

January 15, 2014

Bureau of Ethics and Campaign Finance
404 James Robertson Parkway, Ste. 104
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear committee members,

I am writing you concerning my opponent, Eric Watson's fund raising. I believe he has acted both unethically and even illegally.

State Representative Eric Watson told some of his friends before the 2012 state election that he was going to run for Bradley County Sheriff in 2014. He this to told Ralph Creel, who says he is going to be Eric Watson's chief deputy. Watson told this close circle not to publicize this fact before he was re-elected as state representative. Since he had only token opposition, I believe he didn't want this information out because it may restrict his fund raising opportunities; knowing he was going to use it to run for sheriff.

When Eric Watson was terminated from the Bradley County Sheriff's Office in 2011 he told the Cleveland Daily Banner that he was leaving to help his father who was injured the year before. The chief deputy sheriff and the major over personnel meet with Watson and told him that he was terminated for cheating on his time sheet and for lying. Earlier this year Watson stated in a federal court deposition that he was fired because he was going to run for sheriff. Watson was being deposed in a lawsuit by a former employee that I fired for exposing himself to neighborhood children by cutting grass wearing his underwear. The federal judge ruled in my favor. The point I am making is that Watson says he was running for sheriff all along and yet continued to collect tens of thousands of dollars toward a state representative race.

Enclosed is a brochure advertising fund raiser for the state representative race. At this fund raiser he announced that he was running for the office of sheriff.

At least two of his donors have stated they did not give him money to be used in a sheriff's race.

I believe Watson acted fraudulently, knowing that the rules governing the state representative race are far more lax than the rules for the sheriff's race. The maximum amounts raised for a state representative are almost limitless and donors are hidden by PAC groups and those donors are not as accountable as those in the local county race.

I appreciate your consideration of these facts. I would be willing to answer any questions you may have about this matter.

Sincerely,
Sheriff Jim Ruth

3415 Eveningside Drive NW
Cleveland, TN 37312