

April 26, 2023

The Honorable Jake Johnson
North Carolina House of Representatives
300 N. Salisbury Street, Rm 306B1
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925

The Honorable Harry Warren
North Carolina House of Representatives
300 N. Salisbury Street, Rm 611
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925

RE: Kristi Jones Letter to Hon. Jake Johnson and Hon. Harry Warren dated April 14, 2023

Dear Chairman Johnson and Chairman Warren,

I represent SBI Director Bob Schurmeier as his Attorney in the matters before the House Government Oversight Committee. We noted the Governor's desire to have him waive his privacy rights as requested in their letter dated April 14, 2023. On behalf of Director Schurmeier, he declines to waive his personnel privacy rights beyond what he has already shared concerning the singular pending personnel matter he referenced in his testimony.

The issue before the Legislature is the Governor's attempt to inject politics into SBI operations and intimidate the SBI Director who is politically independent by NC Statute. The Governor's Office through his Chief of Staff and General Counsel circumvented established due process for personnel matters by threatening to take the extraordinary step of hiring a law firm of their choosing to investigate him if he did not resign. This even though the NC government and Legislature have provided well-defined rules and procedures that address such personnel matters. Government personnel actions must be allowed to run their course without interference from the Governor's office. This is true for all NC government agencies, but especially the SBI.

The Governor's office arranged meetings in 2019 and again in 2022 with outside staff who had no right to be involved in SBI personnel issues or have access to SBI personnel records. These inappropriate meetings and the threatened Governor led "investigation" tainted any future proceedings involving SBI personnel matters. This is not about Director Schurmeier's so-called personnel file which he has never seen, nor been apprised of its existence or contents. The sole issue is the calculated effort of the Governor's representatives to bully the head of the state's preeminent investigative agency into resigning before his statutory term ended in July 2023 so he could be replaced with a political appointment.

The focus of this legislative inquiry should not be diverted from the efforts of the Governor's office to leverage a personnel matter for political purposes while circumventing well established processes defined by North Carolina and Federal laws and regulations.

Respectfully,

Chris Swecker

Chris Swecker

Chris Swecker Law PLLC

chris.swecker@sweckerlaw.com