

A Disgrace to the Court

Judge Griffen's anti-police, racially insensitive comments have no place in our justice system.

The state of Arkansas made national headlines in the past few weeks because of our decision to move forward with a number of executions. As expected, a large number of appeals and court battles ensued by parties representing the condemned. The Arkansas legal system was on display for the world to see and unfortunately one judge decided to use this attention to make a mockery of our judicial process. Instead of acting as a neutral arbiter of the law, he selfishly disregarded his duties as a judge.

The judge in question is Wendell Griffen from Pulaski County. On GoodFriday, about an hour after he had made a critical ruling against the state that effectively halted the executions, Griffen strapped himself to a cot in front of the Governor's mansion to protest the executions he had just stopped. Making a public statement about a case in which he was still involved reeks of bias. Setting aside the merits of the case itself, Griffen attacked the integrity of our legal system by showing some parties can't get a fair trial in his court.

Griffen has a long history of this kind of extreme and reckless statement. A few of the most egregious examples are:

He called our brave police officers "terrorist" and said we should "punish the terrorist...disguised as agent of law enforcement."

He said that we live under a system of "white supremacy," where white people have a fear of "losing control over people of color."

He said that the leaders of Little Rock School system are a "white supremacist tyranny" who "pimp children."

He claimed that the United States is "subsidizing tyranny and fascism by Israel against Palestinians."

Clearly, Griffen has shown that he is not fit to be on the bench. While any respectable judge would resign from his office, Griffen has doubled down. He is now calling for an investigation for ethic violations against the Attorney General and the Arkansas Supreme Court. The irony of Griffen calling for an ethics investigation against anyone would be laughable if this were not such a serious issue.

Because of his gross misconduct in office, I am calling for the Arkansas House of Representatives to bring an article of impeachment against Judge Wendell Griffen. He should never again be allowed to hold office of any sort in Arkansas. We as the General Assembly can remove the stain that Griffen has left on our judicial integrity.