

Respondent Name
John Snaza
Complainant Name
Melissa Genson
Complaint Description
<p>Melissa Genson (Tue, 11 Oct 2022 at 12:15 PM)</p> <p>Thurston County Sheriff John Snaza used, authorized the use of, and publicly induced the use of his office's public resources to assist his re-election campaign, in violation of RCW 42.52.180.</p> <p>Snaza began these illegal acts the night that he lost the primary in a landslide to a young deputy in his own office, Derek Sanders.</p> <p>John Snaza had repeatedly continued these illegal acts to this day.</p> <p>Allegation # 1) Sheriff John Snaza violated RCW 42.52.180 by forcing a female deputy, against her will, to make a public statement against Snaza's opponent that she did not believe was true. This occurred at work, during work hours. The sole purpose of Snaza's action was to assist his political campaign. (Deputy Dillon's signed statement is attached.)</p> <p>Deputy Dillon firmly believes that the motivation for Sheriff Snaza forcing her to make this statement was to help his own political campaign, and she did not want to take part in this illegal process. She reported these concerns to her supervisor, Sgt. Chatterton. (Sgt. Chatterton's signed statement is attached.)</p> <p>Even though there is zero evidence, John Snaza's supporters have publicly repeated John Snaza's unsubstantiated rumor that Deputy Sanders is guilty of workplace sexual harassment.</p> <p>Allegation # 2) Sheriff John Snaza publicly induced voters to request documents from his records office, for the sole purpose of assisting his campaign. This also violates RCW 42.52.180. (Screenshots from Snaza's campaign facebook page are attached.)</p> <p>Responding to public records requests takes a significant amount of public resources. That has a very significant public impact.</p> <p>I have personally waited eight months for the Thurston County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) to respond to public records requests. My requests were about actual crimes, not imaginary ones. This was long before this campaign.</p> <p>TCSO told me that my requests took that long to process because their records office was understaffed and overwhelmed with work. John Snaza has also said that his office is understaffed for their workload.</p> <p>Yet Sheriff John Snaza wants to divert those limited resources away from real people with real concerns, just because he lost his primary in a landslide to a young deputy from his own office.</p>
What impact does the alleged violation(s) have on the public?
Thurston County Sheriff John Snaza used, authorized the use of, and publicly induced the use of his office's public resources to assist his re-election campaign, in violation of RCW 42.52.180.

Snaza began these illegal acts the night that he lost the primary in a landslide to a young deputy in his own office, Derek Sanders.

John Snaza had repeatedly continued these illegal acts to this day.

Allegation # 1) Sheriff John Snaza violated RCW 42.52.180 by forcing a female deputy, against her will, to make a public statement against Snaza's opponent that she did not believe was true. This occurred at work, during work hours. The sole purpose of Snaza's action was to assist his political campaign. (Deputy Dillon's signed statement is attached.)

Deputy Dillon firmly believes that the motivation for Sheriff Snaza forcing her to make this statement was to help his own political campaign, and she did not want to take part in this illegal process. She reported these concerns to her supervisor, Sgt. Chatterton. (Sgt. Chatterton's signed statement is attached.)

Even though there is zero evidence, John Snaza's supporters have publicly repeated John Snaza's unsubstantiated rumor that Deputy Sanders is guilty of workplace sexual harassment.

The public impact of the above violation can't be overstated - for both women and men – who suffer this kind of force, harassment, and defamation by a boss. Since John Snaza has no supervisor, he is free to use his office's public resources to destroy the careers and reputations of anyone he considers a threat.

It is unconscionable that a male boss would still think he has the right to harass his female employees, and to force them to do things for him against their will. This is the 21st century. It's worse that he did it on the taxpayers' dime, during work hours.

It is downright sickening for a politician to use public resources to advance a negative cultural stereotype against his opponent. Derek Sanders is still in his 20s, and he is bi-racial. Sheriff Snaza tried to force a female employee to accuse Derek Sanders of workplace sexual harassment, to hurt Sanders' campaign. She risked her career and reputation, by bravely refusing.

Allegation # 2) Sheriff John Snaza publicly induced voters to request documents from his records office, for the sole purpose of assisting his campaign. This also violates RCW 42.52.180. (Screenshots from Snaza's campaign facebook page are attached.)

Responding to public records requests takes a significant amount of public resources. That has a very significant public impact.

I have personally waited eight months for the Thurston County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) to respond to public records requests. My requests were about actual crimes, not imaginary ones. This was long before this campaign.

TCSO told me that my requests took that long to process because their records office was understaffed and overwhelmed with work. John Snaza has also said that his office is understaffed for their workload.

Yet Sheriff John Snaza wants to divert those limited resources away from real people with real concerns, just because he lost his primary in a landslide to a young deputy from his own office.

I have a friend who worked in the public records office of the Washington Department of Corrections. She told me the heartbreaking part of her job was that most requests were people trying to find lost loved ones. They had gotten to the point where their greatest hope and prayer was that their loved one was in prison somewhere, because they had looked everywhere else – including morgues.

If their loved one wasn't in prison, then his or her body was probably out there somewhere, and they would probably never find it, and they would probably never know what happened.

The criminal justice system is a grown-up business, involving real people with real problems. The Sheriff's Office is a crucial part of that system.

Yet Sheriff John Snaza wants to shove those people's needs aside, so he can use his office's limited public resources to stalk and defame his political opponent.

That is another reason why these allegations have serious public impacts.

Thank you for your time.

-- Melissa Genson, CPA/CIA

List of attached evidence or contact information where evidence may be found

- 1) Deputy Dillon's signed statement
- 2) Sgt. Chatterton's signed statement
- 3) Screenshot 1 of John Snaza's campaign facebook page
- 4) Screenshot 2 of John Snaza's campaign facebook page

List of potential witnesses

Certification (Complainant)

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that information provided with this complaint is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 7, 2022
Contact: Derek Sanders
(360) 836-0323
Derek@SandersForSheriff.org

Sheriff Snaza Leverages Internal Investigation for Political Gain

YELM – On the night of Derek Sanders' decisive Primary Election victory, Sheriff Snaza placed Deputy Sanders under investigation for "misconduct and social media campaign violations." This was done despite a documented recommendation from a high-ranking Sheriff's Office official to have an independent investigation conducted to avoid the conflict of interest in launching an internal investigation against his political opponent.

The complainant in this investigation was anonymous. Deputy Dillon, whom the Sheriff's Office was pressing forward as a victim, was forced to provide a statement against her will by the Sheriff's Office. Deputy Dillon provided the following remarks for the public at the conclusion of the investigation:

"In July of this year, I spoke with Deputy Sanders about a circulating rumor and we resolved the matter at the lowest level, as we are taught to do. A few weeks later, I was informed the Sheriff's Office had received an anonymous complaint about the resolved matter and launched an investigation. The Sheriff's Office then required me to provide a statement despite my request that this matter be considered resolved. As a Deputy with TCSO, I have strived to remain apolitical as I am here to focus on my work. Unfortunately, this matter involved me directly.

Despite being told the investigation was not being conducted due to politics, I can't help but feel that it was indeed fueled by the politics surrounding this election. The incident was not a case of sexual harassment, and at no point during my time at TCSO have I felt sexually harassed by Deputy Sanders. I am not here to assist or oppose a campaign, I am here to work. Should I have felt that the issue needed attention beyond what could be handled on an individual-to-individual level, I would have escalated the issue. I ask that this be taken as my only comment on the matter so I may continue to focus on my career and not further be involved in the politics of the Sheriff's Office."

- Thurston County Deputy Sheriff M. Dillon



Sergeant Chatterton, who was involved in the incident as the supervisor, also provided a statement:

"In July I was informed of circulating rumors involving Deputy Dillon and Deputy Sanders.

I immediately took action and discussed the validity of the rumors and the course of action with Deputy Dillon. Deputy Dillon was overly adamant that she wanted to have a conversation with Deputy Sanders and did not want me involved as the first line supervisor. I advised Deputy Dillon that I would like to have a conversation with her after she spoke with Deputy Sanders to make sure the incident/rumors were resolved, and that if she did not get the resolution she was looking for, I would then start my fact finding into the incident.

I was notified by Deputy Dillon that this incident was resolved, and she was once again overly adamant she did not need or want further action.

A few days later I was approached by a superior officer and questioned about this incident and my involvement. I explained I felt this incident was handled at the lowest level and resolved. An investigation was started shortly after.

After the investigation was completed, Deputy Dillon expressed that she felt this investigation was politically motivated and did not want to take part in the process.

This statement is not a political endorsement and is only intended to provide insight into this incident, which was genuinely resolved and needed no further action."

- Thurston County Sergeant S. Chatterton



The Sanders for Sheriff team has run a campaign focused on developing solutions for the very real problems facing our community. This investigation was blatant political retaliation for Deputy Sanders decision to challenge the incumbent Sheriff, and underscores exactly why new leadership is needed in the Sheriff's Office.

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17h · 🌐

If you want more information on my opponent, you're welcome to submit a public records request to the Thurston County Sheriff's Office.

Be informed before you vote.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 7, 2022

John Snaza

SheriffJohnSnaza@gmail.com

Thurston County: I'd like to address the lies coming from my opponent's campaign.

Photos

See all photos





Re-Elect John Snaza for Thurston County Sheriff

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If you want more information on my opponent, you're welcome to submit a public records request to the Thurston County Sheriff's Office.

Be informed before you vote.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 7, 2022

John Snaza

SheriffJohnSnaza@gmail.com

Thurston County: I'd like to address the lies coming from my opponent's campaign.

My opponent is trying to play the victim because he is seeing the wave of supporters that are coming to our campaign. He claims that I used an internal investigation for political gain. Have you ever heard anything about an internal investigation coming from my campaign? I'll answer that for you, you haven't. That's because I hold myself to a high standard that's expected of a Sheriff. The statements he is making are a last-ditch effort to trick you, the citizens of Thurston County. Don't be fooled!

For as long as I am your Sheriff, I will keep politics out of the office, I will hold abusers accountable and above all protect our most vulnerable. When somebody needs us we will be there, no matter what. I consider myself lucky to work side by side with the men and women who make up the Thurston County Sheriff's Office. Don't let the misguided attempt by a political campaign tarnish the outstanding reputation that the Sheriff's office has had for many years.

I personally will not run smear campaigns but I trust that you, the public, are capable of doing your own research. I could talk about my opponent's history, but as the Sheriff, I choose to take the higher road. If you want more information on my opponent, you're welcome to submit a public records request to the Thurston County Sheriff's Office.

Be informed before you vote.

Thurston County Sheriff, John Snaza