

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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September 1, 2026

The Honorable William H. Pryor, Jr.
Chair
Judicial Council of the Eleventh Circuit
56 Forsyth St. N.W.
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Judge Pryor:

The Committee on the Judiciary is conducting oversight of judicial misconduct committed by Judge Eleanor Ross of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia.¹ On December 10, 2025, a special committee appointed by the Eleventh Circuit Judicial Council found that Judge Ross engaged in three instances of judicial misconduct, including engaging in an extramarital affair while in her chambers, attending a partisan event, and making false statements during a judicial misconduct inquiry.² We are concerned about the egregious nature of Judge Ross's conduct, and we respectfully request additional information about your office's investigation concerning Judge Ross.

On September 22, 2025, the Chief Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, Leigh Martin May, sent a memorandum to you alleging that Judge Ross, who is identified in the judicial misconduct findings and orders as "Subject Judge," had "engaged in judicial misconduct."³ According to the memorandum, Chief Judge May received information from a law clerk in Judge Ross's office, who alleged that the judge engaged in an extramarital affair with a uniformed police officer during work hours in her chambers and "within hearing distance of the judge's clerks."⁴

On September 30, 2025, you appointed a special committee to investigate Judge Ross's alleged misconduct.⁵ The special committee also investigated allegations that Judge Ross "did not mentor [her] clerks or substantively edit clerks' written work product," and that, on one

¹ *In re Complaint of Judicial Misconduct*, No. 11-25-90212 (11th Cir. Jud. Council Feb. 11, 2026). Josh Blackman, *Who Is The District Court Judge Who Was Privately Reprimanded For Having Loud Sex In Her Chambers With A Law Enforcement Officer From Her District?*, REASON: VOLOKH CONSPIRACY (May 27, 2026).

² *Id.*

³ *In re Complaint of Judicial Misconduct*, No. 11-25-90212, at 2 (11th Cir. Jud. Council Feb. 11, 2026).

⁴ *Id.* at 3.

⁵ *Id.* at 2, 5.

occasion, she mistreated her “staff” by “yelling and cursing” at them.⁶ At the time of the allegations, Judge Ross supervised six law clerks and each of them told the special committee that Judge Ross failed to properly supervise their work on civil cases, and that many of them “were uncomfortable with the level of discretion they appeared to exercise” in these cases.⁷ Judge Ross has since disputed this allegation.⁸

During the course of its investigation, the special committee determined that Judge Ross lied to you and Chief Judge May regarding her conduct with the uniformed police officer in her office.⁹ Specifically, on September 29, 2025, when you informed Judge Ross about the allegations,¹⁰ Judge Ross falsely responded the same day that she had “never engaged in sexual intercourse in [her] office, nor anywhere else in the Courthouse,” and that she was “not sure who this allegation concerns or whether it is alleged to have occurred with different individuals.”¹¹ In addition, in email correspondence with Chief Judge May, Judge Ross falsely asserted that she had “no idea what this clerk is referring to or why [the clerk] has made such allegations.”¹² Judge Ross also told Chief Judge May, “Because so many lawyers, law students and officers from my cases as a prosecutor have stopped by to visit me, I don’t even know which law enforcement officer [this clerk] is referring to, or if [the clerk] alleges it was different officers.”¹³ On October 10, 2025, Judge Ross submitted a supplemental response to you retracting her prior statements and admitting they were false.¹⁴

The special committee also discovered that Judge Ross attended “a primary election victory party for a District Attorney,”¹⁵ which it described as “a partisan political event.”¹⁶ Public reporting has indicated that the District Attorney in question is Fani Willis, the Democrat District Attorney for Fulton County, Georgia.¹⁷ According to the special committee, Judge Ross told her clerks that she had “consumed too many martinis” at the victory party.¹⁸ Two of the clerks told the special committee they were “mortified” by Judge Ross’s statements.¹⁹

Ultimately, the special committee concluded that Judge Ross “engaged in three instances of judicial misconduct,” including:

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.* at 8.

⁸ Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs and Mattathias Schwartz, *Sex, Lies and Secrets: A Federal Judge’s Trysts Go Public*, N.Y. TIMES (June 11, 2026).

⁹ *In re* Complaint of Judicial Misconduct, No. 11-25-90212, at 17-19 (11th Cir. Jud. Council Feb. 11, 2026).

¹⁰ *Id.* at 3.

¹¹ *Id.* at 17; *see also id.* at 4 (providing date of Judge Ross’s response).

¹² *Id.* at 18 (brackets in original).

¹³ *Id.* (brackets in original).

¹⁴ *Id.* at 9, 12-13.

¹⁵ *Id.* at 8.

¹⁶ *Id.* at 16.

¹⁷ *See* Kate Brumback, *DOJ seeks recusal of judge from Georgia election case over reported attendance at Fani Willis event*, ASSOCIATED PRESS (May 30, 2026); Josh Blackman, *Who Is The District Court Judge Who Was Privately Reprimanded For Having Loud Sex In Her Chambers With A Law Enforcement Officer From Her District?*, REASON: VOLOKH CONSPIRACY (May 27, 2026).

¹⁸ *In re* Complaint of Judicial Misconduct, No. 11-25-90212, at 8 (11th Cir. Jud. Council Feb. 11, 2026).

¹⁹ *Id.*

(1) [Judge Ross] engaging in an extramarital affair with a high-ranking [police] officer and, in the course of that affair, having sexual intercourse (and other intimate contact) in the judge's office, during business hours, and within hearing distance of staff; (2) [Judge Ross's] attendance at a partisan political event; and (3) [Judge Ross's] making false statements to Chief Judge Pryor and to the Chief District Judge that were material to the investigation of misconduct allegations and to the administration of the district court.²⁰

As a result, the special committee recommended that Judge Ross be privately reprimanded.²¹ Judge Ross also agreed to “(1) issue letters of apology to certain law clerks affected by the judge's misconduct; (2) decline to serve as chief judge of the district court when [she] would otherwise be eligible to do so; and (3) indefinitely refrain from serving on any Judicial Conference committee.”²²

On February 11, 2026, the Judicial Council of the Eleventh Circuit adopted the special committee's findings,²³ which the U.S. Judicial Conference's Committee on Judicial Conduct and Disability subsequently affirmed on May 22, 2026.²⁴ On May 27, 2026, Judge Ross sent an apology to the six law clerks.²⁶ However, Judge Ross's apology letters were vague and insincere.²⁷ After the law clerks raised this issue, you ordered Judge Ross to send a second apology letter to the clerks to convey greater accountability for her misconduct, consistent with the special committee's recommendation.²⁸

Judge Ross's misconduct seriously undermines judicial integrity and erodes trust in the judicial system. Accordingly, to assist the Committee's oversight and to inform whether additional action is warranted, we ask that you provide written responses to the following questions:

1. Why did the special committee choose to privately reprimand Judge Ross for severe offenses of misconduct?

²⁰ *Id.* at 14.

²¹ *Id.* at 2.

²² *Id.*

²³ *Id.* at 1-2.

²⁴ *In re* Complaint of Judicial Misconduct, No. 26-01 (U.S. Jud. Conf. Comm. on Jud. Conduct & Disability May 22, 2026).

²⁵ Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs and Mattathias Schwartz, *Sex, Lies and Secrets: A Federal Judge's Trysts Go Public*, N.Y. TIMES (June 11, 2026).

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs and Mattathias Schwartz, *Judge Offers New Apology for Her In-Chambers Affair and Other Misconduct*, N.Y. TIMES (June 12, 2026).

- a. Why did the special committee not recommend that Judge Ross voluntarily retire from office for her misconduct?
 - b. How does her lenient punishment help to restore public trust in the judicial system?
2. Did the special committee investigate how Judge Ross's attendance at a political event may have potentially influenced any of her cases?
3. When the Judicial Conference of the Eleventh Circuit adopted the special committee's findings and recommendations, was there any disagreement among the Conference that a stronger punishment for Judge Ross was warranted? Why or why not?

Please provide the requested information as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 p.m. on September 15, 2026.

The Supreme Court has recognized that Congress has a "broad and indispensable" power to conduct oversight, which "encompasses inquiries into the administration of existing laws, studies of proposed laws, and surveys in our social, economic, or political system for the purpose of enabling Congress to remedy them."²⁹ The Committee is authorized to conduct oversight of "[t]he judiciary and judicial proceedings" and "[f]ederal courts and judges," pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives.³⁰ In addition, the Committee is authorized to initiate "any impeachment proceedings against an individual," including federal judges.³¹ If you have any questions, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-6906. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jim Jordan
Chairman



Clay Fuller
Member of Congress



Darrell Issa
Chairman
Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual
Property, Artificial Intelligence and
the Internet

²⁹ *Trump v. Mazars USA, LLP*, 591 U.S. 848, 862 (2020) (internal quotation marks omitted).

³⁰ Rules of the House of Representatives, R. X, 119th Cong. (2026).

³¹ See U.S. CONST. art. I, § 2, cl. 5.; U.S. CONST. art. II § 4, cl. 1; JARED P. COLE & TODD GARVEY, CONG. RSCH. SERV., R46013, IMPEACHMENT AND THE CONSTITUTION 10 (2023).

The Honorable William H. Pryor, Jr.

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cc: The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member

The Honorable Hank Johnson, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, Artificial Intelligence, and the Internet