

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Reiko Callner, Executive Director
Commission on Judicial Conduct
P.O. Box 1817
Olympia WA 98507
Telephone: (360) 753-4585
rcallner@cjcc.state.wa.us

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JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSION FILES STATEMENT OF CHARGES AGAINST KING COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE MICHAEL HEAVEY

On May 14, 2010, the Commission on Judicial Conduct found probable cause that the Code of Judicial Conduct had been violated and approved a Statement of Charges against King County Superior Court Judge Michael Heavey. The Statement of Charges in this matter is a public document available at the Commission's web site, <http://www.cjc.state.wa.us>.

Judge Heavey is charged with violating Canons 1, 2(A) and 2(B) of the Code of Judicial Conduct by writing letters on official court stationery to Italian judicial system officials on behalf of criminal defendant Amanda Knox, utilizing court staff to type those letters, and speaking publicly on several occasions, identifying himself as a judge, about that same pending criminal case in an attempt to influence the proceeding. Judges may not, under the Code of Judicial Conduct lend the prestige of judicial office to advance the private interests of others.

Canon 1 of the Code of Judicial Conduct requires "Judges shall uphold the integrity and independence of the judiciary." Canon 2 provides "Judges should avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in all their activities."

Judge Heavey is required to file an answer with the Commission within twenty-one days, unless the time to respond is extended by the Commission. Upon receipt of the answer, the Commission shall schedule a public hearing. Disciplinary Counsel for the Commission is Attorney Steven Reisler of Seattle.

The Washington Commission on Judicial Conduct is an independent agency of the judicial branch of government created under the Washington Constitution to assure the integrity and independence of the judiciary. Its eleven members are appointed by the Governor, judicial associations, and the Washington State Bar Association.

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