

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

Idaho House of Representatives - House Ethics on House Policy Committee Meeting

Witness: Representative James Holtzclaw

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Dixon: Committee we have Representative James Holtzclaw with us. And I asked him to come speak with us because in conversations that had been circulating that we've talked about, about patterns and different behaviors. Representative Holtzclaw's name was mentioned as somebody who had interacted with Representative von Ehlinger and had warned him, uh, about certain behaviors. He was asked to intervene. So I thought it was prudent if he would explain to the Committee what his interaction with him was. And on those dates. Thank you Representative Holtzclaw. It's a little casual and um, but if you wouldn't mind just explaining what those interactions were. You and I spoke a bit earlier. Yes and I will remind you that we are still in the confidentiality phase of our preliminary investigations so, nothing is to leave this room. Nothing that you and I've spoken of prior (inaudible) told you that prior, that, we need you to act as if. Or put it out of your mind once you're done with this but, I think your interactions important for us to hear as we go through this investigation. Yes. Oh, I'm sorry. So many people. This is Bill Myers.

Holtzclaw: Hi Bill.

Dixon: And he is acting as counsel for the Committee. Ah, the AG's Office advises us, but it, we may be entering a phase where it's going to be a little more difficult and so we retained Mr. Myers to act as our counsel as well. So he'll be taking some notes and may have a question as we go through this. But I think what you have to say is pretty straight forward. But if you wouldn't mind describing what was asked of you and your interaction with Representative von Ehlinger regarding that.

Holtzclaw: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I'm a little apprehensive to be quite honest with you. Uh, because I know how it works, can hurt and destroy a man. Whether they're true or not true. Um, so I think that I am not going to talk to the Committee.

Dixon: Okay. Great. Alright. Well, thank you for coming here and telling me that. Sorry that we spent some of your time.

Holtzclaw: No, I think you'll... I'll

Horman: Just to clarify, per the Ethics Rule, um disclosure of even knowledge that there is an investigation going on, is a violation of the Ethics Rule.

Holtzclaw: I understand that Representative. And I would, I would never. Yeah.

Crane: Representative is your concern that statements you might make in this Committee setting would be used further in a public hearing?

Holtzclaw: Um, I'm not concerned with, with, with, with me personally and that how that may look going forward. What I'm, what I'm concerned about, Representative Crane is that um, everything that I'm telling you I heard second hand. So if in fact someone said something, would you go do this, and I did. It would almost be like I am affirming what was done or not done from this individual. Because again I have personal, I have a, anyway. Things have happened to me that someone said something about me that was totally not true, but yet, it, it could'a ruined me. And that's what I'm afraid of. That, that in fact what I'm saying or what I could say, in fact third party if best, you know, or hearsay. And that somehow is going to hurt this gentleman's or female, gentleman's lively-hood and life.

Crane: So you didn't have a direct conversation with Representative von Ehlinger?

Hotlzclaw: Yes I did Representative Crane.

Dixon: Representative, that's what we're asking about, nothing else. I just wanted to know your interaction with him. Not anything you might have heard about what happened.

Crane: Just what you said to him.

Hotlzclaw: Okay. Cause I don't know what done or what was not done.

Dixon: No that's not what we're asking. I'm sorry. If I misspoken or you had the wrong impression. You had an interaction with him and that's what we wanted to hear about.

Crane: Just tell us what you told him.

Dixon: Yeah. I deeply apologize if I miscommunicated that to you. And I'm glad, thank you for going down a little deeper. I didn't want you to just walk out.

Hotlzclaw: Okay, okay.

Dixon: Cause I want to accommodate you and what your feelings are. I'm not asking about third party anything. Just your one-on-one interaction and, and if you feel comfortable. Well no, not even that just that interaction.

Holtzclaw: Okay and I appreciate that. Because again I just want to say for the record I have no idea what was done, what was not done, what was said, what was not said between him and any other person.

Dixon: Not asking that in any way. Right. Yes.

Holtzclaw: Okay. Alright. So saying that, I was asked, but can I use names?

Dixon: Yes.

Holtzclaw: I was asked by Representative Blanksma, the Caucus Chair, to speak with him because, um there was again rumors or whatever, that maybe he was being too polite. I don't know the word or whatever, again I'm not trying lead you guys down any kind of path. Um, but because I had first-hand knowledge of how being overly nice to someone could perhaps be misconstrued as something other than that. Kay. Man, you all guys are tough. Man I feel like I'm in the court. [Laughing]. So saying, saying all that I came to him in a causal way, hey you know what, you're young, you're good-looking, and you know just kind of be careful because you know you don't wanna, but you, you don't be overly nice with anyone. You don't want to, to have anyone misconstrue, like of what I said, misconstrue what you're, what you're, what you're doing if you're flirting with em. Just kind of be monotone. Be, be pleasant, but not overly nice because of the situation that you're in. Because you're young and because you're single. He goes oh, okay, I appreciate that. Um, and that was last summer when we were in special session. I was also asked again, um, uh, about a month ago, and again, give or take, about a month ago, to, to speak him again because of um, again, hearsay stuff that might, may have happened, may have not happened. Um, and so I at this point I felt like I was, I owed it to him as a human being and as a brother in arms quite honestly, cause he was in the military, to speak with him quite...

Dixon: Forcefully, right?

Holtzclaw: ...well, a little bit less than that but, candidly I guess. And so, I, I set up a lunch with him. We sat down and I said look, you can't talk to anyone in a flirty manner. You cannot date anyone, ask out anyone, be with anyone in this, this is off limits to you. And I was almost just like that. This place is off limits to you. No more, you can't do it. You're gonna get in trouble. And I had Louisa with me, my, my fiancé. Um, and uh, just for her perspective and for his benefit, she kind of, yeah you know this could be misconstrued as flirting or it could be and he goes I appreciate that. And,

and I told him that even a kind way. Okay, you're single so would you like to get a, would you like to go to the movies with me, young lady, mam, in someone in this building because of the position that you're in could weigh more heavily in her decision than if you were just equally, um, yoked in this anyway. So. And, so that's what I said.

Dixon: Thank you Representative. Representative Davis.

Davis: So in your opinion do you feel that there is kind of a hierarchal, you were in the military, the fraternization kind of policy, or that kind of exists here. It's an unspoken, you know that Legislators shouldn't be dating staff or there's the people in hierarchal positions, it's inappropriate.

Holtzclaw: Um, I would say, yes mam. Um, me and you can have a conversation and have a banter, I should say, me and Representative Horman can have a banter among us because we're colleagues. Much differently than I can have a banter with someone, uh that is not of my. I mean not that we're better, it's just different positions. You know and, and it's not a rank system. It's just we're on the same plane and we, and we can have that banter on someone that, that maybe like a secretary or attaché, I would never have that same banter with. You know, hey good morning how you doing today. How was your weekend? We can't do that. I don't do that with anyone higher or lower in my view than, than my colleagues. That's just how I am so. Now, I am that way.

Davis: Can I just take it a little further than even banter? [Laughter]

Holtzclaw: Yes mam.

Davis: I guessing I would just like to hear from you. Not even just banter, but like you said, going out to a movie together or dating, that not right.

Holtzclaw: Um, in my view, if you're asking my view. Uh, yes mam. You should not date anyone in this sphere of who we are, who we work with. Anyone in this building is off limits. If you're single in my view. Whether you a man or a woman. If, if you're in a, if you're a Representative or a Senator, Senator, or an elected position I think, it's, I think they should be off limits. Man or female, either way. Uhm-hmm.

Dixon: You don't have to answer, but I need to ask this so you're original conversation with him, was that driven by rumors again, about his, I mean prior actions at that point in time as well?

Holtzclaw: Um, the Caucus Chair asked me ...

Dixon: Back in our special session?

Holtzclaw: Yes.

Dixon: Okay.

Holtzclaw: She asked me twice. Once it was a very, hey, ya know on the cuff. Hey ya know, be careful. And the second was more direct.

Dixon: Thank you.

Holtzclaw: Yes.

Dixon: We good. Thank you Representative. I'm sorry for the misunderstanding and the discomfort that I caused you. Or at least you were expecting. What you said to us is exactly what we wanted to hear.

Holtzclaw: Okay.

Dixon: It's that perspective that you had on those conversations. So I appreciate your time.

Holtzclaw: Okay. Thank you. Thank you Committee.

Crane: Don't forget your coffee.

Holtzclaw: Oh yeah. Now I can go relax.