



NAACP

Derrick Johnson
*President and
Chief Executive Officer*

Leon W. Russell
*Chairman
National Board of Directors*

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

April 25, 2019

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL AND CERTIFIED MAIL

Mr. John Gaskin, III
NAACP St. Louis County Branch
6373 Sutherland, Suite 2E
St. Louis, MO 63109

Re: **Removal from Branch Office**

Dear Mr. Gaskin:

It has come to my attention that you, in your capacity as President of the St. Louis County Branch of the NAACP ("Branch"), have publicly spoken out in support of proposed state legislation that would make it more difficult for survivors of sexual assault at Missouri's state universities to come forward with their claims and have them adjudicated. This position conflicts with NAACP policy regarding implementation of Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972 and its supporting regulations, which is reflected most recently in the NAACP's January 2019 opposition to proposed rule changes at the federal level that would have largely the same effects as the proposed Missouri legislation. *See* Comments of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights in ED Docket No. ED-2018-OCR-0064, RIN 1870-AA14, *Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance* (submitted January 30, 2019) (attached). Moreover, it appears from the evidence we have received that you took this position without having consulted with the leadership of the Missouri State Conference or other units in the State, despite the fact that the proposed legislation would apply to all public universities in Missouri. Furthermore, it appears that you took this action without having obtained authorization or ratification of your actions from the Branch's Executive Committee, in apparent violation of the NAACP's Bylaws for Units.

Separately, it has come to my attention that you may have participated in discussions of the Branch Executive Committee regarding the proposed merger of St. Louis City and St. Louis County governmental functions and that you publicly announced your support of the proposed merger in your capacity as President of the St. Louis County Branch, despite having accepted a paid position from an outside entity to advocate in support of the merger. You did not disclose this apparent conflict of interest until confronted by a newspaper reporter following a press conference announcing your support of the merger.

Given the importance of these issues to the NAACP and the communities we represent, I have concluded that the conduct described above is inimical to the best interests of the Association and presents a danger of irreparable harm to the Association and the St. Louis County Branch. Moreover, I have concluded that immediate action is necessary to mitigate that harm.

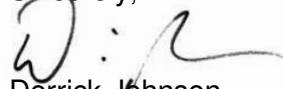
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Accordingly, under the authority granted to me under Article X, Section 4 of the NAACP Bylaws for Units, I am hereby suspending you from office as President of the St. Louis County Branch of the NAACP, effective immediately, pending further action by the NAACP Board of Directors.

Should you timely request a hearing regarding this matter, one will be provided as outlined in Article X of the NAACP Bylaws for Units. Any such request for hearing – as well as any written response you would like to submit regarding the above allegations – must be sent within 20 calendar days from the postmark on the envelope containing this letter, along with a copy of the envelope showing the postmark. Your hearing request must be sent via certified mail to the attention of Yutiv Stafford, Field Services Manager, NAACP, 4805 Mount Hope Drive, Baltimore, Maryland 21215.

You are directed to cease and desist immediately from holding yourself out as President of the St. Louis County Branch of the NAACP. You are further directed to turn over to the 1st Vice President of the Branch – no later than seven calendar days from the postmarked date of this letter – all Branch records, keys and security codes for all NAACP property, all computer identification names and passwords, and all information regarding social media accounts used by or in the name of the Branch. If you have any questions, you may contact Regional Field Director Kevin Myles at kmyles@naacpnet.org.

Sincerely,



Derrick Johnson
President and Chief Executive Officer

cc: Chairman Leon W. Russell, Chair, National Board of Directors
President Gloria Sweet-Love, Chair, Committee on Membership and Units
Kevin Myles, Regional Field Director

Attachment