



NEWS RELEASE

Arizona House of Representatives

Representative Joseph Chaplik (R-3)

1700 West Washington • Phoenix, Arizona • 85007

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

House Ethics Committee Issues Final Report Regarding Investigation of Rep. Leezah Sun

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – The Arizona House Ethics Committee today issued its final report regarding the ethics investigation report involving Representative Leezah Sun, which concludes that Representative Sun committed a pattern of disorderly behavior in violation of House Rule 1.

Statement from Ethics Committee Chairman Joseph Chaplik:

“As the Chairman of the Ethics Committee, I wish to emphasize the role our committee plays in addressing complaints brought forward by House members regarding potential violations of [House Rules](#). It is important to clarify that our committee is not intended to emulate a court of law, and our investigation of matters is not conducted as a trial. Rather, the proceeding in which Committee members have engaged in this matter were to receive Representative Sun’s input and gather pertinent facts related to a specific internal House matter—namely, whether Representative Sun engaged in disorderly behavior, contravening House Rule 1.”

“In line with principles of fairness and due process, Representative Sun, like any House member, was entitled to a judicious consideration of the allegations against her. I’m proud that the Committee strived at all times to satisfy this constitutional guarantee, conducting two hearings to provide a platform for Representative Sun to present her perspective.”

“I am appreciative of the witnesses, members, and staff of the committee for demonstrating and upholding the integrity of the House and ensuring that our proceedings adhered to the highest standards of professionalism and fairness.”

A copy of the final report is attached.

Joseph Chaplik is a Republican member of the Arizona House of Representatives serving Legislative District 3, which includes Scottsdale, Fountain Hills, and the Northeast Valley in Maricopa County. Follow him on X/Twitter at @JosephChaplik.

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Arizona House of Representatives
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON ETHICS – JANUARY 30, 2024

MR. SPEAKER,

Your Committee on Ethics (“Committee”) has considered the Ethics Complaint (“Complaint”) formally presented on November 6, 2023, by Representatives Lupe Contreras, Oscar De Los Santos, Nancy Gutierrez, and Melody Hernandez against Representative Leezah Sun, which is based on Representative Sun’s behavior off the Capitol campus but under the color of her office as a member of the Arizona House of Representatives.

This Report summarizes the Committee’s investigation and factual findings. The Committee unanimously concludes that Representative Sun committed a pattern of disorderly behavior, thereby violating Rule 1 of the Rules of the Arizona House of Representatives and damaging the institutional integrity of the House.

Consistent with the text of the Arizona Constitution, *see* Ariz. Const. art. 4, part 2, § 11 (empowering the House to “punish its members for disorderly behavior”), and because Representative Sun’s violation of Rule 1 occurred in connection with her capacity as a member of this House, the Committee refers this Report to the whole House to determine what disciplinary measures should be taken.

I. BACKGROUND

For purposes of clarity and ease of reference, the following incidents involving Representative Sun’s conduct are described below in chronological order.

A. *Littleton Elementary School District Incident*

On December 14, 2022, before she took office, Representative Sun met with Dr. Roger Freeman, the Superintendent of the Littleton Elementary School District, at her request, to discuss potential legislation for her upcoming first term. Exh. 9. But the meeting soon turned into what Dr. Freeman characterized as a series of “lectures” by Representative Sun on multiple subjects, including her displeasure with the Littleton School Board president for writing about one of her campaign aides. Exh. 9 at 1. Representative Sun told Dr. Freeman that “the only reason she hadn’t already ‘gone after’ the District was because [the aide] asked her not to.” *Id.* After Dr. Freeman was unable to successfully move Representative Sun onto a different subject, Representative Sun asked him if he was familiar with SB 1487. When he replied that he was not, she stated that it was a bill that would allow her, as a state legislator, to have “anybody investigated for any reason.” Dr. Freeman inquired what allegation Representative Sun would make, to which she reiterated that “it didn’t matter because she could say anything.” *Id.*

Dr. Freeman took this as a threat to either his job or the district as a whole and believed that Representative Sun’s conduct and remark was an act of intimidation. *Hearing*, 12/19/23 00:26:00. Dr. Freeman perceived the meeting to be intimidating because of the conversation’s

“elevated tenor” as well as the “outstanding rarity” of anything like this happening in his thirty years of work in the public sector. *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 00:35:00-37:00.

B. *Interference in a Private Custodial Matter*

On June 16, 2023, four minor children involved in a private custodial matter were to be transferred, pursuant to a court order, from their mother to their father for his scheduled visitation. The court had ordered that the transfer be supervised and facilitated by Family First Forensic Consultants. Exh. 4 at 1. Kristyn Alcott, Family First’s agency director and supervisor, arrived just before 6:00 p.m. at the Avondale Dairy Queen parking lot—the location and time agreed upon by the parties’ attorneys. But the children refused to exit their vehicle and go with Ms. Alcott for their father’s parenting time.

Nearly an hour into trying to convince the children to comply with the court order, Representative Sun—who is not a party or otherwise involved in the legal case—approached the scene wearing a badge with “Rep. Leezah Sun” written on it, stating that the family members were her friends and that she just wanted to see what was going on because she had “heard [they were] stuck in this situation.” Exh. 1 at 53; *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 01:53:00. She repeated that Ms. Alcott should “call it a day” and reschedule the transfer. Representative Sun rebuffed Ms. Alcott’s statement that a court order cannot be rescheduled by saying, “Well, it’s a court order to always have due process and this process is part of that.” *Id.* at 54. When Ms. Alcott restated that she was following the court’s orders, Representative Sun stated that she did not believe Ms. Alcott was and again repeated her suggestion that she “call it a day.” *Id.* at 56-57. Although Representative Sun stated that she was there as a family friend, when Ms. Alcott addressed her as “Miss,” Representative Sun corrected her: “No, it’s Representative Leezah Sun.” *Id.* at 56.

Representative Sun became more assertive in her remarks toward the court-appointed supervisor and in her stance that the transfer should not occur: “Yeah. No, you are done. Trust me, you are done” (*Id.* at 57); “This is a cruel procedure that you are taking part in and I will document it. . . . Yeah, and my words will stick.” (*Id.* at 58); “That’s the due process that you’re not following and I’m here watching you not following it” (*Id.* at 59); “Now you need to move on” (*Id.* at 60). During the exchange, Representative Sun was reminded multiple times that a court order was in play, and each time she dismissed it.

Eventually, Ms. Alcott informed the children that she would report back to the court that the order could not be carried out and that they would try again the next week for the father’s next scheduled visitation. *Id.* at 59, 60. After Ms. Alcott went back to her car, Representative Sun told the children that their mother was waiting for them at home and praised them for “doing a wonderful job” and “doing everything right” by refusing to comply with the court-ordered transfer. *Id.* at 62-63. After a few minutes, Representative Sun then went to Ms. Alcott’s car and allegedly advised her that she would report back to the Attorney General that “due process was done” and that she did not see anything inappropriate occur. Exh. 2 at 4.

Ms. Alcott subsequently wrote a report about the incident and filed it with the court. Exh. 2. In it, she described that Representative Sun had told her that she was there in her official capacity and that although she had initially believed that her intervention would be a “conflict,” she had spoken with Attorney General Kris Mayes and she believed that she “absolutely” needed to be there. *Id.* at 3.

C. *Incidents Involving City of Tolleson Employees*

On October 18, 2023, three employees of the City of Tolleson petitioned for an injunction against workplace harassment against Representative Sun. Exh. 5. The petition detailed three incidents that the employees alleged were aggressive and threatening, and together amounted to harassment. First, the employees alleged that on May 31, 2023, Representative Sun arrived at the Tolleson Civic Center without an appointment but wanting to speak with a member of the city council. Because no councilmembers were available at the time, staff invited Representative Sun to meet with the three employees: City Manager Reyes Medrano, Chief Government Affairs Officer Pilar Sinawi, and Government Affairs Support Specialist Alicia Guzman. Although the meeting initially did not have any issues, the employees alleged that Representative Sun became “agitated and aggressive,” and began yelling, using profanities, and responding to the employees’ efforts to calm the situation by instead escalating the intensity of her behaviors. The petition described that, eventually, Representative Sun “aggressively leaned towards [Mr. Medrano] and stared at him for several seconds in what seemed to be a trance, and in a manner suggesting she wanted to physically hurt” him. *Id.* at 2. The employees further said that they “observed Ms. Sun reach into her purse as though she were looking for something,” and that given the totality of her behavior during the meeting, they feared that she “might be looking for a weapon in her purse.”

One of the employees, Ms. Guzman, had audio recorded the final moments of the meeting with Representative Sun in which one of the employees told Representative Sun that she believed the meeting had become inappropriate and needed to end, implying that none of them felt “comfortable” or “safe” with how the meeting had progressed. *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 1:32:00; Exh. 11. The audio recording further captures Ms. Guzman’s conversation with Representative Sun as she escorted her to the elevator, during which Representative Sun told Ms. Guzman that Mr. Medrano was “a fucking asshole” and a “douchebag,” and expressed that Mr. Medrano needed to have more respect for elected officials. Exh. 11.

Next, the employees asserted that on August 29, 2023, Representative Sun attended the League of Arizona Cities and Towns conference in Tucson. Although none of the three Tolleson employees attended, they had heard from a witness that during a conversation about the city of Tolleson, Representative Sun exclaimed, “Pilar Sinawi better not show her face here, or I will smack her in the face and throw her off this balcony to kill her!” Exh. 6 at 2. The employees then reported it to police. Given the nature of their previous interaction with Representative Sun, the employees alleged in the petition that this second incident made them fear for their safety.

Finally, the employees alleged that on September 13, 2023, Representative Sun sent a friend request on Instagram to Mr. Medrano’s daughter as well as Ms. Sinawi’s spouse. The employees interpreted these requests as attempts to threaten and intimidate them through their family members. *Id.* at 3.

The Maricopa County Superior Court granted the petition that same day, prohibiting Representative Sun from having contact with any of the three employees and from going to the Tolleson Civic Center. Exh. 5. The court further ordered that Representative Sun not possess, receive, or purchase firearms for the duration of the order. Absent court-ordered changes, the injunction order remains effective until October 18, 2024.

In response to the injunction and subsequent media inquiry about it, Representative Sun issued a six-page written response. Exh. 7. In it, she characterized the allegations as being part of an “ongoing defamation campaign” against her and an affirmative effort to prevent her from

fulfilling her obligations as an elected state representative. *Id.* at 1. Specifically regarding the interaction at the Tolleson Civic Center, Representative Sun contended that she had made only “a single crass utterance” during the meeting and that all aggressive behavior was actually exhibited by the city employees. She admitted, however, that everyone in the meeting had “talk[ed] all over each other, voices escalated, and it was tense,” and that she and Mr. Medrano “in particular were going back and forth.” *Id.* at 5. Eventually, she asserted, she grew increasingly frustrated with him, called him a “douchebag” and “perhaps looked at him.” *Id.* She further stated that as she left that building, and in a hallway that she believed to be empty, she blew “off steam to describe what had just happened,” calling Mr. Medrano a “jerk” for not listening to her and being disrespectful toward her. *Id.* Rep. Sun claimed she was unaware that she was being audio recorded at that time. *Id.*

Regarding the alleged threat made at the Tucson conference, Representative Sun wrote that while she was there, she met with a lobbyist. During that meeting, she claimed that she “used hyperbolic language such as referring to Pilar Sinawi as ‘a bitch’ and saying [she] was glad she was not [t]here,” and warned the lobbyist to be careful when dealing with the three Tolleson employees because she “kn[e]w them to employ underhanded tactics.” *Id.* at 1. Representative Sun further asserted that she had “made a disclaimer” to the lobbyist and her associates who were also present, “as I always do, when using hyperbolic language” that she does “not believe in causing harm or violence of any kind.” *Id.* at 1. As to the allegations, Representative Sun wrote: “I did not make the threats described.” *Id.* at 2.

Finally, Representative Sun asserted that she has multiple people who manage her social media accounts and “send follow requests on Instagram to thousands of constituents.” *Id.* at 2. She stated that she did not see any record of the family members having accepted her follow requests and that in any event, “following someone on social media is not a crime.” *Id.*

In a phone interview with the *Arizona Republic* on October 30, 2023, Representative Sun continued to deny any wrongdoing and characterized the Tolleson employees’ injunction as part of a grander scheme to defame her. Exh. 8. She said that the allegations by the employees about the civic center meeting and the conference were “just nothing” to her, and that she was “tickled” by the whole situation. *Id.* at 5.

II. ETHICS COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

Complaint and Response

On November 6, 2023, Representatives Lupe Contreras, Oscar De Los Santos, Nancy Gutierrez, and Melody Hernandez formally presented the Complaint against Representative Sun to the Ethics Committee Chairman. *Complaint* at 1. The Complaint alleges that preventing the execution of a court order in a private matter in which she is not a party and the incidents involving the Tolleson employees were reflective of a “pattern of erratic and aggressive behavior” that is “unbecoming of an elected official,” and submits that Representative Sun’s conduct constitutes disorderly behavior under House Rule 1 because it reflects poorly on Representative Sun and the House as an institution. *Id.* at 1. The Complaint further suggests that the incident with the family court order might constitute “custodial interference” under Arizona Revised Statute § 13-1302, a class 3 felony. *Id.* at 2. Accordingly, the complainants asked that the Ethics Committee “convene and investigate” Representative Sun’s actions. *Id.*

Pursuant to the House Ethics Committee Rule of Procedure 13, the Committee provided Representative Sun, who elected to exercise her right under Rule 15 to engage legal counsel, with

an opportunity to respond to the Complaint in writing. She did so on November 13, 2023. In it, Representative Sun does not deny several of the actions alleged in the Complaint, which she addressed in turn. First, Representative Sun admitted that she “may have acted inappropriately” when she intervened and prevented the execution of the court-ordered transfer of the minor children in the private custodial matter. *Response* at 4. Notably, she did not dispute any allegations about being confrontational, introducing herself as a state representative, or otherwise demanding that the court-ordered supervisor cease her efforts to comply with a lawful court order. *Id.* at 1-2. Instead, she refuted only that she invoked the Attorney General’s name during the interaction and justified her actions based on the children being in the car for over an hour. *Id.* She wrote that she “knows now not to interfere with any custody transfer.” *Id.* at 2.

Second, regarding the Tolleson Civic Center incident, Representative Sun argued only that Mr. Medrano’s statements that he felt threatened by her lacked credibility because he is bigger in size than she is. *Id.* at 2. She did not address the allegations of fear and intimidation felt by the remaining two employees or deny that she had behaved aggressively during the meeting toward the women or Mr. Medrano. Instead, she asserted that she “never made any *verbal* threats of *imminent* danger,” “never made gestures or alluded that she was about to *strike* [Mr. Medrano] or anyone else in the room,” and countered that in fact she “became quiet as she processed what she believed to be [Mr. Medrano’s] flagrant and unrelenting contempt for her.” *Id.* at 3 (emphases added). She concluded that she “should not have used profanities when leaving the building,” but said that she did not use that language in Mr. Medrano’s presence. *Id.*

Third, Representative Sun denied saying that she was going to throw Ms. Sinawi off the hotel balcony but admitted that she had said that if Ms. Sinawi were at the conference, she would “bitch slap” her. *Id.* at 3. Representative Sun contended that this could not be considered a “credible threat” because Ms. Sinawi was not in Tucson at that time and did not hear it herself. *Id.* She did not, however, address the impropriety of the statement in the first place other than saying it “was not the best move.” *Id.* Instead, Representative Sun offered that if she had actually meant to cause Ms. Sinawi harm, she would have actually harmed her: “[Representative Sun] could have driven to her house or place of work when she returned from Tucson.” *Id.* at 3.

Additionally, Representative Sun posited that even if she had said that she would throw Ms. Sinawi off the balcony, it would not be “actionable” because Ms. Sinawi would have to be in Tucson at that time and at that specific balcony for the threatened action to occur. By contrast, Representative Sun offered: if she “would have said that she is going to shoot Ms. Sinawi the next time she sees her and Rep. Sun owned a firearm, that could be a credible threat. If she said she was going to run her over with her car when Ms. Sinawi showed up for work, that could have been considered credible and actionable.” *Id.* Again, Representative Sun notably did not address the impropriety of making any such comment or threat in the first place, particularly while acting under the color of her office.

Finally, Representative Sun contended that sending a single friend request each to Mr. Medrano’s daughter and Ms. Sinawi’s husband alone did not amount to harassment. *Id.*

After the Chairman received the Complaint and Representative Sun’s Response, he received correspondence from Dr. Roger Freeman, the Superintendent of the Littleton Elementary School District. Exh. 9. In the letter, Dr. Freeman wrote that he had read a news article about the ethics complaint and the allegations in it and believed it was “a familiar story” and described his December 2022 meeting with her.

Rule 15 Evidentiary Hearings

On December 19, 2023, the Committee held an evidentiary hearing open to the public and press pursuant to Rule 15 of the Committee's Rules of Procedure. During that hearing, the Committee learned the identity of two additional witnesses who until that point were noted only as "anonymous" in the record. The Committee agreed that those witnesses could provide details necessary for its investigation into the allegations made in the Complaint. The Committee therefore held a subsequent open hearing on January 25, 2024, for the purpose of hearing from those two witnesses. The Chairman accepted the following exhibits for the Committee's consideration:

1. Reporter's transcript of the audio recording dated June 16, 2023. This was attached to Representative Sun's Response as "Exhibit 1."
2. Family First Forensic Consultants Report by Kristyn Alcott dated June 19, 2023. This was attached to the Complaint.
3. Tolleson Police Department Incident Report. This was attached to the Complaint.
4. Tolleson Police Department Incident Report dated September 13, 2023.
5. Petition for Workplace Injunction dated October 18, 2023. This was attached to the Complaint.
6. Injunction Against Harassment dated October 18, 2023.
7. Six-page written response for the media by Representative Sun about the Injunction. This was attached to the Complaint.
8. AZCentral article entitled, "Arizona Rep. Leezah Sun Decries 'False Statements' as Court Grants Restraining Order Against Her" dated November 3, 2023.
9. Correspondence to the Ethics Committee Chairman from Littleton Elementary School District Superintendent Dr. Roger Freeman dated November 6, 2023.
10. An audio recording of the June 16, 2023 encounter that was submitted with Representative Sun's Response to the Complaint. The recording is 57 minutes and 25 seconds long.
11. An audio recording of the May 31, 2023 interaction at the Tolleson Civic Center. The recording is 2 minutes and 39 seconds long.
12. An aerial image of the Dairy Queen parking lot where the interaction with Kristyn Alcott took place.
13. Declaration of Elizabeth Goodman.
14. Declaration of Kayla Destiny Ruiz Davidian.

Pursuant to the Ethics Committee's Rule 15, Representative Sun and her counsel were provided an opportunity to examine each of the exhibits.

Finally, the Committee carefully considered testimony from the following witnesses: Dr. Roger Freeman, Kristyn Alcott, Reyes Medrano, Pilar Sinawi, Alicia Guzman, Elizabeth Goodman, and Kayla Destiny Ruiz Davidian. The Committee also considered Representative Sun's testimony during the evidentiary hearings, including her responses to Committee members' questions and her presentation of evidence.

III. COMMITTEE'S FINDINGS OF FACT

As the Chairman emphasized at the evidentiary hearings, the sole issue for the Committee's consideration is whether Representative Sun violated House Rule 1, which prohibits members from engaging in disorderly behavior. In undertaking that inquiry, the Committee makes the following factual findings, accompanied by the Committee's reasoning to support each finding.

1. THE COMMITTEE FINDS that Representative Sun levied a death threat toward the Tolleson official while acting in her official capacity as a member of the Arizona House of Representatives.

Representative Sun admitted that she was present at the conference and a participant of this meeting in her official capacity as a state representative. *Hearing*, 01/25/24, at 00:44:00. She further admitted to having been “livid” that day because of news she had heard about her mentee and former campaign aide being charged with stealing campaign signs and having been generally “displeased” with the city of Tolleson’s leadership officials. *Hearing*, 01/25/24 at 00:51:00-53:00. To that end, Representative Sun agrees that she said she would “bitch slap” the city’s chief government affairs officer. *See Response* at 3; Exh. 8 at 1; *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 01:57:00; *Hearing*, 01/25/24 at 00:29:00; *but see* Exh. 7 (admitting that she only referred to the official as a “bitch,” but otherwise avowing that she “did not make the threats described”) *and Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 01:58:00 (avowing to the accuracy of Exhibit 7). But she disagrees with the remaining allegations in the Complaint.

The Committee does not find Representative Sun’s contentions credible. Foremost, Representative Sun denies having said that she “would throw [Ms. Sinawi] off the balcony” or “to kill her.” Nonetheless, the Committee finds credible the testimony that she in fact levied a death threat about the Tolleson official while acting in her capacity as a member of the Arizona House of Representatives. The Committee does not make this finding lightly, but the evidence sufficiently supports it.

First, Representative Sun claims that her words were said in a private conversation, thereby suggesting that they cannot be deemed “disorderly.” *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 01:58:00-59:00. However, the words were said during a meeting conducted in her capacity as a public official in an open room during a conference where many people were present and many conversations were occurring. Regardless, whether or not she said them in a private meeting or a public one is of no matter when those words were said aloud to others, threatened and expressed a desire for bodily harm against someone, and were made under the color of the office of state representative. To be clear: the fact that the words were ultimately reported to people outside of that conversation is not what makes Representative Sun’s action disorderly, it was the utterance of the words at all in this setting and while acting in her official capacity.

Second, Representative Sun claims in her Response that the remark was made only to “add levity” to the situation. *Response* at 3. But a desire to physically harm someone—by either assaulting them or throwing them over a ledge—or to take their life cannot be considered levity in any situation. Moreover, Representative Sun’s own admissions show that she was genuinely upset that day and that by the time of the conference, she had already felt animosity toward the Tolleson officials. *See, e.g.*, Exh. 11. Specifically, Representative Sun had clearly expressed her disfavor of the Tolleson employees at her first meeting with them in May 2023 at the civic center, as heard in the Exhibit 11 audio recording as well as in her own description of that meeting, in which she suggests that the employees had been disrespectful toward her because of their friendship with a former state representative with whom she has “had contention ... in the past.” *Id.*; Exh. 7 at 3. By the time of the conference, Representative Sun was aware that the employees had filed an incident report with the police about that meeting, which she decried as “false” and believed was made to “smear” her. *See* Exh. 7 at 6; *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 01:56:00. Additionally, up to that point, the conversation between Representative Sun and the lobbyists at the conference had included pleasantries and other subjects related to Representative Sun’s district. The conversation took a

“dark tone” only *because of* Representative Sun’s threat—the threat did not lighten it. *Hearing*, 01/25/24 at 00:13:00. To that end, the Committee finds that Representative Sun provided no indication before or after the threat that her sentiments were anything but serious. This includes Representative Sun’s assertion that she had provided a disclaimer that she “do[es] not believe in causing harm or violence of any kind” before she made her statement; indeed, “bitch slapping” is itself a form of violence. *See* Exh. 7; *see also* *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 01:58:00 (avowing to the “accuracy” of the statements contained in Exhibit 7). The Committee repeatedly asked the witnesses who directly heard Representative Sun’s threat if Representative Sun made this statement in jest. The witnesses described Representative Sun’s tone and repeatedly confirmed that Representative Sun was not joking.

Third, Representative Sun argues that the threat could not have been credible because the Tolleson official was not present at the conference and did not hear it directly.¹ *See, e.g.,* *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 01:59:00-02:01:00; 02:29:00; *Response* at 3. But the Committee heard directly from the witnesses who heard her threat, both at the second evidentiary hearing and through their signed affidavits that were submitted to the Committee. *See* Exhs. 13, 14. Moreover, this argument ignores the impropriety of having made the statement in that way in the first place: whether the official was there or not and whether the threat was levied directly to her or not does not mitigate the severity of the content of the threat or the fact that Representative Sun made it while acting in her official capacity at a legislative event. In addition, Representative Sun appears to argue that because she was able to cause Ms. Sinawi harm but did not actually do so, merely saying that she would do so was not inappropriate. *Response* at 3. The Committee declines to adopt this reasoning.

Finally, the Committee notes that, aside from conceding that saying she would “bitch slap a woman” was “not the best move,” *Response* at 3, Representative Sun has otherwise made no indication that she feels remorse for her actions or a need to apologize. During the first evidentiary hearing, she was asked directly whether she had ever felt that she should apologize, to which she did not provide a direct answer, instead claiming that the allegations were merely hearsay. *See* *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 01:59:00-02:01:00; 02:26:00. But she offered no different response after the witnesses provided their first-hand accounts, nor did she address the fact that she admitted to saying she would assault the Tolleson official. To the contrary, Representative Sun described being “tickled” by the allegations made against her.

In sum, the Committee finds that Representative Sun levied a threat of physical harm and against the life of the city official while acting in her capacity as a member of this House and in doing so committed disorderly behavior under House Rule 1.

2. THE COMMITTEE FINDS that Representative Sun misused her title and position as a state representative when she knowingly prevented the execution of a lawful court order in a private custodial matter to which she was not a party.

The Committee is disturbed by Representative Sun’s deliberate and inappropriate interference in a child custody matter. Significantly, Representative Sun does not refute that she injected herself into what is an ongoing legal custody dispute—to which she is not a party—when

¹ Representative Sun also argued for the first time at the January evidentiary hearing that the lobby where the meeting took place did not have a balcony. *Hearing*, 01/25/24 at 00:29-30; 00:41; 00:55. The Committee makes note of the resort’s lobby layout, which includes a drop down to a lower floor. *See* <https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/tussp-jw-marriott-tucson-starr-pass-resort-and-spa/photos/>.

she approached Ms. Alcott and the minor children in the Dairy Queen parking lot on the date and time of their court-ordered transfer. In fact, the only matter that she disputes about this allegation in the Complaint is that she had invoked Attorney General Kris Mayes's name during the exchange. *See Response* at 1-2. But the Committee agrees that, regardless whether she did so, Representative Sun acted inappropriately and abused her position as a state representative when she intervened in the transfer and knowingly acted in a way to prevent compliance with a lawful court order. To be sure, Representative Sun was informed at least four times that the children's transfer was required by an order from the court. Exh. 1 at 54, 55, 59. Still, she continued her efforts to prevent that judicial mandate from being fulfilled.

Although Representative Sun stated that she intervened only in her capacity as a family friend, the record shows that she nevertheless exhibited the title of her office during the exchange to assert an authority that she did not possess. Specifically, Representative Sun approached the situation wearing a badge displaying her name as "Rep. Leezah Sun," and when the court-appointed supervisor addressed her as "Miss," Representative Sun corrected her, requiring that the supervisor instead address her in her official capacity as a state representative. *See Exh. 1* at 56. Representative Sun testified during the evidentiary hearing that she wore the badge all day after having attended an event. *Hearing*, 12/19/23, at 1:53:00. But even if she had been previously wearing it that day for an official event, Representative Sun chose to not remove it before approaching the custodial transfer scene. Indeed, Representative Sun acknowledged that she was aware that she was wearing her badge visibly throughout the encounter because she noticed Ms. Alcott staring at it long enough to make Representative Sun believe that Ms. Alcott was "fully aware of who [she] was" before she demanded that Ms. Alcott refer to her by her title. *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 2:13:00. Representative Sun even seemingly suggested during her committee testimony that she had actually elected to intervene in the transfer and prevent the fulfillment of the court order *because* she was a state representative and did not know that she was "not allowed" to supplant a court order. *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 2:09:00. This reasoning illustrates an abuse of the bounds of power entrusted to a member of the legislative branch.

Additionally, although Representative Sun originally cited only a concern for the children's wellbeing as the motivation for her actions, the record shows that Representative Sun was also previously familiar with Ms. Alcott through negative reports allegedly relayed to her by her constituents. In the transcript that Representative Sun provided, for example, she repeatedly informs Ms. Alcott, "we know who you are," "we know your track record," "we don't think you have a really good track record." Exh. 1 at 54, 59. During her committee testimony, Representative Sun explained that she has received complaints from "dozens, and dozens, and dozens of parents" regarding Ms. Alcott and that she has herself submitted reports about her to the Attorney General's Office on her constituents' behalf. *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 02:17:00-20:00. This further supports the Committee's finding that Representative Sun acted under the color of her office when she intervened in the private custodial matter in which Ms. Alcott was the court-appointed supervisor and prevented her from fulfilling her duties. By doing so, she abused the power of the office.

3. THE COMMITTEE FINDS that the Littleton Elementary School District Incident Is Further Evidence that Representative Sun Engaged in a Pattern of Abusing Her Official Title and Position.

Finally, the Committee finds that Representative Sun's conduct involving the Littleton Elementary School District Superintendent supports the Committee's finding of a pattern of misconduct. Representative Sun asked for the meeting with the Littleton Elementary School

District’s Superintendent shortly after she won her election, but before she was sworn in, to discuss potential legislation for her upcoming first term. The meeting, therefore, was requested and premised upon her occupancy of the office of State Representative. Although the conversation initially embraced subject matters relevant to the public office, Representative Sun then used this meeting to express her personal disapproval of the school board’s president, particularly as related to one of her mentees.

Despite the Superintendent’s efforts to resolve the disagreement and redirect the conversation, Representative Sun refused to leave the subject alone. Instead, she met Dr. Freeman’s efforts with a threat to invoke an authority that is afforded to only “members of the legislature” to initiate an investigation by the Arizona Attorney General—an investigation that could potentially result in the withholding of state shared monies if certain statutory circumstances are met. *See* A.R.S. § 41-194.01. She did so despite not yet formally possessing that authority, without any factual basis for initiating such an investigation, and while misrepresenting the scope of A.R.S. § 41-194.01. Not only are school districts not an entity for which a legislator can initiate an investigation under this law, but the law itself requires a legal basis for the request and cannot be made “for any reason.” A.R.S. § 41-194.01(A). It therefore appears that her invocation of SB 1487 and contention that she did not need to provide a reason to do so was an intentional endeavor to use the stature of the office of state representative to assert authority over the Superintendent and intimidate him.

Although Representative Sun testified in committee that she had only discussed SB 1487 with Dr. Freeman in the context of agreeing with him that a similar authority would be desirable for charter schools (*see* Hearing 12/19/23 at 2:06:00), the Committee does not find her assertion credible. The Committee finds Dr. Freeman’s testimony credible that Representative Sun made the comment as a threat and that he took it as an “open ended implication” that she would initiate an official investigation into either him or the district for no specific reason and without statutory authority to do so.

Additionally, Dr. Freeman testified during the committee hearing that after he wrote and sent the letter to the Ethics Chairman in November 2023—and while this Ethics matter was pending—Representative Sun wrote her own letter to the school board president asking her to “intercede” in the matter. *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 00:34:00. Dr. Freeman further voiced concern about what he believed might be possible consequences to his participation in this Ethics matter, particularly as a result of testifying at the December 19, 2023 evidentiary hearing. *Hearing*, 12/19/23 at 00:38:00.

Although Dr. Freeman did not elaborate on what those consequences might be, the Committee takes notice that Representative Sun attended a Littleton Elementary School District Board meeting on January 9, 2024—again, while this matter was still pending—where the matter of his employment was scheduled for discussion.¹ During her testimony before the school board, Representative Sun specifically expressed her displeasure at Dr. Freeman’s participation in this House Ethics matter.² When the Committee asked about her presence at the school board meeting, Representative Sun declined to answer. *See Hearing*, 01/25/24 at 00:48:00. The Committee finds

¹ *See*:

https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SB_Meetings/ViewMeeting.aspx?S=112002&MID=2809&Tab=Agenda&enIID=-ZTOT5q8Qo5p3PubplusFOZZPQ%3D%3D

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tCOglv0SXM4&t=2738s>

that this was an act of retaliation against the superintendent and that the totality of circumstances surrounding this incident supports the Committee's finding of a pattern of abusing her official title and position.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Arizona Constitution empowers the House to establish its own rules of procedure. *See* Ariz. Const. art. 4, part 2, § 8. The House Rules, which the House adopted at the beginning of the first regular session of the 56th Legislature, expressly confirm that House Rules are subject to only constitutional rules and take precedence over statutory rules or provisions, customs and usages, or other parliamentary authority. *See* House Rule 29. Accordingly, it is incumbent on the Ethics Committee to thoroughly review any Complaint by any member to determine whether a member has violated a House Rule.

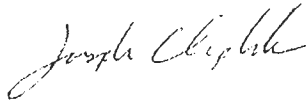
The Committee's investigation required significant time and legislative resources. The Committee does not lightly issue this Report, but the findings herein are necessary to protect the integrity of the House and House Rules.

This Report should not be construed as any comment on individuals' constitutional rights, including the right to freely speak as guaranteed by the Arizona Constitution. House Rules have long required members, the public, and the press to maintain proper decorum. Although the Committee has held meetings open to the public and press, the Complaint at issue ultimately presents an internal House matter for the Committee alone to investigate. What the House Rules cannot tolerate is a member engaging in the conduct described above, which erodes public trust in the legislative process.

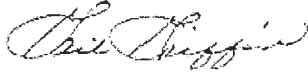
Pursuant to its investigation and factual findings above, the Committee finds that the evidence sufficiently supports a conclusion that Representative Sun engaged in a pattern of inappropriate behavior in her official capacity and under the color of her office as a state representative. The Committee finds that this pattern constitutes disorderly behavior in violation of Rule 1 of the Arizona House of Representatives.

The Committee notes that its findings are uniquely fact-intensive and require a subjective assessment of Representative Sun's credibility. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that all members of the House fully examine this Report and the material cited herein. The Committee agrees, unanimously, that Representative Sun violated Rule 1. Based on this finding, and because Representative Sun's violation of Rule 1 occurred in connection with her official capacity as a member of this House, the Committee deems it appropriate for the House as a whole to decide what disciplinary measures should be taken.

Respectfully submitted this 30th day of January, 2024.



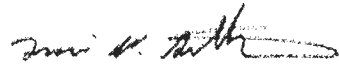
Rep. Joseph Chaplik, Chairman



Rep. Gail Griffin



Rep. Jennifer Longdon*



Rep. Travis Grantham, Vice Chair



Rep. Christopher Mathis

* Representative Longdon fully participated in the hearings, deliberations, and drafting of this Report, but resigned on January 26, 2024, before its issuance. She signed it with permission from the Speaker and the Ethics Committee Chairman.