcing an ad buy and the Web site was dated Monday.

More information about the Arkansas Judicial Campaign Conduct & Election Committee Inc. and the Rapid Response Team can be found at [www.arkansasjudges.org](http://www.arkansasjudges.org).

***Copy of cease-and-desist letter attached.***