

IN THE SUPREME COURT
OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA

INQUIRY CONCERNING A JUDGE,
THE HONORABLE NEIL A. RODDENBERY,
JQC 2020-154

SC20- _____

_____ /

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION OF INVOLUNTARY RETIREMENT

The Commission, through its Investigative Panel, has received information that Judge Neil Roddenbery was evaluated by Dr. Daniel Traviesa, MD, on March 13, 2020, and was diagnosed with a permanent disability that seriously interferes with Judge Roddenbery's ability to perform his judicial duties.

Dr. Traviesa's diagnostic report states that Judge Roddenbery has been diagnosed with Primary Progressive Aphasia (PPA), and/or logopenic variant of Alzheimer's disease. His evaluation revealed that the judge was presently experiencing "significant cognitive impairment," and he concludes that Judge Roddenbery's condition is permanent and will result in a "slow progressive dementia." It is Dr. Traviesa's opinion that the condition means Judge Roddenbery "...will not be able to function at his present employment as a circuit judge." (Dr. Traviesa's report is attached as Exhibit A).¹ Chief Judge Ellen Masters concurs with the treating physician that the condition prevents Judge Roddenbery from performing his judicial duties. (A letter from Judge Masters is attached as Exhibit B).

Judge Roddenbery has also provided a letter stating his desire to be

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involuntarily retired due to the disability seriously interfering with his ability to perform his judicial duties. A stipulation between the Judge and Commission is being filed concurrently with the Notice of Formal Charges, and these Findings. (Judge Roddenbery's letter is attached as Exhibit C).

Accordingly, the Investigative Panel, based upon these uncontroverted facts, concludes that Judge Roddenbery is permanently disabled and incapable of performing his duties as a circuit court judge. The Investigative Panel therefore respectfully recommends to the Supreme Court of Florida that Judge Roddenbery be involuntarily retired by reason of a permanent disability that seriously interferes with the performance of his judicial duties, pursuant to Article V, Section 12(c)(1) of the Florida Constitution and Rules 6(a) and 6(j) of the Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission Rules, immediately upon the filing of any opinion accepting and confirming this recommendation.

Dated this 6th day of April 2020.

INVESTIGATIVE PANEL OF THE FLORIDA
JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS COMMISSION

By: /s/ Krista Marx
Hon. Krista Marx, Chair
Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission

¹ Certain portions of Dr. Traviesa's report not having any relevance to the diagnosis discussed herein, have been redacted.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the above and foregoing has been furnished by electronic service to The Honorable Neil Roddenbery, Circuit Judge, Tenth Judicial Circuit, Polk County Courthouse 255 North Broadway P.O. Box 9000, Drawer J-158, Bartow, Florida 33831-9000, nroddenbery@jud10.flcourts.org, this 6th day of April 2020.

/s/ Alexander J. Williams

Alexander J. Williams
General Counsel