



## STATEMENT OF AMICUS INTEREST

As Attorney General of Ohio, I am the State's chief law officer. The Revised Code says that I "shall appear for the state in the trial and argument of all civil and criminal causes in the Supreme Court in which the state is directly or indirectly interested." R.C. 109.02. Sheriff Reader's corruption directly impacts the State of Ohio, and my Office therefore has an interest in supporting Reader's suspension.

## ARGUMENT

"It is a well-worn, but no less true, statement of public policy that a public office is a public trust and a public official is a fiduciary." *State v. McKelvey*, 12 Ohio St. 2d 92, 95, 232 N.E.2d 391, 393 (1967). Sheriff Reader violated the public trust when he used his office to benefit himself rather than the public. As a result, and for all of the reasons laid out in the Motion to Commence Suspension Proceedings Against a Public Official, I support the request to establish a special commission to review whether the Sheriff should be suspended from office under R.C. 3.16.

More than any other official, a local law enforcement officer must be both trusted and trustworthy. The indictment of Sheriff Reader goes directly to his honesty and conduct in office, and therefore his ability to keep the peace and enforce the law.

Removing Reader from office will improve, not undermine, criminal justice in Pike County. Perhaps most critically, Reader's removal will have no effect whatsoever on Ohio's ability to prosecute the defendants who stand accused of murdering the eight

members of the Rhoden, Gilley, and Manley families in April of 2016. Though the murders occurred in Pike County, Reader played no material role in the investigation. After officials learned of the murders on April 22, 2016, Reader immediately contacted the Bureau of Criminal Investigation. He requested that the Bureau's Special Investigations Unit—which the Attorney General's Office oversees—take the lead in the investigation. The Bureau agreed, and its agents arrived to investigate in a matter of hours.

The Bureau led the investigation from that point on. Although Reader received periodic updates, he played no direct role and had no direct involvement in the investigation. For example, Sheriff Reader was never the affiant on any search warrant, subpoena, or court order. And while he was at times present during the execution of some search warrants, he was there in conjunction with, not independent of, the Bureau. Further, he never participated in the searches themselves.

In sum, Sheriff Reader's removal from office poses no threat to the prosecution of the Pike County murders. Because there is no other conceivable reason for permitting this corrupt public official to stay in office, the Motion to Commence Suspension Proceedings ought to be granted and Reader ought to be removed.

## CONCLUSION

The Court should grant the State's Motion to Commence Suspension Proceedings Against a Public Official, and do everything possible to ensure Reader's swift removal from office.

Respectfully submitted,

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## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that a copy of the foregoing amicus brief was served by regular U.S. mail  
this 1st day of July, 2019, upon the following individuals:

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