

COLEMAN CONDEMNS ATTACKS AGAINST HIS WIFE AND FAMILY

Lawsuit Allegations Are “False And Defamatory” Says Senator; Calls On Al Franken And His Allies To Stop The Attacks Against Him And His Family

Moorhead- Senator Norm Coleman today called on Al Franken and his allies to end their vicious 11th hour political attacks against his wife and his family. The following statement was made by Senator Coleman this morning in Moorhead, Minnesota:

“In a few days, we will have one of the most important elections of our time. But, instead of focusing on the issues, my opponent and his political allies want to divert attention away from this campaign with a false and malicious political attack against my wife.

Let me be clear: Each and every allegation in this lawsuit relating to me and my wife is false and defamatory.

At the eleventh hour, as the people of Minnesota are preparing to go to the polls in a very important election, a smear campaign has been attempted to try to influence that result. This is absolutely outrageous and I know that Minnesotans will see it for what it is: sleazy politics and reject it out of hand.

First of all, I appreciate that the majority of the media who have covered this story so far have been thoughtful in raising legitimate questions about these tactics. The easy thing for me to do would be to let the news coverage stand on its own and trust that Minnesotans will see through this. But Minnesotans deserve more. When politics crosses an ethical line we have to stand up and call it out for what it is.

Let me tell you how this arose. This is not about public documents researched by an investigative reporter. No. Sometime last week, even before this Texas lawsuit was originally filed, a copy of these false allegations was delivered in Minnesota in an unmarked envelope to two Minneapolis Star Tribune reporters.

Then on Monday of this week, my opponent began running vicious, untrue attacks against me with charges the media called “false”. That same day, some person in Texas, unknown to me or my wife, files the lawsuit with these same allegations given to the reporters a week earlier. Within hours, that lawsuit was withdrawn.

Then, yesterday morning, my campaign filed a legitimate lawsuit against Al Franken and his campaign for violating the state's fair campaign laws – and before you know it, we learned that this false and malicious lawsuit had been refiled in Texas. And now the Franken campaign and its allies are trying to use it for political advantage.

So today I'm calling for an end to these personal, malicious and unfounded 11th hour attacks. This is not how we do campaigning in Minnesota and, I hope Minnesotans will join me in holding my opponent and his political allies accountable for this.

A few weeks ago I took down my negative ads to put a more positive focus on the issues of the day. That approach has been emphatically rejected by Mr. Franken. If Minnesotans want to know what kind of Senator Al Franken would be – watch his campaign this last week – see how he has attacked my family – my wife – and my reputation.

And, my message to him – to his political allies – and anyone else who intends to attack my wife, and my family, in the remaining days of this campaign is this: get out of the gutter.

My wife has been devastated by this. She turns on her computer and reads on the blogs the most vicious attacks, impugning her integrity and trying to destroy her ability to do her job. She's angry-- and she has a right to be -- and so am I.

This is the kind of 11th hour, sleazy attack the people of Minnesota are sick and tired of. This is not the Minnesota way and I know the people of Minnesota. This will backfire.

If my opponents have any shred of decency left in this campaign – stop attacking my family.”

The Facts: A Bogus Lawsuit in the Final Days of a Campaign

- This political attack and story began last week with an unsigned, anonymous envelope that was sent to two Star Tribune reporters containing false and baseless allegations against Norm and Laurie Coleman;
- On Monday of this week, Al Franken began his vicious attack ads against Norm Coleman – and a disgruntled former CEO of a company filed a false and baseless lawsuit using the Senator and his wife as bait in a lawsuit;
- It's a vicious, 11th hour attack and dirty trick that we have come to expect in this campaign;
- The Senator's wife is entitled to work for a living, and any attacks against her or the Senator's family will not be tolerated;
- The Senator and his wife were not party to this lawsuit when it was originally filed – and then withdrawn – and still are not party to this lawsuit since it has been refiled. Whatever the person's agenda, it's clear that it was intended to use this election as leverage;
- The facts are as follows:

- The Senator's wife is a legally licensed insurance agent
- She has not received one dime from the company that was involved in this lawsuit – she was not the producer on the account – she was not responsible for this transaction in anyway
- The allegations in this false lawsuit are without merit and defamatory
- Al Franken and his political allies began this week with a coordinated effort to destroy the Senator's campaign – in the process they have tried to undermine the Senator and his wife's reputation -- and to attempt to unfairly influence the outcome of an election. With a majority of public polls showing this race slipping further and further out of his grasp – he and his allies have taken out all the stops in their 11th hour attacks;
- Yesterday, we filed an Unfair Campaign Practices complaint against Al Franken and his campaign for their campaign commercials that are falsely attacking the Senator – we believe these ongoing efforts to smear the Senator and his family must come to an end.