

Fulford, Millie

From: C <cbzuco@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2026 2:36 PM
To: commission@ethics.state.fl.us
Cc: mperez@perezlasurelaw.com; nhenrichsen@hslawyers.com; Fulford, Millie
Subject: Formal Response to Proposed Stipulated Agreement – Matter of Mayor Jackie Espinosa (Case No. 26034)
Attachments: Ethics Response.pdf

To the Members of the Florida Commission on Ethics,

Please find attached my formal correspondence regarding the proposed stipulated agreement for Mayor Jackie Espinosa of Kissimmee, Florida (Case No. 26034).

As the Complainant in this matter, I am writing to formally request that the Commission reject the *current terms of the lenient stipulation*. As detailed in the attached document, the proposed \$2,000 fine and public censure fail to meet statutory accountability benchmarks or protect the public treasury under Florida Statute § 112.317. I urge the Commission to enforce full financial restitution of \$75,000 back to the City of Kissimmee alongside an appropriate civil penalty per violation.

Thank you for your time, attention, and continued oversight of public integrity.

Respectfully submitted,

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September 16, 2026

Florida Commission on Ethics

P.O. Drawer 15709

Tallahassee, FL 32317-5709

RE: Response to Stipulated Agreement – 26034 Matter of Mayor Jackie Espinosa, City of Kissimmee

To the Members of the Florida Commission on Ethics,

This correspondence is submitted as a formal response to the proposed stipulated agreement concerning Mayor Jackie Espinosa of Kissimmee, Florida. While the Commission's determination mirrors the underlying findings of misconduct, the proposed penalty of a \$2,000 fine and a public censure is profoundly inadequate. It fails to protect the public interest or provide true statutory accountability for the citizens of Kissimmee.

A \$2,000 administrative fine does not begin to compensate the community for the substantial public funds lost as a direct result of the actions under review. Under Florida Statute § 112.317(1)(a)6, the Commission has the clear authority to impose a civil penalty of up to \$20,000 per violation. Settling for a fraction of that amount minimizes a severe breach of public trust.

Furthermore, the financial toll inflicted on Kissimmee's taxpayers stands at \$75,000, which includes:

- **\$50,000** in misallocated grant funding wrongfully taken from municipal resources.

- **\$25,000** expended by the City of Kissimmee to retain a special prosecutor to investigate this matter—an expense incurred only to reach the identical determination later echoed by your Commission.

I would like to remind the Commission that Florida Statute § 112.317(1)(a)7 explicitly grants the authority to mandate the "restitution of any pecuniary benefits received because of the violation committed" and directs that such restitution be paid directly back to the victimized public agency. A public censure performs a symbolic reprimand but leaves the public treasury entirely depleted.

True ethical accountability requires the Commission to exercise its full statutory power under Fla. Stat. § 112.317(1)(a)7 by demanding that the Mayor personally repay the full \$75,000 to the city treasury. Additionally, the Commission should impose a civil penalty of \$5,000 per grant violation alongside the agreed-upon public censure. Anything less would fail to send a clear message that our city is not a financial trough for corrupt public officials.

I urge the Commission to reject the current terms of this lenient stipulation and enforce full financial restitution as a prerequisite for any final resolution.

Sincerely,

Claudia Zuco

Complainant

CC:

mperez@perezlasurelaw.com

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FULFORD.MILLIE@leg.state.fl.us