

My Resignation

From: **Alice Stewart** (alicestewart1@msn.com)

Sent: Tue 4/12/11 9:39 AM

To: Alice (alicestewart1@msn.com)

Date: Wed, 6 Apr 2011 05:36:14 -0700

From: teresabelew@yahoo.com

Subject: My Resignation

To: dmatayo@hotmail.com

CC: chairman2nddist@aol.com; alicestewart1@msn.com; jkwood12@netzero.com

I imagine this has been a long night for everyone. I know it has been for me. I will not be at the office today. My letter of resignation addressed to Secretary Martin along with the phone, key, ID badge, etc. are all in your (Doug's) credenza. Keys to the desk and file drawers, are in my desk where I had told you they were being kept and the signature key is locked in the desk as well. Everything is organized and labeled with most items being in the desk drawers and the bottom file drawer. The ALEC reservations and flights are done. Calendar items are in red folders with dates in order and it should be easy to assign someone to pick that responsibility up. Here's the tough part. My resignation letter gives reference to my concerns about FOIA issues. In my opinion, concerns I have expressed related to leadership decisions were not taken into account as we moved through the past weeks. I have experienced tension and stress to the point that I have stated to you and others that I feel like a nervous wreck. In a meeting I asked Mark if he felt he had the counsel he needed. When you and I talked on Monday, I recounted my continued concerns about personnel, FOIA, Mark's stress level and what I perceived to be an environment of disrespect, fear and mistrust. On March 24th I was directed to print out all of Secretary Martin's emails (the print outs bear MY name) for the previous 30 days and turn them over to fulfill a FOIA request. When I started the project, I soon realized that one of the emails addressed to Secretary Martin would be immediately controversial. I immediately reported this to Alice. I was told to delete a certain email (which I did not) I was told that the email would be shredded if it fell into the scope of the FOIA request. That same night I discussed this with AJ and was told not to delete anything but also not to worry because the most important thing was to delay delivery of the FOIA until after budgets were approved. Based on what I was told and the discrepancy in the paper count of the 430 pages I submitted of email printouts compared with the number of copies invoiced to the Arkansas Times, there were likely items not included. I shared this issue with you, Doug and while you indicated that deleting the email should not happen, so far as I know you did not address the core issue. As the days have past since, the stress of this over arching issue and additional FOIA requests that have come forward (this was the first issue Secretary Martin mentioned to me yesterday) make it necessary (in my view) for me to resign. The email policy distributed yesterday by Cecil further indicates to me that this issue will be an ongoing one. I don't want to be part of this. It was my hope to talk directly to Secretary Martin yesterday but as you know, his schedule and focus were on other things. I have no desire to cause harm but simply can't and won't continue employment under these conditions. I wish that things had turned out differently. Only in the case that a critical matter comes up related to work items, I will reply to texting from Danielle. There is really not anything else to say. I don't plan to talk about it. I am going to be out of town and since I am travelling my reply may not be immediate.

April 6, 2011

Secretary of State Mark Martin
Arkansas State Capitol
Suite 256
Little Rock, AR

Dear Secretary Martin,

Please accept this as my resignation as a member of your Senior Management Team, serving in the position of Executive Assistant. My resignation is effective immediately.

I believe that certain aspects related to the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) are not being properly followed by the Secretary of State's Office.

I have communicated this to my superior and colleagues in the office, including Chief Deputy Doug Matayo and Deputies AJ Kelly and Alice Stewart. To my understanding those concerns have been ignored or dismissed. This deeply saddens me, but makes resignation necessary.

I must separate myself from an administration where such decisions violate my personal core values, as well as what I believe to be a fundamental public trust.

I am unable and unwilling to be part of an administration where I have lost faith in leadership.

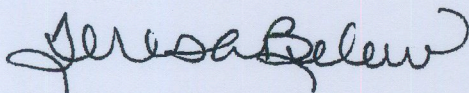
The law of this state allows the public open access to the vast majority of information within this office. Regrettably, I believe that neither the spirit nor the letter of the law has properly been followed when some FOIA requests have been made.

Over my career, I have built up a strong record of service. I refuse to allow my reputation and integrity to be put into question as it relates to my employment at the Secretary of State's Office.

I have left all of my state issued equipment (cell phone and charger), my door key and ID badge in Chief Deputy Matayo's office credenza. My office area desk keys, cabinet keys and signature keys are all in their proper places.

I request that this resignation letter be placed in my permanent employee file.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Teresa Belew", with a stylized, cursive-like script.

Teresa Belew

On Teresa Belew:

From Sec. Martin

I'm sad to lose Teresa Belew and wish her, and her family, well. I understand all too well the stress of her leadership position in the office. I'm disappointed with her written comments about compliance with FOIA. I have never had the opportunity to hear her concerns, as she did not express to me- nor to anyone else in our office- her specific concerns. In an ideal situation, she would have expressed those concerns to me before any FOIA response was delivered. The office has attempted to contact Teresa Belew to find out what her specific concerns are; but she has not yet responded to our inquiries. My office, our Executive team, and our employees remain committed to following the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. Governor Rockefeller instituted the FOIA for good reason, and I hope we never forget the legacy he left us. The office continues to re-examine all of our policies and procedures, and to update policies and procedures on an ongoing basis.