

**COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST
OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADVOCATE**



REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

K #: K11-040

Date Opened: March 25, 2011

Date Closed: July 21, 2011

Name of investigator: Breno Penichet

Allegation:

This investigation is predicated upon information received in the form of a memorandum, dated March 4, 2011, from former County Commissioner Natasha Seijas (Seijas) to County Attorney Robert Cuevas. In the memo, Seijas requests the COE to review some statements she made on a local radio show regarding fellow Commissioner Bruno Barreiro's (Barreiro) conduct during the efforts to recall him and determine if Barreiro engaged in any inappropriate activity.

Investigation:

A letter dated March 2, 2011, was delivered to Seija's office accompanied by a CD of a radio interview featuring Seijas. The communication was from fellow Miami-Dade County Commissioner Barreiro Barreiro. Upon reviewing the contents, her staff took the letter and accompanying CD and turned it over to the County Attorney's Office (CAO). This investigator reviewed the letter.

The letter stated that Barreiro was, "in complete dismay of your allegations regarding my conduct during the efforts to recall me." Barreiro went on to state that no one in his family or his staff intimidated anyone during the petitioning process.

Investigator Penichet contacted the Miami-Dade County District 13 office and obtained the home phone number of Seijas in order to proceed with the investigation. Numerous attempts were made to contact Seijas with negative results. This information was provided to the Advocate Michael Murawski who requested this investigator send a letter to Seija's home address, in order for her to contact COE. Seijas contacted investigator Penichet and an interview was scheduled for July 1, 2011. Seijas was interviewed to learn if there was any further information besides what occurred after she received the visit and letter from Barreiro. Seijas advised that a member of her staff, Terry Murphy, received the letter from Barreiro and immediately it was decided to have the CAO review it and determine if any misconduct had occurred. Seijas advised that she found Barreiro's behavior strange in light of all that was happening during that time. She said what was particularly strange was his reaction to her answer on the radio program.

Seijas advised that she chose not to interfere with the process and allowed the people to make their choice. Seijas further stated that she felt it was undignified for anyone connected to her to have confrontations with the persons gathering the signatures, as it reportedly occurred in Barreiro's district. Seijas further stated that she did not have any other information other than what was reported in the news.

Conclusion:

The above information was discussed with Advocate Murawski who advised it does not appear that any ordinance within our jurisdiction has been violated therefore the investigation will be closed without further action.